



Haverling
LONDON BOROUGH

COUNCIL CHAMPION FOR
EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT

COUNCILLOR KATHARINE
TUMILTY 2023-2024

Councillor Introduction

My name is Councillor Katharine (Kathy) Tumilty. I am one of three Councillors within Gooshays Ward (Harold Hill). I was elected in May 2022. I am the vice chair of the Places Overview and Scrutiny Committee and also chair of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

Champion for Equality and Diversity.

Equality and Diversity sits within a unique position of being paramount in all three corporate priorities of People, Places and Resources. As such, every action each council team, agency, partner and community group progresses, needs to consider the equality, diversity and inclusion element to their intervention. To understand the ask, it is helpful to have an overview of the relevant data.

The Census data, comparing Havering from 2011 to 2021, identifies a significant increase in the over 65's, young children and those not born in England over the last 10 years. According to the Office for National Statistics – between the last two census (2011 Census and Census 2021) the Havering population has increased by 10.5%.

The number of people aged under 18 in Havering has increased by 15.2% (from 50,827 to 58,550). A high percentage of this is the growth in children aged 0-4, which is the second highest growth of all local authorities nationally. The proportion of households with dependent children has increased by 28%.

There is an increase from 4.9% (2011) to 10.7% (2021) of residents identifying as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh residing in Havering. There was also an increase from 4.8% (2011) to 8.2% (2021) of Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African residents.

Please note that these stats are all taken from the Census 2021 and as such there might be some slight change to date. The data however remains relevant in considering the change required as a Borough to meet the diversity needs of our changing population, especially when Government funding has not increased in line with this growth.

The cost of living crisis within the UK has meant that there is an even more urgent need to ensure equality and diversity is considered in all areas by not only the council, but agencies, councillors and within the wider community groups within Havering. Support via food banks, warm banks and data poverty interventions remains being provided by partners, charities and local community groups across Havering.

As recorded in my report for 2022/23, when considering Equality and Diversity we also need to think about Inclusion and Accessibility. This is a requirement within government and local policies, as well as from the learning and actions identified within the LGA independent READI report. Equality and Diversity directives and policies have enabled a greater understanding of posed gaps associated to equality and diversity, however the increased focus on inclusion and accessibility is required to enable a plan for change and for positive intervention to occur. From the case work I complete and from examples shared with me from other councillors, residents do not always know how or where to

access support, especially when they have additional needs, are elderly, isolated, or English is not their first language.

Havering council's zero-tolerance pledge remains in place. The pledge was signed in 2022 by all councillors and includes 'to uphold a zero tolerance to racism and discrimination of any kind, calling out bad behaviours or practice that fall short of this'.

Within the cross party working of Places Overview and Scrutiny Committee, we ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is considered as part of the scrutiny. This includes how the new processes / bids / services would enhance the residents of Havering. Additional to this, I have had discussions with children social care officers regarding how we link the social value element of external services within Havering, at the stage they are bidding, to include enhanced apprenticeship options for care leavers. Examples of this could be Housing Repair services, or other sourced agencies, supporting our own Havering corporate children.

Community Engagement

In October 2023, the Equality and Diversity partnership statement was released in Havering. This coincided with Black History Month. Part of the statement included:

“The diversity of the people within our Community in Havering is one of our strengths – that’s our residents, workers and visitors. In Havering, our vision is to build and support a strong, sustainable, safe and cohesive community by ensuring our policies, processes and employment are inclusive and that we are a welcoming place to live, work, study and visit. We are clear that we must be an inclusive and welcoming Community; we know we have a long way to go but we are committed to seeking to eradicate all forms of discrimination, and we hope that those who live, work and frequent this borough will give and experience respect to and from others”.

The Havering Strategic Needs Assessment 2023-2024 records that according to the Census 2021 in Havering about 12.7% (12,838) of the population aged 66 years and above are living in one-person households. In London this is the second highest proportion after Bexley in London. This therefore could increase isolation for residents. An action identified from the needs assessment was *‘the local authority needs to engage with other local partners to address the issue of loneliness and social isolation as these are multi-faceted issues and effective responses should be delivered in cross authority partnerships including the voluntary and community sectors.’* I have worked with the over 50’s champion to consider the isolation issue and to seek information of the many support/groups they can access across Havering.

