

## Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty which states that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

This document demonstrates how The County Council is meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty by setting out the findings of an equality analysis that has been undertaken in relation to a proposed change to assess whether it has a disproportionate impact on people who share a protected characteristic. The County Council's Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process covers additional groups not 'protected' by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, including care leavers and care experienced adults.

### 1. Background

Directorate	Adults
Service area	Adult Social Care Services and Business Development
Title of the proposed change being assessed i.e. the policy, service, or other development	To seek approval to conduct a consultation process with residents which will inform Gloucestershire County Council's (the County Council's) plans to amend the Adult Social Care (ASC) Fairer Contributions Policy (attached as appendix 1), including charging illustrations for consultation.

Describe the purpose of the proposed change and the intended outcomes

**This Equality Impact assessment will:**

- Support with decision making in the ASC Fairer Contributions Policy cabinet report in January 2024.

- Provide an update to the pre-engagement work conducted between 06 July 2023 until the 15 September 2023.
- Consider key themes which have helped to inform options development.
- Consider the approach to consultation.

### **Overview**

Funding for Adult Social Care in England is partially funded by central government, and under the Care Act 2014, local authorities in England can ask people who use the services to make a financial contribution towards the cost of providing them if they can afford to do so.

When choosing whether to charge for some social care services, local authorities should consider solutions that support more of their communities sustainably. This does not mean choosing the cheapest option; but the one which delivers the outcomes desired for the best value.

If a local authority chooses to charge, there is a framework set out in the Care Act to help provide consistency/to help set levels. Local authorities have flexibility within this framework and must have a policy on how they will apply this discretion. This is to ensure that two people with similar needs, and receiving similar types of care and support, are not assessed their charge differently. The County Council has a policy which sets out its current approach to charging – this is called the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy.

The County council has recognised a need to review its Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy, and this is outlined in the issues paper (appendix 2 of the cabinet report).

Prior to making any decisions on the review of the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy, the County council committed to engaging with relevant stakeholders. Initially, this involved a 10-week pre-engagement to understand the status quo, asking questions around the issues paper and incorporating equalities monitoring and equalities-based questions and wider due regard.

### **Key themes from our pre-engagement:**

The following key areas were identified for The County Council to prioritise within the wider review of the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy:

- The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG)
- Disability Related Expenditures (DRE's)
- The financial assessment processes
- The appeal processes

### **Areas of discretion for charging**

As the County Council looks at its policy and discretionary areas for charging, and in consideration of its sustainability for the future, additional proposed areas for consultation include:

- Self-funder administration charges (for people who are financially assessed with capital over £23,250, and who would like the authority to arrange care and support for them, following a Care Act assessment).
- The way we charge for respite and short break services.

### **Purpose of proposed change**

The purpose of the consultation is to provide the opportunity for our communities, and those most affected by how we charge for adult social care, to have their say on amendments to our Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy. This looks to develop a policy which is informed by the views of the community, and which is sustainable for The County Council.

The areas of the Fairer Contributions policy we are looking to consult on are:

- 1) The level set for the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) and other additional allowances/disregards
- 2) The assessment for Disability Related Expenditure (DRE's)
- 3) How we charge for respite care and short break services

#### 4) The introduction of a self-funder administration charge

##### **Intended outcomes**

Following public consultations on the charging options, we hope to create a new, fairer charging policy which fully considers the views of people affected by the policy and supports individual choice and control over their care.

##### Who is affected by the proposals?

People supported by Adult Social Care:	Yes
Wider community:	Yes
Workforce:	Yes – implementation of change only
Other (please specify):	N/A

Decision to be taken and decision maker	That the Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• approves the plan for a 12-week consultation with residents which will inform on the proposed options to amend the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy.</li></ul>
Person(s) responsible for completing this assessment	Carriann Hatherall – Adult Social Care Policy Review Officer and Project Team Lead
Date of this assessment	5 January 2024

## 2. Information and Data Collection

Summarise how you have collected the information and data required to assess the current situation (section 3.1 below) and the potential or actual impact of the proposed change (section 3.2 below) on those who share the protected characteristics and the additional groups (e.g. survey of services users, running community focus groups, analysing service usage data, engaging with staff networks). The actual information and data should be set out in Appendix 1 (People currently supported by Adult Social Care) and Appendix 2 (The County Council staff).

If there are any gaps, include an action in section 4 to fill these. This does not mean that you cannot complete the equality impact assessment, but you need to follow-up the action and revisit as part of the monitoring and review arrangements set out in section 5.

Stakeholders	Engagement and Consultation	Other Sources
People supported by Adult Social Care / Wider Community	<p>Adult Social Care have worked with The <a href="#">Consultation Institute</a> to advise and support with the pre-engagement.</p> <p>Pre-engagement was conducted over 10-weeks and looked to understand the status quo of the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy and its application, asking questions around the issues paper, and incorporating equalities questions.</p> <p><b>The Stakeholders:</b></p> <p>The pre-engagement phase was delivered through a variety of diverse stakeholders, including people with lived experience, their carers and family. The independent consultant also spoke with community interest companies, charities and organisations that support people with care and support needs, such as Age UK, Gloucestershire’s Carers Hub, Access Social Care and Healthwatch.</p> <p><b>The pre-engagement period:</b></p> <p>Alongside an online survey, pre-engagement, included commissioning an independent consultant from <a href="#">Evolving Communities</a> (a community</p>	<p><b>Complaints:</b></p> <p>A review of the 2021-2022 Adult Social Care complaints and compliments report (<a href="https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/krijp1tg3/adult-care-annual-report-2021-22.pdf">https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/krijp1tg3/adult-care-annual-report-2021-22.pdf</a>) has been used to provide some desk-based insight into feedback from people using our services:</p> <p>It is identified that 10 complaints were received relating to the financial assessments and benefits team and the financial assessment process. In four of fourteen cases taken to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO), The County Council was found at fault. Two of these cases related to paying for care.</p> <p><b>Research:</b></p> <p>The desk-based research and pre-engagement exercise identified areas of the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy which may no longer be</p>

interest group), who provided the opportunity for residents to share their views with someone outside of The County Council.

