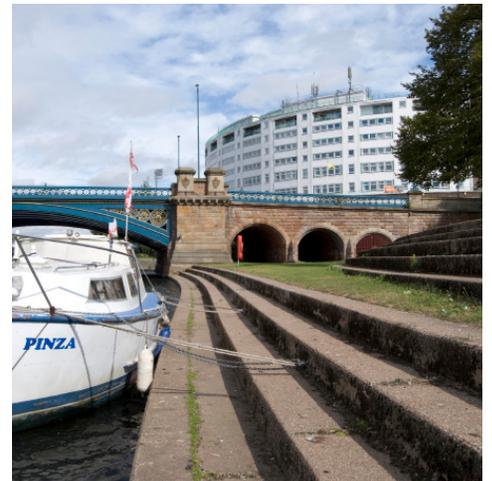


Rushcliffe Respectful Relationships





Joint Statement

By Rushcliffe Borough Council's Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council

As Chief Executive and Leader of the Council we are committed to supporting the Equality Act 2010 and aim to create an environment where we can all live in harmony and have access to what they need in order to play a full and active part in society, free from fear or discrimination.

We will continue to work to achieve a consistent approach to equality and diversity when delivering all services and as an employer. This underpins everything we do. We will strive to ensure our staff and our residents receive a fair and equitable treatment and we will work to build strong communities.

Our scheme will embed equality into our Council's policies, services and spending plans and help us to be an even better employer. The scheme is a living document which will be constantly under review and will be monitored by the Executive Management Team and Performance Management Board to ensure we meet the evolving needs of the community.

We look forward to seeing positive outcomes and benefits from implementing this scheme. We welcome and value continued comment from all groups and individuals within the local community.



Allen Graham
Allen Graham
 Chief Executive
 Rushcliffe Borough Council

Neil Clarke
Cllr Neil Clarke MBE
 Leader of the Council
 Rushcliffe Borough Council

Introduction

We want Rushcliffe to be a great place for everybody to work, live and visit.

To do this, we will ensure that everyone is treated with courtesy and respect, acknowledging that each individual has unique needs and abilities.

We will ensure that there is no discrimination in the delivery of services or in the Council's role as an employer.

This scheme sets out what the Council will do to make a difference.

This document is for Rushcliffe residents and staff – to show what we will do over the next three years to make Rushcliffe an even fairer place for everyone.

Our borough

Rushcliffe is south of the City of Nottingham. The River Trent extends across towards Newark on Trent in the north east and Loughborough in the South West.

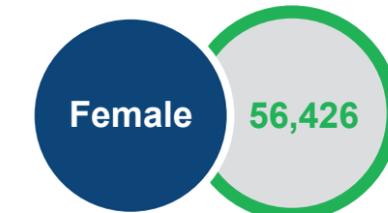
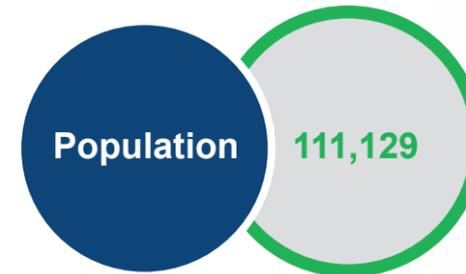
The main centre of population is West Bridgford, a large suburb of Greater Nottingham, where around 41,500 of the Borough's 111,600 population live.

There are six other large settlements – Bingham (population: 9131), Radcliffe-on-Trent (8205), Cotgrave (7203), Keyworth (6733), Ruddington (7216) and East Leake (6337) – and a large number of smaller villages dispersed throughout the remainder of the Borough, which is largely rural in character.

The covers 407 square kilometres.



Rushcliffe's profile



7,625 are non-white

7,540 have a long term health problem or disability which severely limits their day to day activities

Age Profile

Age Range	14 and under	15-19	20-64	65+
Population	19,246	6,610	64,850	20,423

Source: Office of National Statistics 2011 census data

Population

Rushcliffe has proved a popular place to live with the population growing by 14% since the early 1990s.

