



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KINGSTON
UPON THAMES

Inclusive Kingston Strategy

2025-2029



This is an Easy Read version of Kingston Councils Inclusive Kingston Strategy.



Words to know



- **Equality** - Means treating everyone fairly



- **Diversity** - Means Involving people from all backgrounds



- **Inclusion** - Means creating an environment where everyone belongs



- **Accessibility** - Means making sure everyone has the chance to be included.



 The right to be treated fairly

- **Equity** - Means giving everyone exactly what they need to have the same opportunities as everyone else



- **Inequalities** - Means the unfair differences between groups of people



- **Discrimination** - Means when someone is treated worse than other people because of who they are.

Introduction

A community where everyone belongs



- This strategy is for you.
- We believe everyone should feel they belong.
- Working together, we can create a friendly and welcoming place for everyone to live and work.



- Our borough is a place where we celebrate different people and cultures.
- We work hard to make sure everyone is treated fairly and feels safe, important, and listened to.



- Our borough should be inclusive, accessible and safe.
- Fairness and opportunities for all are important to the Council which can be seen in the Council Plan.



- We have worked with partners and communities to build strong relationships.
- We are happy with what we have done, but know there is always more to do.



- This plan shows our goals for making Kingston a place for everyone.
- Every year, we will check our work to make sure it helps the community with what they need most.

Working together with our partners



- We value the strength of our partnerships and how we work together.
- In recent years, we have started a new voluntary and community sector partnership, an **Inclusive Kingston Borough Alliance** and refreshed the **Kingston Faith and Belief Forum**.



- We have also worked with our residents to create the **Kingston Disability Network**, an inclusive network creating a stronger voice for people with disabilities.
- We also have a network of support available for **unpaid carers of all ages**.



- We work with partners and communities, including the Kingston Partnership Board, to build togetherness, tackle inequalities and deliver our aims.

Celebrating our diversity



- Kingston upon Thames is proud of its diversity. Kingston has a large Korean community, and Tamil is the second most spoken language.
- There are also large communities of Hong Kongers, Chinese, Indian, Black African, and Black Caribbean residents.
- We work together to support celebrating different cultures like Tamil Heritage Month, Kimchi Day, Kingston Carnival, and South Asian Heritage Month.

Our commitment to all residents is shown in many ways.



- As a 'Marmot Borough', we aim to give children the best start in life, tackling and stopping poverty and promoting overall wellbeing.



- As an 'Age Friendly Borough', we support a healthy lifestyle and outcomes for people of all ages



- We uphold the 'Armed Forces Covenant' to recognise and support the needs of military personnel and their families.



- As a 'Council of Sanctuary', we welcome refugees, migrants, and those seeking sanctuary.



- For people that have experienced being in care we provide protection against discrimination.



- The Cambridge Road Estate project will provide modern, safe, and secure homes.
- Kingston's new leisure centre will be accessible and let people have active lifestyles.



- Our good work is recognised by others. In 2025, our Adult Social Care team achieved a 'Good' rating from the Care Quality Commission, which highlighted our positive work with Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, Tamil, and Korean populations.



- Our Children's Service has been awarded an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating, which is the highest judgment possible.



- Many other key strategies support our targets, including:

- All-Age Autism and ADHD Strategy 2025 - 2030
- Children and Young People's Plan 2024-2027
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2025 - 2030
- Greenspace Strategy 2024 - 2034
- Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025 - 2028
- Kingston All Age Carers Strategy 2022 - 2027
- Kingston Economic Development Strategy 2024 - 2028



Supporting our changing population



- Kingston is experiencing large population changes.
- The borough's population is estimated to increase by 11.5% to around 191,000 over the next 15 years.



- It is estimated that Kingston's overall population will grow by **8% over** the next 20 years.
- Almost all of this growth will be in the **65 years and over population**.
- Estimations predict an extra 12,000 older residents.



- Improving healthy ageing is a key priority, making sure Kingston stays as a place that meets the changing needs of all its residents.



- Accessibility and digital inclusion remain important for us.
- Residents have told us that contacting the Council can be challenging, we want to improve in this area.



- Tackling poverty is especially important because of the rising cost of living, this means we need to do more work with local charities, food banks, and housing support.



- The number of people from different backgrounds and cultures is growing in Kingston.



- It is important to strengthen relationships with communities where we know we need to do more work to engage with.



- Kingston is committed to being an inclusive borough and a place of sanctuary that welcomes people from all communities.