The pre-engagement exercise requested the views of people using our services and their families, carers and friends through a variety of different channels:

- Gloucestershire County Council conducted a survey hosted on Engagement HQ, which was available online and printed with a freepost envelope.
- Evolving communities offered a choice of seven face-to-face drop-in sessions which were held for 5 hours a time. These were based around the county in libraries and in Gloucester City and Cheltenham town centres (hosted by the One Gloucestershire Bus).
- Evolving communities conducted one –to-one interviews with members of Gloucestershire community and voluntary organisations. These were offered both in person and virtually.

Each session with evolving communities had a set of questions to help guide the conversation around the complex legal framework – however they remained primarily public led to allow full expression on concerns around paying for care.

Prior to the online survey for pre-engagement going live a V3 of the Equality Impact Assessment was completed. The findings within this assessment were tested within the online survey. Questions considered the fairness of the existing Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy, and its wider due regard. An example is below:

**“Do you feel Gloucestershire County Council’s policy treats people fairly and with dignity and respect, considering different backgrounds and/or protected characteristics?”**

supporting our residents in the best way it can, this included:

- The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG)
- Disability Related Expenditures (DRE’s)
- The financial assessment processes
- The appeal processes

As The County Council looks at its policy and discretionary areas for charging, and in consideration of its sustainability for the future, additional areas for consultation include:

- Self-funder administration charges (for people who are financially assessed with capital over £23,250, and who would like the authority to arrange care and support for them, following a Care Act assessment).
- The way we charge for respite and short break services.

The survey included additional equalities monitoring questions, these were anonymous and not compulsory. They looked to identify if our survey was completed by hard-to-reach groups (seldom heard groups), supporting our next steps, including our consultation planning.

Various communication strategies maximised pre-engagement exposure, including:

- Paid for targeted social media advertisement
- Word-of-mouth contact
- Stakeholder emails
- Use of The County Council press releases
- Leaflets (distributed by our Adult Social Care Operations team when they have been completing visits)
- Paper versions of the survey (provided to some community groups).

We have taken some learnings in how we can reach seldom heard groups, which are included in the action plan for consultation communication delivery.

**The consultation:**

After evaluation of the pre-engagement, we have committed to contacting our stakeholders who have been identified as high interest in our consultation planning and our engagement methodologies. This included community groups with a focus on disability, and also sensory needs, to ensure our consultation will be accessible for those we want to hear from, and more likely to be impacted by the potential changes.

The project manager and team have met three times with our stakeholder reference group, to discuss the illustrations provided in the cabinet report, which are the basis of the survey questions.

	<p>The survey questions are due to co-designed by our stakeholder reference group prior to the beginning of consultation – as placed in the action plan.</p>	
<p>Workforce</p>	<p>As part of the pre-engagement, Evolving Communities held focus groups with key frontline staff within our workforce. This early engagement from the workforce helped to consider and develop the survey questions for the public pre-engagement.</p> <p>We also made use of the community development team, who’s aim is to support with bridging a gap between social care and those in diverse communities and invited people from our staff networks to be involved.</p> <p>The County Council staff had the opportunity to contribute to the pre-engagement via a “staff survey” option on engagement HQ.</p> <p>The survey was advertised through leaflets, social media posts and internal newsletters.</p>	
<p>Partners</p>	<p>The pre-engagement review provided an opportunity for our health colleagues to have their say on the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy and how they believe this may be impacting those who draw on our support.</p> <p>A MS Teams meeting was carried out virtually with the Continuing Health Care colleagues.</p> <p>Our partners staff had the opportunity to contribute to the pre-engagement via a “sole trader/voluntary organisation option on engagement HQ.</p>	
<p>Other</p>	<p>We understand that paying for Adult Social Care can potentially impact anyone at any time, whether through needing social care themselves in the future, or supporting someone who does. This cohort were also encouraged take the opportunity to contribute to the pre-engagement via</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have reviewed how other local authorities apply their discretion in relation to the charging Framework in the Care and Support Statutory Guidance. Primarily, we looked at 15 other local authorities who are like us in</li> </ul>



the engagement HQ survey. They were also invited to our drop-in-sessions.

We did not receive extensive feedback from those not currently using or supporting someone who does use Adult Social Care.

**Scrutiny:**

Where the engagement and pre-consultation work has updates provided within The County Council's scrutiny committee, elected members thoughts have been considered.

demographic and geographical data and grouped together by the Chartered institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). We have also explored our boarding counties.

- National guidance legislative requirements
- National Association of Financial Assessment Officers (NAFAO)
- Office of National Statistics Data
  - National life tables
- Inform Gloucestershire (2023)
  - Population Profile 2023: An overview of the population of Gloucestershire by the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 [online] available at <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/uxvcfrsp/equality-profile-2023.pdf>
- Citizens Online (2022) Digital Exclusion Risk Mapping Report
- Relevant ONS data

### 3. Equality Assessment

Indicate the impact on each group and explain how you have reached your conclusions (i.e. through analysis of the information and data that was collected through the engagement, consultation and other sources / methods that were set out in section 2).

Consider sub-categories (e.g. different kinds of disabilities) and how the groups are interconnected (e.g. young women) resulting in particular needs or types of disadvantage and discrimination (sometimes known as intersectional or combined discrimination).

#### 3.1 – Status Quo

If the proposal involves changing an existing activity (e.g. policy, service), summarise the key findings from your assessment of the current situation for each of the groups below. If the proposal is completely new, then move straight to section 3.2.

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People supported by Adult Social Care
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<b>Gloucestershire County Council Staff</b>
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<p>Protected Characteristics (Equality Act 2010)</p>	<p>The engagement exercise has provided us an opportunity to explore how our current policy is impacting people with additional characteristics.</p> <p>The desk-based research and pre-engagement exercise identified areas of the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy which may no longer be supporting our residents in the best way it can, this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG)” and how this is applied to means tested assessments by The County Council.</li> <li>• The way The County Council disregards Disability Related Expenditures (DRE’s) in financial assessments.</li> <li>• The accessibility and transparency of the financial assessment processes</li> <li>• The accessibility and transparency of the appeal processes</li> </ul> <p><b>The profile of people supported by adult social care in Gloucestershire:</b></p> <p>At the end of September 2022, almost 5,700 people were receiving support of care by the service. Older people (65+) with a physical support need make up more than half of those supported by adult social care. People with learning disability account for a quarter, 18–64-year-olds with physical support needs makes up around 15% and people with mental health needs made up 5%. More females than males are in receipt of support from adult social care (56.6%) and are overrepresented compared to the overall female population. Males are slightly over-represented for those seeking physical needs support. The most significant difference can be seen for those aged 65 years and over, where females make up more than two-thirds of those receiving support or care (67.2%). Around one-fifth each of people receiving support for a mental health condition are aged 50- 59 years (21.9%) and 60-69 years (20.9%). People aged 20-29 years and 40-49 years make up around one-fifth of those receiving support for a learning disability. The majority of people receiving support of care from Adult Social Care at the end of September 2022 were white (83.8%, white British, white Irish, white European, white other).</p>	
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## **AGE**

Gloucestershire has a larger proportion of older population with 21.8% being over 65 (2021 census). This is said to continue to grow.