Much of this is due to in-migration. The Government anticipates that the borough's population will continue to increase in the future. The most recent projections indicate growth to 130,000 people by 2037 (up 23% from 2001), although this calculation is based on past growth rates and does not take into account future house building levels.

Rushcliffe's population is also notable for its more elderly profile. There is a lower percentage of 25-29 year olds in Rushcliffe than is generally the case in the rest of the country and an above average proportion of adults aged over 45 years.

*Source: Office of National Statistics



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Socio-economic factors

Rushcliffe is the most affluent local authority area in the county, with full time workers earning on average around £32,498 (in 2014), which is more than 34% higher than the regional level. It ranks only 315th of 326 local authorities on a national deprivation scale: with first being most deprived.

However there are some pockets of relative deprivation, for example, in the Trent Bridge and Cotgrave wards. Historically, unemployment levels in Rushcliffe have been low at around 2.7% in 2011* and this rate is currently one of the lowest in Nottinghamshire

The employment profile of Rushcliffe's resident's shows that the proportion employed in managerial and professional occupations is significantly higher than both regionally and nationally, with a much lower proportion in less skilled occupations.

Workforce profile

Correspondingly, educationally, Rushcliffe's residents are relatively well qualified, performing better than other council areas in Nottinghamshire.

The profile of jobs within the Borough shows there is a strong service sector base, with jobs in retail, public administration, education and the health sector in particular accounting for 48% of all jobs in Rushcliffe in 2011. The rest of jobs are made up of a variety of other employment types. Established industries include the British Geological Survey at Keyworth and British Gypsum at East Leake.

Due to the attractiveness of the area, property prices are relatively high, with an average house (mid 2013) costing around £200,000 compared with the Nottinghamshire average of £102,467*. Housing affordability is a significant issue within the Borough, with average house prices around eight times average incomes, despite wages being relatively healthy.

Rushcliffe is one of the safest places in Nottinghamshire with a moderate to low crime rate.

Rural areas can suffer significant deprivation in terms of access to essential services (shops, doctors, hospitals, school and broadband etc.) Rushcliffe is a largely rural borough and it is identified as suffering from this type of deprivation in the Greater Nottingham Accessibility Strategy. People without access to a private car are especially vulnerable to this type of deprivation.



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The Council employs 286 staff within 4 service areas. The majority of these employees work at three sites – the Civic Centre, the Council's works depot and the Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre. All three sites are based in West Bridgford. The Council also has other smaller sites such as Rushcliffe Country Park in Ruddington and community halls.

The Council's current workforce consists of 57% male and 43% female employees at the above sites, 4% of whom declare that they have a disability.

The Council's workforce age profile shows 4% of 18-24 year olds, just over 2% are over the age of 64 and the greatest age range employed is that between the ages of 45-54.

Our ethnic makeup shows that 3% of the workforce declared that they were from a background other than white British.

As a Council we strive to encourage a wide range of diversity to be employed within the organisation in order to reflect the people we serve in the Borough.

*Source: Office of National Statistics



Our aims

- We want Rushcliffe to be a welcoming place
- We will treat people fairly and aim to meet individual needs
- We want our services to be easy to access for all
- We aim to make Rushcliffe a place where everyone can achieve their potential

We want Rushcliffe to be a welcoming place for everyone

What we have done so far:

1. We aim to remove all hate motivated or offensive graffiti within 24 hours and we investigate all hate motivated complaints of anti-social behaviour working closely with our partners in the South Nottinghamshire Community Safety Partnership.
2. We have reduced council tax bills by a total of £4.8 million, and paid in excess of £17.7 million in housing benefit payments to residents who are out of work or on a low income. We also paid a total of £86,000 to vulnerable tenants by providing discretionary housing payments to those in the greatest need. We have protected working age families with children from changes to council tax benefit regulations with the intention of reducing child poverty.
3. We organise events for different age groups within the community such as Armed Forces Day, Chinese New Year, Proms in the Park and Lark in the Park(a children's play day).
4. It is mandatory for employees to complete the equality and diversity e-learning module, so they know what Rushcliffe expects of the people it employs to make sure there are respectful relationships in Rushcliffe.
5. We ensure that employees are made aware of the standards the Council expects with regards to customer service.
6. Our community facilities are used by a range of groups of varying ages and diversity for events such as civil partnership receptions, weddings for a variety of faiths, play groups and tea dances. In addition, we support the provision of sport and physical activity opportunities with our partners to meet the needs of people with a range of disabilities.
7. We have moved to a new super-centre leisure facility at Rushcliffe Arena in West Bridgford. The new centre has been designed in consultation with various stakeholder groups and will provide access to a wide range of leisure facilities and activities, helping residents to maintain healthy and active lifestyles.



