

Equality Impact Assessment

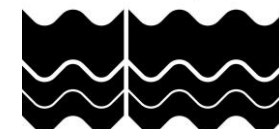
Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) makes services better for everyone. It supports value for money by getting council services right the first time. It helps us make good decisions and evidence how we have met our legal duties¹.

EqIAs need to be done whenever a service, project, policy, strategy, activity or proposal is being started, needs to change, or is being reviewed. If there is potential for an impact on people, then do an EqIA. We use EqIAs to review information, consider possible disproportionate or specific impacts on different people, and then plan actions to reduce or avoid negative impacts and create positive outcomes². Embed any actions you identify into the relevant action plan to get the best outcomes for the Council, people who access services and our staff³.

Our legal duties to identify equality impacts don't stop us taking decisions or introducing changes that are needed. They do require us to take decisions and make changes conscientiously, and to deliberately confront the anticipated impacts on people.

This template sets out how to complete an EqIA. Guidance for sections is in *italics* in each section and in the end-notes. If you have any questions about your EqIA and/or how to complete this form, please use the contact details at the end of this form.

Title of Project / Service / Policy	Proposed co-location of the Registration Service and the Library and Information Service in Hastings
Teams	Registration Service and Library and Information Service
Department	Communities, Economy and Transport
Provide a comprehensive description of your project (or service/policy, etc.) including its purpose and scope	<p>Alternative office locations are being considered for the Hastings registration office. The end of term lease on the building is upcoming, and with all leases and contracts held by East Sussex County Council under review, looking to make best use of resources and reduce ongoing costs, the option to co-locate the Hastings registration office into the Hastings library, is being explored.</p> <p>The “It All Adds Up” campaign is running across East Sussex County Council. It encourages everyone in the organisation to help save money and work more efficiently. It is our collective effort to tackle the unprecedented financial challenges we face at East Sussex County Council and to identify areas where we might be able to make a reduction in costs.</p>



	<p>Nationally there is a move towards multi-use buildings that house not just libraries but other local services as well. There are examples in neighbouring authorities where co-location of the registration and libraries have already taken place, including West Sussex County Council where Registration Services co-locate in Haywards Heath, Worthing and Littlehampton libraries, and Surrey County Council in Leatherhead and Reigate libraries. Co-location of services has benefits including reduced costs, increased building usage, and potential for attracting new users.</p> <p>The Registration Service and the Library and Information Service already work in partnership. Newborns recorded with East Sussex Registration are also automatically enrolled with a Library membership. It would be beneficial for these customers to be familiar with the space and offer available to them. East Sussex Parking Teams also work in partnership with the Library and Information Service by leasing spaces, including in Hastings library. Providing parking offices and facilities within libraries has proved convenient for customers as well as making a good use of space available in the buildings.</p> <p>Space within Hastings library is being scoped to provide high quality spaces for customers of both the Registration Service and the Library and Information Service. The proposed co-location in Hastings library would include part of the 2nd floor being converted into registration staff offices, consultation rooms, waiting area, and a small ceremony room.</p> <p>The relocation in Hastings would be a difference of 0.2 miles in distance for customers and staff, from the current registration office location to the potential library location. A continuation of all services currently offered by the Registration Service is essential. To enable this co-location to take place, changes to the current library internal layout would need to occur in advance of the move. It is expected work in the library would take place in early 2026/27 with a change in office location taking place in mid to late 2026/27. Minimal reduction to library floor space would be enabled by utilising the space previously occupied by the Learning Service team, this service ceased in 2024/25.</p>
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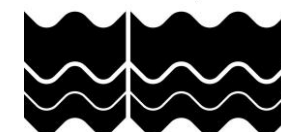
1. Update on previous EqlAs and outcomes of previous actions (if applicable)

What actions did you plan last time? (List them from the previous EqlA)	What improved as a result? What outcomes have these actions achieved?	What <u>further</u> actions do you need to take? (add these to the Action Plan below)
<i>Not applicable: no previous EqlA</i>		

2. Review of information, equality assessment and potential actions

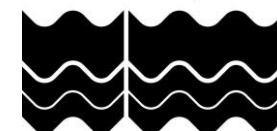
Consider the actual or potential impact of your project (service or policy) against each of the equality characteristics.