Our service user diversity report also shows that over 50% of people drawing on the support of Adult Social Care is over 65.

40.5% of our survey responses, came from people over 65.

[ONS data](#) shares that on average, individual wealth increase with age, which supports some of the feedback listed below.

The Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy introduces a charge once children transition into adult's social care.

Gloucestershire also has 0.89% 10–19-year-olds drawing on the support of our service. Currently, the transitions team are estimated to be allocated to 120 young people between 17-25 years old.

### **Feedback from engagement**

Negative:

Collated and grouped comments from the feedback demonstrate:

- Concerns over how the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy depletes assets people have saved.
- Consideration that under the Care Act 2014, charges must not reduce people's income below a certain amount, but local authorities can allow people to keep more of their income if they wish, and that The County Council have opted to set the MIG as the statutory minimum.
- Concerns that the MIG doesn't leave enough for a household to afford daily living
- Concerns over how information is provided (particularly the use of too much jargon)

## **DISABILITY**

In 2021, 17.8% of the Gloucestershire population were registered as having a long-term health problem or disability.

Due to the nature of adult social care, there are a higher number of people with disabilities access our services.

Around 30% of households in Gloucestershire have at least one disabled person living in it.

### **Feedback from engagement**

#### Negative

- Concerns that the policy does not account for differing levels of disability when deciding what to charge.
- Concerns that people with similar needs and benefits may be assessed differently due to Disability Related Expenses (DRE's)
- 82.4% in the survey responded that it is difficult to understand the DRE process. This feedback included that it requires a lot of work to gather evidence for DRE's and this may leave some people with more money than others to participate in society.
- Concerns over delays in financial assessment outcomes, meaning people are not aware of their contribution at the beginning of a chargeable service, reducing choice in their own care and support package and social spending. Some may then take a choice to cancel the care as feel they cannot afford it.
- Concerns that financial assessment information (and related documents) aren't easy to understand

### **Feedback from complaints data:**

#### Negative:

- An upheld LGO complaint related to a decision around DRE's.

Positive:

- The County Council has already implemented a new panel process to ensure robust decision making for DRE's. The panel consist of several officers across the directorate including Social Workers, Integrated Social Care Managers, financial assessment and benefit (FAB) Officers, Legal support and the Complaints Manager. It is hoped that this provides a more holistic and critical review of our decisions.

## **SEX**

The 2021 census data evidence the populations of Gloucestershire to be 51.1% female. Of the people drawing on the support of Adult Social Care, 57.01% are female. From our "individual care needs" survey, 68.9% of response identified as female.

[UK Labour market statistics](#) show that although there has been a decline in women leaving work, women still make up the highest percentage to leave work and take on caring roles and therefore may be more reliant on benefits of partners income.

Due to the number of females accessing social care, it is understood that these changes may disproportionately impact them

### **Feedback from engagement**

Negative

- Concerns over the impact of finances when a women may be reliant on a male partners income.

### **Further impacts**

Nationally women live longer than men and therefore it is expected that there are a higher number of women using Adult Social Care.

## **RACE**

2021 Census data shows that Gloucestershire has a growth of ethnic groups by 2.3% in 10 years: the highest growth are Romanians which has increased by 964.1% between 2011 and 2021<sup>1</sup>.

4.3% of people living in Gloucestershire do not speak English as their main language.

### **Feedback from engagement**

#### Negative

- Concerns Adult Social Care public information isn't readily provided in other languages.

#### Neutral

- Feedback in relation to the policy has reiterated the need for The County Council to respect other cultures and choices. It appeared that this feedback intended to promote mindfulness to our current practices.

The County Council will work with families, advocates and voluntary groups to identify appropriation outcomes for those with cultural, language or social needs.

Included in the consultation communication plan is how The County Council intend to reach hard-to-reach (seldom heard groups). The County Council intend to utilise community teams and existing relationships between other council services areas and these groups to support with the development of the consultation, and support with easier access of participation.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/n2tlbkzf/demography-and-migration-topic-summary-1.xlsx>

## **GENDER REASSIGNMENT**

We recognise there are a 0.41% of the population in Gloucestershire whose gender identity is different to the sex they were assigned to at birth.

There has been no significant impact identified.

Subject to decision, further work will be explored to ensure that the needs of people who identify as a different gender than they were registered at birth are considered, for them to provide meaningful contribution to the consultation.

## **MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP**

There was feedback obtained on ensuring there is enough money left in the household – this is not specific to marriage or civil partnership, as all people living in a household are considered regardless of their marriage or civil partnership.

## **RELIGION AND BELIEF**

### **Feedback from engagement**

#### **Neutral**

- Feedback in relation to the policy has reiterated the need for The County Council to respect other cultures and choices. It appeared that this feedback intended to promote mindfulness to our current practices.

Subject to decision, further work will be explored to ensure that the needs of people of all beliefs and faiths, are considered, for them to provide meaningful contribution to the consultation.

Included in the consultation communication plan is how we intend to reach hard-to-reach (seldom heard groups). We intend to utilise community teams and existing relationships between other council services areas and these groups to support with the development of the consultation, and support with easier access of participation.



	<p><b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b></p> <p>In the 2021 Census, 9.6% of Gloucestershire answered they were not heterosexual/not disclosed.</p> <p>There has been no significant impact identified.</p> <p>The County Council have engaged with our staff network groups; however further work will be explored should The County Council go out to consult to ensure we are meeting the needs of people regardless of sexual orientation to provide meaningful contributions to the consultation.</p>	
<p>Additional Groups (including care leavers / care experienced adults)</p>	<p>There has been no significant impact identified.</p> <p>Further work will be explored should we go out to consult to ensure we are meeting the needs of people who are care leavers/care experienced adults to provide meaningful contributions to the consultation.</p>	

### 3.2 – The Proposed Change

Summarise your assessment of the likely or actual impact of the proposed change on each of the groups. If an action is required, this should be recorded in Section 4.