We want our services to be easy to access for all

What we have done so far:

1. We opened the Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre in April 2011. It is located in West Bridgford Police Station in the heart of our main town. The Centre has hearing loops, staff communicate in sign language, leaflets can be made available in large print and type-talk facilities are available. We also have contact points in main villages which makes customer services more accessible.
2. We have a housing advice duty officer and a back-up duty officer for emergency housing issues, at the Community Contact Centre and provide home visits for people who are not able to leave their homes. We also offer translation services for housing advice and homelessness interviews.
3. We have introduced Choice Based Lettings to promote greater housing choice, including prioritising people with physical disabilities to available adapted properties. There is an auto-bid function for vulnerable residents to place bids on vacant properties.
4. We ensure easy access to planning services via our website and the ability to submit applications online and have developed a programme of affordable housing in some of our villages to meet local housing needs.
5. We have undertaken an inclusivity audit at Rushcliffe Country Park and provide a range of targeted facilities including disabled parking and toilets, 8km of wheelchair suitable paths, picnic tables with wheelchair seating and a sensory garden. We also provide a range of 'inclusive' play equipment in our children's play areas.
6. We offer assisted refuse collections – available to people who are unable to move a wheeled bin if there are no able-bodied people living at the address.
7. Our website (www.rushcliffe.gov.uk) meets the 'AA standard' of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 -for example, it works well for people using different technology to view it and pages can be translated into 57 different languages. Our website has also recently been made compatible for users accessing our services via mobile devices.
8. Access to housing and council tax benefit is now easier. Customers can claim benefits online and report changes in circumstances over the phone. Staff carry out home visits to help customers make a benefit claim. We guarantee to process claims in 24 hours if all supporting information is provided.
9. Rushcliffe Reports, our residents magazine, is available in an audio version for blind and partially-sighted residents.



We will treat people fairly and aim to meet individual needs

What we have done so far:

1. We ask for individual requirements prior to Council events and interviews. E.g. access or dietary requirements.
2. We negotiate where possible that all new affordable housing designated for older people is built to Lifetime Homes standards. We consider cultural and/or religious needs of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation where there are shared kitchen/bathroom facilities and work to prevent homelessness.
3. An updated gypsy and traveller accommodation needs assessments is currently being undertaken.
4. We provide work experience for schoolchildren and others who we feel benefit from spending time with us, for example, volunteers. We know that this unpaid work experience gives people a real idea of future career choices.
5. We respect the faith of any deceased individual for whom we have a duty to arrange a burial or cremation.
6. We work with individual employees and relevant organisations to ensure that disabled employees can remain at work.
7. We provide flexible and remote working for staff to enable them to balance work and home life.
8. In partnership with all other Nottinghamshire Councils and a range of voluntary agencies, Rushcliffe BC have signed a 'No to Hate Pledge' which demonstrates our commitment to tackling discrimination, prevent hate and promote diversity.



We aim to make Rushcliffe a place where everyone can achieve their potential

What we have done so far:

1. We ensure affordable housing is located in areas which provide access to opportunities such as employment, education and participation in the social and economic life of the community.
2. We employ young students attending local schools to promote the Council and the Borough particularly to other young people via social media.
3. We are promoting work experience and innovation through the YouNG brand and the YouNG Market.
4. We are supporting the Positive Futures scheme, helping other young people to meet their potential through sport and social enterprise.
5. We support apprenticeship schemes to give young people work experience and future employment opportunities.
6. We work with our partners to host an annual jobs fair to provide all residents with the opportunity to find out about jobs and training opportunities available in the area, as well as support in accessing these opportunities where required.
7. We support our partners with the ready for work clubs that operate within Rushcliffe, providing information, advice and guidance for job seekers, particularly those who may struggle to access the provision that is based in the neighbouring city centre.