Due to the current financial restraints, linked to reduced government funding provided to local authorities, it is evident that there is more pressure on local voluntary and community sectors than ever before. At the point of writing this overview, it is recorded that Taylor Swift is providing monies for food banks in areas of the UK where she is currently touring. Although it is noted that Havering will not receive any of this support, it highlights the impact of poverty across London and not just Havering. Reduced Council finances has impacted in many areas of support, putting pressures on services such as Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and MIND as well as the voluntary and community groups in Havering.

Voluntary and community sectors within Havering over the last year have continued to provide support to the vulnerable and enabling their voice to be heard. I have met with a Havering resident who identifies as neuro diverse and who has recently started to work for North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT) as a peer mentor. He has expressed the importance of “celebrating difference”. He has shared the below image with me of an example of what diversity and equality means to him.



I have witnessed real inclusivity from faith groups, for those who are vulnerable and in need. The interfaith forum remains pivotal within Havering regarding the cross religion support for residents and providing support. This has felt especially important this year due to the current crisis across the world. They continue to facilitate a toy collection for children and hold regular forums and events.

Community groups such as 'the Wombles' welcome a diverse group of residents to be involved within their local community, and other local community groups are priding themselves on supporting those within their community. Further to this, I have seen many clubs and groups for all ages providing sport, learning, art and socialisation. These have provided warm spaces for food, clothing and linking up with health to do health checks as well as look at issues such as damp and mould. Groups such as 'Proper Blokes Club' for men meet to talk safely about mental health and provide the soft touch to interventions for residents.

I was unfortunately unable to attend London Pride 2024 but did attend in 2022 and 2023 as part of the Havering representatives. It was a joy to observe the engagement of looked after children, workers, residents and other councillors at this event.

The 2021 Census data informs us that 29,742 households in Havering had at least one person with a disability. Parts of Harold Hill and Hornchurch have the highest number of households where at least one member is disabled. The lowest area was Emerson Park. There are nearly three (2.7) times more households with a disabled person in Harold Hill East (1,605) compared to the lowest Emerson Park (596). This identifies a need to consider if additional services are needed.

Beam Park, Emerson Park, Heaton, Rush Green & Crowlands are the wards with the highest proportion of residents identifying as Non-White. Beam Park councillors have advised of the wonderful support by a network of faith groups, including 'Rainham Muslim Trust' who hold Friday prayers in the Mardyke Community Centre. The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) King of Kings Community Church, not only have a leading role in Rainham Foodbank but also offer English lessons in the local community. Housing providers, from Clarion, and Havering Officers have done great social value work around employability and community cohesion. Further to this, the Stay-and-Play at Mardyke Community Centre is attended by families of all cultural and religious backgrounds.

'Havering Changing' recently ran a fantastic project in Orchard Village called World Kiosk, where residents could listen to spoken word stories of fellow Havering residents old and new, sharing their stories from the everyday to the remarkable. 'Havering Changing' are supporting local people in Harold hill, Orchard Village, Rainham and Romford and have led numerous events.

It is sad to report that there have been incidents of racial abuse. Myself and fellow councillors have removed offensive graffiti off bus shelters and encouraged residents to report incidents. We have worked with the Police regarding this.

There are many community groups providing vital support to residents. Residents are encouraged to be involved and these include groups covering a wide scope of activities such as crochet group, sports, reflection / relaxation and faith groups. These groups can signpost, when needed, to universal services or statutory intervention if required.

Open days are held regularly across Havering, led by voluntary and community groups. On occasions, Spider Man even comes to Havering to support.



Closing Message

Over the last 12-months it is evident that there are many strengths relating to the interventions provided in Havering to address diversity, equality and inclusion. There are some actions that if considered, would be beneficial:

- The READI report and the work already completed to progress the actions has been effective. The lead officer regarding this project has recently left. It is important therefore, for the momentum to make and sustain these changes, remain.
- Consideration regarding how to enhance processes for residents to know of local events and support in their local area.

I have been the Equality and Diversity Champion since 2022. I would firstly like to thank all the residents who have shared their experiences with me. Thank you also to the numerous voluntary and community groups who are supporting Havering residents. I am handing over the Equality and Diversity Champion role to Councillor Jane Keane who I know will progress the role.

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