People supported by Adult Social Care

Protected Characteristics / Additional Groups	Positive Impact	Neutral Impact	Negative Impact	Not Sure	Summary of Impact	Action Required (Y/N)?
Age	X				<b>Disability Related Expenditure:</b>	Y

					<p>Importantly, and with the current ‘cost of living crisis’ in the United Kingdom (UK), The County Council must support the people in the county, especially with a higher proportion of pension age adults stating their cost of living has increased<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>An individual’s disability expenditure is relevant at the time of the financial assessment. The proposed options will ensure people are not charged more than reasonable for them to pay by removing the current need for evidence before the disregard is applied.</p> <p><b>Respite Assessment change</b></p> <p>Approximately 58% of individuals using Gloucestershire Adult Social Care are over 65.</p> <p>Older people are more likely to have built up a larger amount of savings than a younger person. Changes made to respite charges may allow for the individuals to retain more of their savings.</p> <p><b>Self-funding administration charge</b></p> <p>With the link to <a href="#">ONS</a> wealth by age, an assumption could be made that more older people will be impacted by an additional self-funding administration charge.</p>	
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<sup>2</sup> As reported by: *Impact of increased cost of living on adults across Great Britain.* [ONS \(2020\)](#).

				<p>This not asked during the initial engagement, therefore we aim to gather further information from the people we support, should we go out to consult.</p> <p><b>Change in MIG</b></p> <p>Considering an amendment to how much money is automatically disregarded from the financial assessment would be beneficial to people of all ages. In particular, younger people. The <a href="#">Care and Support Statutory Guidance</a> sets out the governments minimum income guarantee, which is lower for working age adults than those of pensionable age. The County Council are mindful of the on-going socioeconomic climate, inclusive of people still feeling the effect of financial pressures as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the recent hike in utility bills, while also ensuring our frontline services remain sustainable.</p> <p><b>Improving the accessibility of our documents</b></p> <p>Looking at how we provide information to the public will have a positive impact on all. As our Adult Social Care services provided more services for older people.</p> <p><b>The consultation processes</b></p> <p>We took lessons learnt from our initial engagement to ensure we are gathering as</p>	
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					<p>many views as possible of the people across Gloucestershire. We acknowledge that our communication strategy may not have reached the older community, and those currently drawing on our support.</p> <p>This area will be reviewed following our engagement methodological research evaluation from our stakeholders in January 2024, but so far if consultation is agreed, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approach people using our services directly through the invoice run</li> <li>- Advertise through printed newspapers to reach areas and people who may not have as much access to digital devices.</li> <li>- And in addition, use social media and digital advertisements to reach younger people, less likely to buy newspapers</li> <li>- Provide accessible venues for face-to-face groups</li> <li>- Where people need to support, they can access our “drop in” sessions with enablement colleagues.</li> <li>- Continue to target those in our “transitions” period (moving from children’s to Adult Social Care)</li> <li>- Create a partnership with community organisations and established events which we can address reach this cohort of people.</li> </ul>	
Disability	X				<b>Disability Related Expenditure:</b>	Y

					<p>ONS statistics show that disabled people have been impacted more than non-disabled households during the 'cost of living crises'.<sup>3</sup> An individual's additional disability expenditure is relevant at the time of the financial assessment. We currently ask for evidence of receipts prior to accepting DREs which can delay the financial assessment process.</p> <p>Individuals will also be made aware of their client contribution sooner as a change in process will reduce the administration time of the financial assessment, allowing the individual to make informed decisions regarding their care without delay.</p> <p>In simplifying the approach to DREs, it encourages independence and involvement in the charging process for people with learning disabilities, potentially leading them to feel more involved in their care and support plan.</p> <p>Any option to be considered will remain person-focused by ensuring adults have the opportunity to request an individual assessment personalised to their needs. The financial assessment will continue to be monitored to ensure the individual's circumstances are always taken into account.</p> <p><b>Respite Assessment change</b></p>	
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<sup>3</sup> <https://disabilityhorizons.com/2022/08/the-cost-of-living-crisis-disabled-peoples-stories/>

					<p>A disabled adult enters a respite service with a view to continue their care journey at home after a short stay. By maintaining the same charging model throughout, an individual and their family can budget &amp; forward plan their care choices.</p> <p><b>Self-funding administration charge</b></p> <p>We do not know how many disabled people in Gloucestershire self-fund their care. Nationally, ONS<sup>4</sup> have shared statistics which indicate less than 20% of people with a disability have over the current capital threshold in savings.</p> <p>This not asked during the initial engagement, therefore we aim to gather further information from the people we support, should we go out to consult.</p> <p><b>Change in MIG</b></p> <p>Those who are working age and unable to work due to severe disability are not disadvantaged by being unable to increase their protected income by earnings. The financial assessment takes into account an individual's income from benefits; any money earned through employment is disregarded. Those who are able to work have the opportunity to have more disposable income.</p>	
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However, the increase in protected income limits how much The County Council can charge an individual and this must be balanced against the impact to The County Council's sustainability to provide services.

**Improving the accessibility of our documents**

Looking at how we provide information to the public will have a positive impact on all. As our Adult Social Care services provided more services for disabled people.

**The consultation processes**

This area will be reviewed following our engagement methodological research evaluation from our stakeholders in January 2024, but so far if consultation is agreed, we will:

If consultation is agreed, we will:

- Approach people using our services directly
- Provide information in an accessible format (such as easy read, large print or audio)
- Have an accessible online survey
- Encourage those who may need support to participate to use our [enablement drop in sessions](#)
- Hold face to face meetings in accessible buildings

Sex	X				<p>It's not anticipated that any of the proposed changes will have a negative impact on people due to their sex, but amending the Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy may disproportionately impact more females than males. This is because there are more females accessing our services, more female residents of Gloucestershire and females are evidenced to live longer than men.</p> <p>For the first time in 2023, people are reaching pension age at the same time regardless of sex.</p>	
Race		X			<p><b>Policy illustrations</b></p> <p>It's not anticipated that any of the proposed changes will have a positive or negative impact on people due to their race.</p> <p><b>The consultation processes</b></p> <p>This area will be reviewed following our engagement methodological research evaluation from our stakeholders in January 2024, but so far if consultation is agreed, we will:</p> <p>To support with increasing the number of respondents in this group during our consultation we have held meeting with community engagement officers within The County Council and the ICB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We are using existing council relationships with our community development team and other community</li> </ul>	Y