What we want to continue to improve on by 2020:

The Equality Act 2010 sets out some duties which the Council has to follow by law.

We have to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Make sure people are treated with equality in mind.
- Create and develop good relations in our communities and in our workforce.
- As part of the law we have to set specific objectives which show how we are going to achieve the duties above.

To find out who our customers are, what they want and how they are treated we will:

We have to:

- Monitor the demographic make-up of our residents and our workforce
- Consult customers and staff, where appropriate
- Carry out equality impact assessments as part of our 4 year plan

What to do if something goes wrong

Members of the public

If you think your being treated unfairly, contact us on 0115 981 9911 – 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Or visit Rushcliffe Customer Contact Centre, Rectory Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham. NG2 6BN.

Email us at: customerservices@rushcliffe.gov.uk

If you wish to contact a specific member of staff, Council email addresses have the format initialsurname@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Rushcliffe Borough Council employees

If you are concerned about any equality issues, talk to your line manager or to Human Resources. You can also refer to Rushcliffe Borough Council's Confidential Reporting Code see Appendix J page 45 of the Code of Conduct which you will find on the intranet under HR.

Let us know what you think

If you wish to discuss this policy or make any comments or suggestions on the work we are aiming to do to carry out in accordance with this policy, please contact the Performance and Reputation team on:

Tel: 0115 9819911

Email: media@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Appendix One

Rushcliffe Borough Council's equality and diversity policy.

We want Rushcliffe to be a great place for everybody to work, live and visit.



Rushcliffe Borough Council

Rushcliffe Borough Council recognises that diversity in our communities is a huge asset as everyone has something unique to contribute to the Borough.

As a local employer and public service provider, we tackle discrimination, harassment, intimidation and disadvantage. We set ourselves high standards as an excellent organisation.

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

1. Set and monitor equality objectives.
2. Make equality an everyday matter.
3. Have a diverse workforce where staff are treated fairly.
4. Take action to eradicate discrimination and inequality.
5. Adopt best practice.
6. Evaluate our equality impact.
7. Change what we do if we find it creates inequality.
8. Work with others to get rid of harassment and intimidation.
9. Influence others we work with to adopt similar high standards.
10. Consult on our policies and procedures where necessary.
11. Use the best communications methods, plain English, translate material where necessary and use suitable communications formats as necessary



Where are we now?

Currently Rushcliffe has reached 'achieving' under the local government equality framework and we want to embed the requirements of Equality Act 2010 in all that we do. Equality impact assessments will continue to be a theme in our four-year-plan to ensure all actions and decisions will be made mindful of our diverse community and our impact on them and our staff. We are aware of our demographics. Rushcliffe is a largely affluent area, with educated, high-earning people living here. People are long-lived and generally prosperous and lead a relatively healthy lifestyle. Rushcliffe is also a safe place to live and on most indices we rate as not deprived in most areas.

We want to remove discrimination on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriages and civil partnerships (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

Putting the policy into action

Responsibility

Elected Members are responsible for determining and scrutinising policies. All reports consider whether the matter being discussed has any diversity implication or otherwise. The equality objective will be monitored on an annual basis by the Performance Management Board.

The Chief Executive and senior management team are responsible for developing and reviewing strategic measures and policies to ensure equality across all employment and service delivery issues within the Council.

All Executive Managers are responsible for making sure policies are implemented, investigating complaints and consulting communities.

All employees are responsible for following the law and Council procedures and encouraging good practice in their team.

How we do it

Rushcliffe Borough Council ensures service areas send Equality Impact Assessments for checking by Service Managers, Executive Managers and the HR team.

Making sure staff know about the policy

Rushcliffe does ensure that all staff are properly trained and understand any relevant service plans and their responsibilities for implementing equality.