- The Council employs a lot of staff and aims to always build an inclusive place to work for everyone.
- Our internal staff networks give all staff the opportunity to be themselves.



- We continue to recognise the following communities as priority groups:
 - Active or veteran armed forces personnel
 - Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller communities
 - Homeless households and rough sleepers
 - People with experience of the criminal justice system
 - Refugees and asylum seekers
 - Socio-economic deprivation and low-income families
 - Unpaid carers

Our path moving forward

objectives and actions

Equality Objectives 2025 - 2029

We have set 4 big goals to help us progress



- This strategy's four objectives have been shaped by talking with communities, partners, and stakeholders



Objective 1

- We aim to improve our understanding of our communities and work together to make change



Objective 2

- We aim to tackle inequality and make sure our services work for people from all different backgrounds



Objective 3

- We aim to be a proudly diverse borough which is inclusive, accessible and safe



Objective 4

- We aim to make sure our workplace is a fair place for everyone to work where every staff member is treated with respect

Objective 1

We aim to improve our understanding of our communities and work together to make change



How we will do it:

- Listening and speaking to our communities and partners
- Working together to collect, understand, share and use data
- Using community feedback, compliments and complaints in our work



Examples of what we will do (our actions)

- Work together with children and young people to understand what is important to them and what is good in their life
- Improve our understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of residents
- Make sure we have a better understanding of the experiences of residents by engaging and working together in new ways.

Objective 2

We aim to tackle inequality and make sure our services work for people from all different backgrounds



How we will do it:

- Focus on tackling poverty in the borough
- Work closely with our partners and communities to share information and find out what our community needs
- Think creatively to overcome barriers to make sure residents can access our services
- Show how our services understand people's different needs to reduce inequality



Examples of what we will do (our actions)

- Make sure our website and digital services are accessible, so that they can be used by as many people as possible
- Continue to make sure our electoral services meet the needs of our communities, so everyone is able to sign up and vote if they wish to
- Support our voluntary and community sector to deliver outcomes by working together



Objective 3

We aim to be a proudly diverse borough which is inclusive, accessible and safe



How we will do it:

- Together with our partners, we will focus on tackling discrimination, harassment and hate crime
- Ensuring accessibility and community needs are key priorities when designing buildings, streets and digital support
- Bringing communities together to celebrate culture, heritage and achievements



Examples of what we will do (our actions)

- Use local Family Hubs to include services for children, young people and families, removing the need to repeat their story to different services
- Host a “Sports for All” Festival promoting inclusive and diverse activities
- Work with Kingston Disability Network and other stakeholders to make our streets and spaces accessible for everyone



Objective 4

We aim to make sure our workplace is a fair place for everyone to work where every staff member is treated with respect



How we will do it:

- Our leaders will support this work. We will have a clear plan. Staff will learn about the needs of our communities.
- Everyone will feel welcome. Everyone's voice will be heard.
- Our rules will be fair. Our ways of working will include everyone. This will help our staff feel supported.
- We will keep checking how we are doing. We will learn what works well. We will make changes to improve.



Examples of what we will do (our actions)

- We will take part in a programme (Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard) to help make workplaces anti-racist. This will help make work fair for everyone.
- **Create inclusive and accessible workspaces.** We will design Council workspaces for everyone.
- **Build a workforce that reflects our borough.** We will support and keep staff from protected groups.

Engagement, research and data

Engagement - what you told us



What's working well

- Feedback from the community highlighted several areas that are working well.
- Celebrating diversity of different cultures was mentioned as a big strength, alongside effective partnerships with the Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector.
- Positive comments were received for the Council's health and wellbeing ideas and the quality of Adult Social Care services.



What this means to our communities:

- Celebrating our cultural diversity is done well
- Council and partners work well together to support the community
- Strong support in place for residents who need it
- Adult social care is good
- Good initiatives for health and wellbeing
- Religion and culture are important





Key areas for improvement

The feedback also pointed out key areas for improvement.

- We heard that equality, diversity, and inclusion put into practice needs to be improved
- The people involved also wanted more community safety and less crime
- We heard from residents that they often struggle to reach the right council service, especially if they don't have digital access or if they speak a different language



What this means to our communities:

- It is not well understood how equality, diversity and inclusion is relevant to everyone
- Residents wish to feel that their voice is heard and valued by the council
- Objects left on the pavement makes using streets difficult for people with disabilities
- The cost of living is making it hard for pensioners and families that earn less money
- Digital exclusion and speaking different languages make it difficult to reach the right council service
- Some communities could be celebrated more
- Some people don't feel safe in some areas of Kingston Town Centre





- A report of all engagement done and the different people involved can be found on the council's website

Research



- Research has shown the importance of understanding and talking to our communities.