					<p>groups to help support and engage with seldom heard groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our online survey is fully translatable.</li> <li>- Any PDF information on the website will be translated into the top 5 spoken languages in Gloucestershire, with a contact to request another translation if required.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improving the accessibility of our documents</b></p> <p>We do acknowledge the concern around the accessibility of documents and will create an action plan to making accessible information on our services available to wider communities.</p>	
Gender reassignment		X			<p>It's not anticipated that any of the proposed changes will have a positive or negative impact on people due their gender identity.</p>	N
Pregnancy & maternity		X			<p>It's not anticipated that any of the proposed changes will have a positive or negative impact on people due pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>We do acknowledge how the government considers statutory maternity pay and maternity allowance as different forms of income and benefits and therefore treated differently in the financial assessment. We do not currently have any evidence to consider how this could disadvantage people drawing on the support of our services.</p> <p><b>The consultation processes</b></p>	

					We do not anticipate any disadvantages to people who wish to share their views if they are pregnant or a new parent. Our survey is online 24 hours a day, and our face-to-face groups will be varied in times to support participation. Best days and times are included in the engagement methodologies stakeholder research happening in January 2024.	
Religion and/or belief		X			<p>It's not anticipated that any of the proposed changes will have a positive or negative impact on people due to their religion or beliefs.</p> <p><b>The consultation processes</b></p> <p>Any face-to-face meetings will be held in community assets, not secular buildings. Where possible, we will avoid physical meetings on days with special importance to all religions and beliefs. We will include inclusive imagery in our advertisement of the consultation.</p>	N
Sexual orientation		x			<p>It's not anticipated that any of the proposed changes will have a positive or negative impact on people due to their sexual orientation.</p> <p><b>The consultation processes</b></p> <p>We do not anticipate there will be any disadvantage to those in attending our physical venues or accessing our online surveys. As part of the consultation plan, we will include inclusive imagery and engage with equality, diversity and inclusion groups to consider any</p>	N

					gaps in our consultation communication plan. We will engage with our PRISM staff network during our communication document development.	
Marriage & civil partnership		x			<p>It's not anticipated that any of the proposed changes will have a positive or negative impact on people due to being married or in a civil partnership.</p> <p>A person's contribution to care is decided from their own income, without taking their partners income into account. Where affordability is considered, the household will be reviewed, regardless of any legally recognised partnership or marriage.</p>	N
Armed Forces community		X			<p>The care and support statutory guidance states:</p> <p>As part of the Armed Forces Covenant, the government has committed to making sure veterans are not disadvantaged by their service and when appropriate receive special consideration. To support veterans injured on active service, payments to veterans under the War Pension Scheme, with the exception of Constant Attendance Allowance, which is specifically intended to pay for care, must be disregarded in the assessment of what a veteran can pay for care from 10 April 2017. This brings payments to veterans under the War Pension Scheme into line with</p>	N

					Guaranteed Income Payments under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme which have been disregarded since October 2012.	
Carers	X				<p><b>Disability Related Expenditure:</b></p> <p>The proposals to amend the current way that disability related expenditure is assessed should ensure that we are placing less onus on the people who support an adult with care needs in their financial assessment to get all the disregards they may be entitled to.</p> <p>Part of our aim of the proposal is to support all Gloucestershire’s residents in the best way possible. This includes making access to our services easier to understand and make the assessment process less complex for carers. Carers will be asked their views on this, should we go out to consult.</p> <p><b>The Consultation Process</b></p> <p>This area will be reviewed following our engagement methodological research evaluation from our stakeholders in January 2024, but so far if consultation is agreed, we will:</p> <p>Healthwatch<sup>5</sup> indicate that carers are a seldom heard groups who have particular needs when it comes to participating.</p>	

<sup>5</sup> Healthwatch(N.D) “A guide on how to work with seldom heard groups” [online] available at <https://network.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/network.healthwatch.co.uk/files/20200727%20How%20to%20coproduce%20with%20seldom%20heard%20groups.pdf>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our survey is available 24 hours a day</li> <li>- Our face-to-face venues will be varied to ensure a time suitable for everyone who wants to attend</li> <li>- We will engage with our carer's hub for targeted advertisements and to identify any gaps in our consultation plan</li> </ul>	
Care leavers / care experienced adults				X	<p>We currently do not have any information to how our policy and the proposed changes may impact care leavers/care experienced adults. This is a recent Council Motion (917) made to include in our equality impact assessments.</p> <p>Should we consult, this will be included to ensure we are considering their views, should they wish to share.</p>	Y
Digital exclusion	X				<p>Our proposal and action plan includes creating more accessible documents, and relay on easy to print information.</p> <p><b>The Consultation Process:</b> This area will be reviewed following our engagement methodological research evaluation from our stakeholders in January 2024, but so far if consultation is agreed, we will:</p> <p>We have collected demographic data regarding internet use across the County. This will be used to inform our consultation plan, to ensure our physical advertising and physical presence can be felt where most needed across the county.</p>	Y

					We will reach out to local newspapers and communities to ask for support in reaching this cohort of people.	
Geography, for example, urban and rural areas	X				<p><b>Disability Related Expenditure:</b></p> <p>We acknowledge that Gloucestershire geographical locations vary greatly and as such, this can impact the provisions of care available and costs.</p> <p>By amending the way, we consider DREs, we should consider the differences in cost of provisions county-wide and create equitable process for all.</p> <p><b>The Consultation Process:</b></p> <p>This area will be reviewed following our engagement methodological research evaluation from our stakeholders in January 2024, but so far if consultation is agreed, we will:</p> <p>Our face-to-face groups will be held within areas with good transport links to provide accessibility across the county.</p>	Y
Socio-economic disadvantage	X				The feedback from the engagement states that some people are finding it hard to meet their daily living costs, with some people feeling they have to choose between essential items. We acknowledge that paying for care pay can attribute to financial worries alongside rising living costs to some people either permanently or temporarily.	Y

					<p>The feedback also supports that people are unaware of the waiver process which can temporarily support people in a difficult financial time by requesting a reduction of care charges.</p> <p><b>The consultation processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We will try and accommodate our face-to-face venues across the country, so financial situations should not be a barrier to participation.</li> <li>- We will engage with community hubs</li> </ul>	
Vulnerable groups of society				X	<p>Adult social care supports vulnerable groups of society. Any changes made to the current Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy will impact some of our most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>We hope to gain further information to allow for a true analysis of how we may impact vulnerable groups through consultation.</p> <p>One immediate change we can make to support vulnerable groups of society is to begin creating our project plan to make Adult Social Care easier to understand and access.</p>	Y
Interconnected Characteristics / Groups	Positive Impact	Neutral Impact	Negative Impact	Not Sure	Summary of Impact	Action Required (Y/N)?