Employment practices

Rushcliffe will have regard to equality and diversity in all aspects of employment, from advertising vacancies, recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, training and personal development, to reasons for ending employment. We will do this by:

- Asking only for the skills and qualities actually needed to do the job
- Advertising jobs using methods that reach all communities and in particular methods that allow all groups who are currently under-represented in the workforce to be targeted
- Providing job details and accepting job applications in alternative formats such as large print, offering a minicom service for job queries and making arrangements for the use of interpreters if required in the selection process
- Valuing skills gained through non-traditional or informal work, such as voluntary work and caring responsibilities. The competences gained through this kind of experience will be balanced against those gained through more formal methods
- Making sure that all job applicants, whether redeployment candidates, existing employees or people who do not currently work for the Council, demonstrate that they are qualified, motivated and competent to do the job.
- Redeployment candidates will be given advice and support to assist them to reach the minimum standards required for a post
- Recognising and supporting the potential of all colleagues by offering opportunities for training and personal development
- On a yearly basis reviewing our commitments and what has been achieved to plan ways to improve on them
- Keeping records of applicants' and employees' equality data to make sure this policy is working properly
- Making sure the working environment is supportive and non-threatening by not tolerating any acts of discrimination or harassment, and by

introducing standards of behaviour contained within a code of conduct for all employees and also within our bullying and harassment procedures. Monitoring all cases of disciplinary action and carrying out work to ensure that this action does not disproportionately affect any specific group of colleagues

- Monitoring all cases where colleagues bring a grievance against the Council, their manager or a work colleague and take appropriate action to ensure that grievances do not unfairly or adversely affect any specific group of colleagues
- Ensuring that all managers discuss this policy and any relevant action plans with their teams, including how they can contribute to achieving our equality and diversity aims and objectives.
- Managers will deal with any breaches of the policy and failure to carry out relevant action plans.
- Recognising that the Trade Unions and Employees' Liaison Group representing colleagues make a valuable contribution to equality. We will continue to work with these groups on equality issues

We will specifically address disability issues by:

- Interviewing all disabled applicants who, at the shortlisting stage, show that they meet the minimum requirements to do the job
- Ensuring that proper arrangements are made within the recruitment process to support disabled people to participate
- Making every effort if employees become disabled to ensure they retain their employment with the Council
- Taking action to ensure that all employees are trained to be able to implement our commitments to disabled people
- Providing and accessing funding for workplace adaptations and aids to enable disabled people to obtain and retain employment with the Council.

Decision-making and our policies

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

- Consider the potential impact and assess the effect on customers and communities of our policies and practices and take action to improve them
- Consider the potential impact on customers and communities before making important decisions
- Carry out equality impact assessments
- Consult with Rushcliffe's Community Cohesion Network to help shape our future plans, decisions and changes.

Working with others

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

- Work with other public, private, voluntary and community groups in the Borough to ensure that equality and diversity policies and plans similar to our own are adopted and implemented more widely
- Share information, experience and examples of good practice on equality through links with other public, private, voluntary and community organisations
- Promote equality and diversity within partnership working and in our dealings with the media
- Work with Rushcliffe Community Cohesion Network, to develop plans and promote equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination and disadvantage
- Involve people from Rushcliffe's diverse communities in influencing our work and progress on equality, and in verifying the work we do
- Learn from the equality and diversity policies and plans of other local authorities and organisations.



Buying services from others

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

- Require any company or business that wishes to be one of our contractors or suppliers to have developed policies on equalities proportionate to their size of operation
- We will monitor the practices of any contractor, or business we employ to provide services on our behalf to contract or purchase from, to ensure they act in accordance with our policies and relevant legislation on equality and diversity
- Follow good practice by having a procurement strategy that gives a clear commitment to equality of opportunity and to tackling discrimination and disadvantage.

Involving communities and consulting with others

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

Support the Rushcliffe Community Cohesion Network for all forms of consultation and the involvement of communities in the planning of services and decision-making.

Rushcliffe Borough Council Employees

As a Council we will continue to consult over equality issues with the recognised Trade Unions and Employees' Liaison Group.

Let us know what you think

If you wish to discuss this policy, or make any comments or suggestions on the work we are aiming to do to carry out this policy, please contact the Human Resources Team on:

Tel: 0115 914 8265