Examples of research undertaken include:

- Looking at other policies, successful pieces of work and what people have done well
- Working with partners to identify shared goals
- Linking to Kingston Council strategies and commitments
- Understanding data and insight
- Reviewing the areas of need in Kingston
- Kingston's Director of Public Health Reports
- Local Government Association Equality Framework

A snapshot of who lives in the borough

There are **168,103** people living in the borough



Age

- **19%** aged 0-15
- **66%** aged 16-64
- **15%** aged 65+
- Approx **25,000** people are aged 65 and over



Care Experience

- In 2023, there were 111 Children Looked After



Disability

- **13.1%** (21,990) of residents have a disability in Kingston



Ethnicity

- **68.3%** white
- **17.9%** Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh,
- **5.3%** mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- **5.7%** other ethnic group
- **2.7%** Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African



The top three languages spoken in the borough are: **English** (82.7%), **Tamil** (1.6%) and **Korean** (1.3%)



Gender reassignment

(of those that answered the question)

- **99.3%** of residents stated their gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth
- **0.7%** stated their gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth

Religion and belief



- 42.6% Christian
- 34.3% no religion
- 8% Muslim
- 5% Hindu
- 1% Buddhist
- 0.8% Sikh
- 0.7% other
- 0.4% Jewish
- 7.1% not stated

Marriage and civil partnership

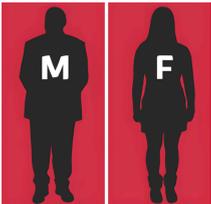


- 47.1% of residents aged 16 and over are married or in a civil partnership

Pregnancy and maternity



- There were 1,607 live births in 2023



Sex

- 52% female
- 48% male

Sexual orientation

(of those that answered the question)



- 96.3% of residents aged 16+ stated they were heterosexual
- 3.7% identified as either gay, lesbian, bisexual or other sexual orientation

Priority Groups



Active or veteran armed forces personnel

- There is an ex-armed forces population of 2%; the London average is 1.4% and the England average is 3.8%



Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller communities

- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller ethnicity make up 0.3% of the Kingston population.



Homeless households and rough sleepers

- Between July and September 2024, 60 people were recorded as sleeping rough in Kingston.



People with experience of the criminal justice system

(data for Kingston is not available, so this is data for the whole of London)

- In 2023, nearly 100,000 adults experienced the Criminal Justice System in London.



Refugees and asylum seekers

- 0.4 % of Kingston's population are supported via the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, the Afghan Resettlement Programme or receive other support (June 2025).



Socio-economic deprivation and low-income families

- More than half of Kingston's residents (55.8%) are not deprived in any of the 4 categories (Education, Employment, Health and Housing).
- Norbiton (including Cambridge Road Estate) has the largest number of households that are deprived in one or more category (53.4%)



Unpaid carers

- An estimation of the number of carers in April 2022 was 14,870, which is an extra 12% (1,500 carers) compared to 2011 data.
- We estimate there are around 2,000 young carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

Legislation and governance

Equality Act 2010



- The Equality Act 2010 protects the rights of people and encourages equal opportunity for all.

 GOV.UK

- The public sector equality duty (PSED) is a legal rule that councils and other public organisations must follow.



It means that councils must:

- **Treat everyone fairly**
- **Make sure no one is discriminated against**
- **Think about the needs of different people**

Protected characteristics

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of a protected characteristic.

The nine protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation



Kingston Council treats “care experience” as a protected characteristic



Priority groups

This strategy continues to recognise communities outside of protected characteristics, that are at a risk of disadvantage, these include:



- Active or veteran armed forces personnel
- Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller communities
- Homeless households and rough sleepers
- People with experience of the criminal justice system
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Socio-economic deprivation and low-income families
- Unpaid carers

Governance



- Every year a report will be presented to Councillors to update them on progress of this strategy



- The Council is supported by key partners when delivering this strategy
- The **Kingston Partnership Board**, aims to guide the borough to be more inclusive
- An **Inclusive Kingston Borough Alliance** and the **Empowering People, Supporting Communities partnership** work to understand inequalities and how to improve them. Our health partnerships continue to aim to tackle health inequalities across the borough





- A continued focus on working in partnership will be kept for the next four years



- In the Council, the Inclusive Kingston Leadership Board will drive forward the strategy and check progress