Age and Disability	X				<p>The review of the MIG and the consideration of using all of PIP as income during the assessment will support younger people with a disability.</p> <p>Feedback from the engagement and desked based research all indicates that our current policy and how it impacts working age people who are unable to work may be disadvantaged by having a higher contribution towards care.</p>	

**Gloucestershire County Council Staff**

We do not currently anticipate any disadvantage to staff at this consultation period. A separate EQIA will be completed at the times of change implementation to understand the impact of change.



#### 4. Action Plan

Set out the key actions that will be undertaken, following the equality assessment in section 3, to further maximise the positive impact or mitigate the negative impact of the proposal on the protected characteristics and additional groups prior to implementation (any negative consequences should be eliminated, minimised or counter-balanced by other measures):

Identified Potential or Actual Impact	Recommended Action(s)	Owner	Target Completion Date
<b>Positive</b> – to foster good relationships and continue to work with the people who draw on the support of our services, the people important to them and partners.	Establish and maintain a stakeholder reference group	Charging Policy Task Group	April 2024
<b>Positive</b> – Consider the effect of our policy decisions at the time it is made with support from people with protected characteristics	Engagement activities to support identifying possible solutions & options development to the areas highlighted in the pre-engagement has shown may need to be refreshed.	Charging Policy Task Group	April 2024
<b>Positive</b> – Improve accessing and understanding of services	Create a comprehensive project plan to increase the accessibility of our public Adult Social Care policies and in particular the ‘paying for care’ document and others highlighted in the report.	Policy Review Officer	Nov 2024

<b>Positive</b> – Engage with our partners and community teams to continue to develop a consultation plan which reach seldom heard groups	Speak with our stakeholders, equality, diversity and inclusion groups, senior teams, carers hubs and more to ensure there are no gaps in our communication plan – this is iterative, and we will continue to monitor through the consultation, with targeted engagement as required	Charging Policy Team Lead	April 2024
<b>Positive</b> – understanding how our proposals affect care leavers/ care experienced adults	Amend our current equalities monitoring form to include care leavers/care experienced adults to ensure we are reaching this seldom heard group	Communication Officer	January 2024

## 5. Monitoring and Review

Public bodies must have regard to the aims of the duty not only when a policy, service or development is being created and decided upon, but also when it is implemented and at regular intervals thereafter. The Equality Duty is a continuing duty.

Lead officer(s):	Tricia Gallagher – Head of Adult Services and Business Development
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Part 1 – Initial arrangements (up to around six months following implementation)


Date of the post implementation review:	May 2024
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<p>Approach to <u>measuring the impact</u> of the change to enable a <u>comparison</u> between the <u>anticipated impact</u> (as set out in section 3) with the <u>actual impact</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What mechanisms will be used?</li> <li>▪ How will the people supported by Adult Social Care / the wider community / The County Council staff and other stakeholders be involved?</li> </ul>	<p>The consultation will provide valuable feedback into our options and how this will impact people with protected characteristics. We will proactively be requesting equalities monitoring data during the consultation to ensure our plan reached seldom heard and targeting groups.</p> <p>The consultation plan will be evaluated every 2-3 weeks during the consultation period through response rates and event evaluation forms and strategies will be amended where required.</p> <p>A full review and update of the EQIA will be completed and shared with our stakeholders as part of the consultation outcome.</p>
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Part 2 – Ongoing arrangements (from around six months onwards)

<p>Frequency of monitoring and review:</p>	<p>To be determined following consultation</p>
<p>What mechanisms will be used?</p> <p>How will the people supported by Adult Social Care / the wider community / The County Council staff and other stakeholders be involved?</p>	<p>The EQIA is reviewed at each policy review, so will be constantly monitored.</p>

**6. Approval**

Signature of Senior Officer	
Name of Senior Officer	Amanda Jones
Date	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024

Signature of Decision Maker	
Name of Decision Maker	Clr Stephan Fifield
Date	17 January 2024

### Appendix 1 – People currently supported by Adult Social Care and Information

Details of people supported by Adult Social Care affected by the proposed activity: Data suppression has been completed to reduce the risk of inadvertently disclosing personal data

Groups	People currently supported by Adult Social Care Data and Information
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Age	<b>From our social care case recording system September 2022:</b>	
	Age (years)	Percentage
	10-19	0.9%
	20-29	6.9%
	30-39	7.3%

40-49	7.1%
50-59	10.0%
60-69	11.8%
70-79	16.6%
80-89	24.3%
90-99	14.4%
Over 100 years	0.7%

**Data collected from our engagement exercise.**

Age (years)	Percentage
16-17	0.0%
18-24	2.7%
25-34	2.7%
35-44	4.1%
45-54	13.5%
55-64	28.4%
65-74	18.9%
75 or older	21.6%
Prefer not to say	8.1%

Disability

**From our social care case recording system September 2022:**

Disability	Percentage
Learning Disability Support	23.3%
Mental Health Support	7.8%
Physical Support	57.5%
Sensory Support	0.9%
Social support	2.3%
Support with memory and cognition	7.2%
Not obtained	1.1%

**47.3% of engagement responses share they consider themselves to have a disability**

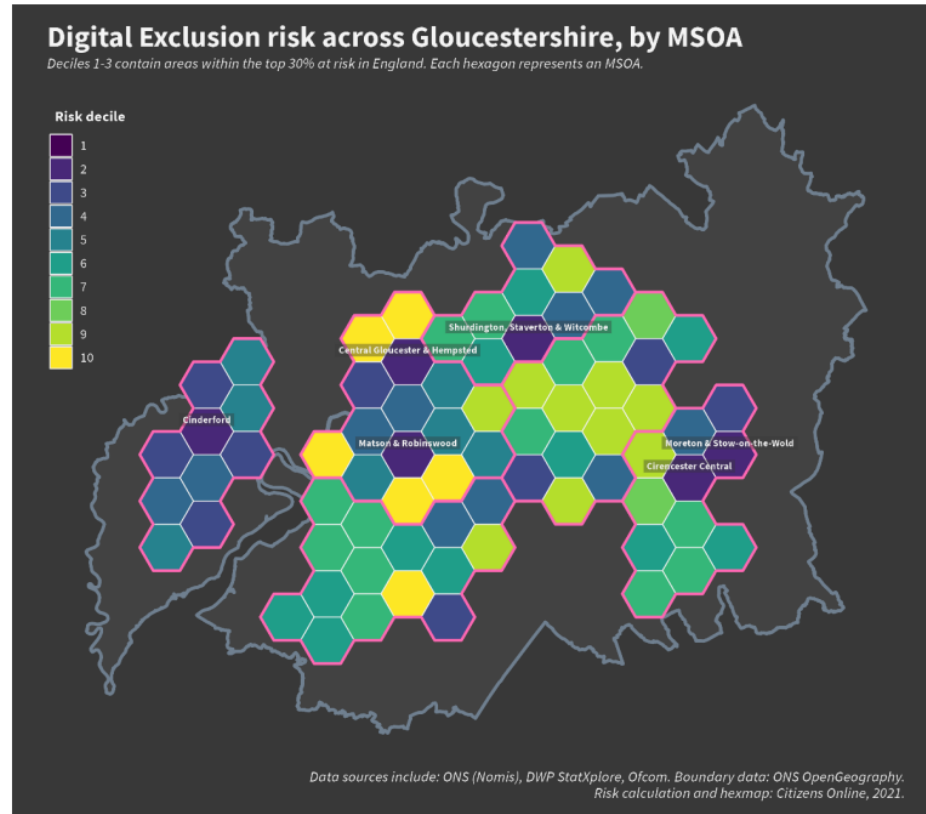
Sex	<b>From our social care case recording system September 2022:</b>	
	Sex	Percentage
	Female	55.6%
	Male	43.9%
	<b>Data collected from our engagement exercise.</b>	
Female	68.9%	
Male	23.0%	
Race	<b>From our social care case recording system September 2022:</b>	
	Race	Percentage
	White British	84.8%
	White Irish	0.2%
	Another other white background	0.2%
	White European	0.6%
	Traveller of Irish Heritage	0.0%
	Gypsy/ Roma	0.0%
	White and Black African/White and Black Caribbean/Black British	0.3%
	White and Asian/Asian British	0.2%
	Any other mixed background	0.1%
	Indian	0.2%
	Pakistani	0.0%
	Bangladeshi	0.0%
	Any other Asian background	0.2%
	Caribbean	0.8%
	African	0.3%
	Any other black background	0.1%
	Chinese	0.1%
	Prefer Not to Say/Not divulged/Not stated	0.9%
Not Obtained	10.8%	
Gender reassignment	<b>From our social care case recording system September 2022:</b>	
	Gender reassignment	Percentage

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Transgender</td> <td>0.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Same gender as birth</td> <td>99.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nonbinary</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not obtained</td> <td>0.3%</td> </tr> </table>	Transgender	0.1%	Same gender as birth	99.5%	Nonbinary	0.0%	Other	0.0%	Prefer not to say	0.0%	Not obtained	0.3%																								
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Pregnancy & maternity	<p><b>Countywide:</b> there are approximately 6,450 births per year in Gloucestershire (<a href="https://www.glosmaternityvoices.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Better-Births-Summary-Document-FINAL.pdf">https://www.glosmaternityvoices.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Better-Births-Summary-Document-FINAL.pdf</a>)</p>																																				
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Armed Forces community	<p data-bbox="600 882 1924 1034">This data is not collected and/or stored in a reportable format. This is recorded on a person's care act record when it has been disclosed, but we have no function at present to report on this. This is being reviewed through the upcoming adult social care data and intelligence strategy.</p> <p data-bbox="600 1074 1924 1185"><b>Countywide</b> In total, 25,598 households in Gloucestershire had at least one person who had previously served in the UK armed forces (9.2% of all households in Gloucestershire)</p>																		
Carers	<p data-bbox="600 1209 1924 1353"><b>Countywide</b> According to the 2021 Census, there are an estimated total of 5.7 million unpaid carers in the UK equating to 9% of the population. In Gloucestershire, we have approximately 52,000 carers with 7,000 young carers.</p>																		



Care leavers / care experienced adults	In December 2023, there were 866 children in care.
Digital exclusion	<p><b>Countywide</b> Across Gloucestershire, there is an estimate that between 30,000 and 40,000 (6-8%) adults in the county are effectively offline and a further 80,000 - 100,000 adults are online but are likely to be missing out on the full benefits of the internet.</p> <p>The six at highest risk – Shurdington, Staverton &amp; Witcombe, Cirencester Central, Central Gloucester &amp; Hempsted, Moreton &amp; Stow-on-the-Wold, Matson &amp; Robinswood, and Cinderford</p>



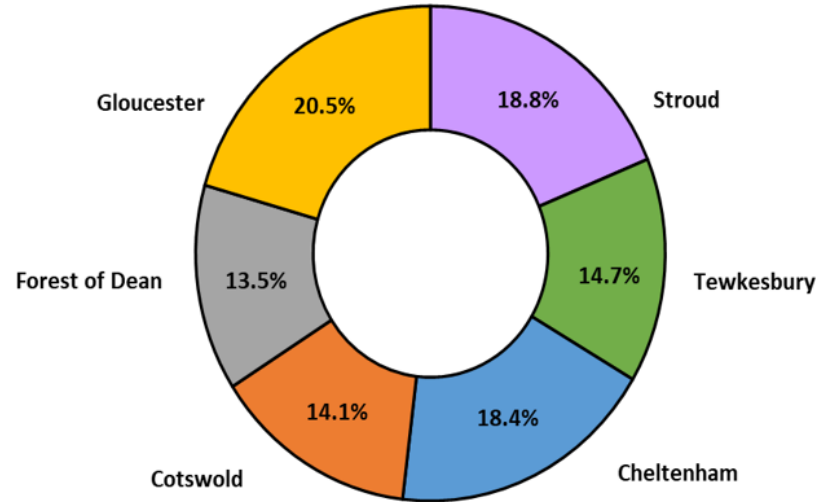
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<sup>6</sup> Citizens Online (2022) Digital Exclusion Risk Mapping Report [online] available at

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/617abf9b742ed51f29193232/t/62443b42ccb53108a1cc2792/1648638801092/Data+Mapping+Gloucestershire+Digital+Divides.pdf>

Geography, for example, urban and rural areas

**Population Distribution of Gloucestershire, 2021**

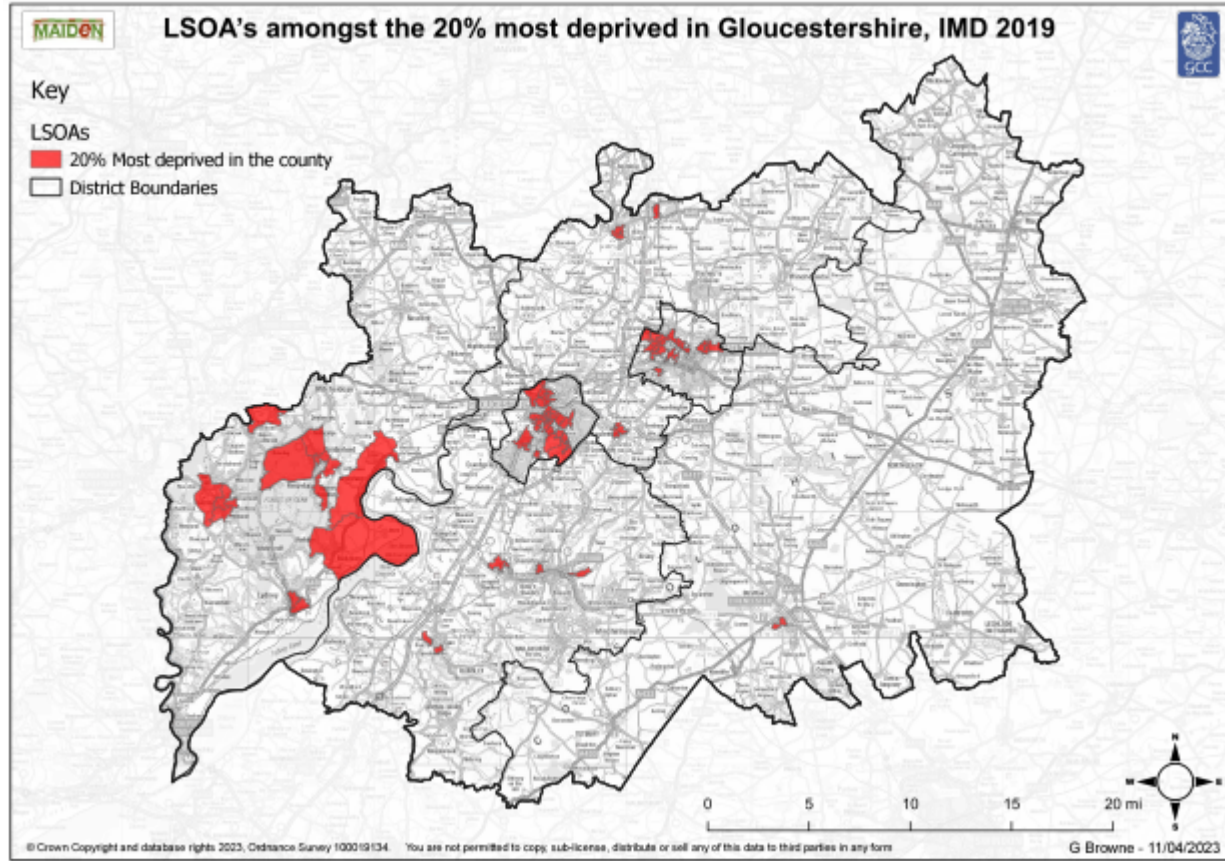


Gloucestershire is a predominately rural county, with Gloucester and Cheltenham being the biggest urban areas in the County.

Socio-economic disadvantage

**Information of people using our services (September 2022):  
Multiple Indices of Deprivation (1 most deprived)**

1	4.6%
2	6.4%
3	5.8%
4	11.2%
5	10.1%
6	12.5%
7	12.5%
8	11.2%
9	14.4%
10	11.0%
Not Obtained	0.4%



Vulnerable groups of society

**Countywide:**

**Unemployment:**

Gloucestershire's rate was 0.3% lower than the Southwest average of 2.5%, and 1.4% lower than the UK average of 3.6%. The claimant count in Gloucestershire in January 2023 increased by 70 people. The amount of people claiming in January 2023 was 0.8% higher than the number in December 2022

**Homelessness:**

Gloucester had the highest rate of homelessness in our area, with around one in 433 people living in a hostel, temporary accommodation, or on the streets. People were least likely to be homeless in Cotswold, where one in 2,929 people did not have a home.

**Asylum seekers:**

There are approximately 1,000 asylum seekers in the county of whom half have been placed in hotels by the Home Office, and that there are also over 100 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the county (Report presented to The County Council in September 2023)

**Drug and alcohol:**

In 2021, 93 people died from alcoholic liver disease, while 276 people died from alcohol-related incidents. 3560 people were admitted to hospital in Gloucestershire for alcohol specific conditions, and 143 people were admitted for alcohol poisoning alone

Of these 21 per cent reported the use of an illegal drug within the last year which equates to around 12,780 young people. There are estimated to be 2,849 heroin and crack users in the county, including 2,414 heroin users. This equates to 0.7 per cent of the adult population of the county, or 7.33 heroin and crack users per thousand population. This is lower than both the England (8.85 per thousand population) and the Southwest (8.32 per thousand population) prevalence rates. (Report presented to The County Council in June 2023)

**Modern Slavery:**

In 2021, the police force investigated 54 potential cases of modern slavery

**Crime:**

The overall crime rate in Gloucestershire in 2022 was 68 crimes per 1,000 people, and the most common crimes were violence and sexual offences, which happened to roughly every 32 out of 1,000 residents.

Out of all of Gloucestershire's larger towns and cities, Stroud experienced the most crime. Then Gloucester, and Cinderford comes in as third. (Crimerate.co.uk)