Age - people of all ages are protected under the Equality Act. Consider: older adults, under 5s, transition-aged young people (16-24), working age adults etc.	
(Age) What do you know? Summary of recent data, census information, research and insight about people who access your services and/or staff	<p>Data from the latest East Sussex Registration Survey 2024 providing the demographic of customers in 2024/25 states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1% are under 25 years 14% are 25 - 34 years 16% are 35 - 44 years 14% are 45 - 54 years 25% are 55 - 64 years 30% are 65+ years <p>This compares to the latest Census 2021 results for the East Sussex:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% are under 25 years 10% are 25 - 34 years 11% are 35 - 44 years 13% are 45 - 54 years 14% are 55 - 64 years 26% are 65+ years <p>We also have the results of the October 2024 Public Library User Survey (PLUS), undertaken every 3 years. Of customers that took part in during the surveying period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3% are under 25 years 8% are 25 - 34 years 15% are 35 - 44 years 11% are 45 - 54 years 16% are 55 - 64 years 48% are 65+ years <p>Focusing on the results from Hastings library:</p>



	<p>3% are under 25 years</p> <p>9% are 25 - 34 years</p> <p>16% are 35 - 44 years</p> <p>15% are 45 - 54 years</p> <p>19% are 55 - 64 years</p> <p>39% are 65+ years</p>
<p>(Age) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback from people who access your service and/or staff feedback</p>	<p>The proposed location is central in the town with good public transport links. The location means that even with a large proportion of library customers being 65 years and over, the majority of library customers visit the library on foot as their primary method of travel, with 55% visiting Hastings library and providing this feedback as part of the PLUS 2024.</p> <p>Hastings library is 0.3 miles from the train station, 0.06 miles from the nearest bus stop, and 0.1 miles from a multi-storey car park.</p>
<p>(Age) What does this mean? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)</p>	<p>Given that almost a third of registration and almost a half of library customers are aged 65 and over, those in this age category have the potential to be disproportionately affected by the changes to the building as a result of co-location. Changes to the internal layout, and access into the library buildings must take this into account when planning and designing the space.</p> <p>Those aged 75+ are also known to be less likely to use the internet, and therefore the eLibrary, due to a lack of skills. Age is a key factor in people's level of digital skills and therefore use of the internet. The buildings must therefore continue to provide access to public computers as well as facilitate space for training (e.g. IT for You) to enable older residents to access resources provided within the building.</p>
<p>(Age) What can you do? All potential actions to remove or reduce barriers and increase equality.</p>	<p>Access audit will be undertaken as part of assessing the proposed works. This will include a review of physical accessibility to the registration and library spaces. Corporate Property teams will review in conjunction with the Library and Information Service to ascertain what works can be brought into scope.</p> <p>A lift audit will be undertaken as part of assessing the proposed works. Due to where the proposed co-location of the registration offices would be within the building it is imperative that the lift condition is evaluated, and recommendations implemented. Contingency plans will</p>

	<p>include emergency alternative provision on the ground floor for if the occasion occurred where the lift was broken and the customer was unable to climb the flights of stairs.</p> <p>Short term and long term contingency plans will be considered to ensure customers of both East Sussex Registration and the Library and Information Service are still able to access the services they require. Options for a ramp for the six steps just inside the main entrance of Hastings library will be evaluated to ensure the building is accessible to all customers.</p>
<p>Disability - A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Consider: sensory and mobility impairments; fluctuating, recurring or developmental conditions; learning difficulties; mental health; and people with cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV. Neurodivergence and effects of menopause can also apply.</p>	
<p>(Disability) What do you know? Summary of data</p>	<p>Data from the latest East Sussex Registration Survey 2024 providing the demographic of customers in 2024/25 states: 81% don't have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more 11% have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses but that it does not reduce their ability to carry out day-to-day activities 8% have conditions or illnesses which reduce their ability to carry out day-to-day activities</p> <p>This compares to the latest Census 2021 results for the East Sussex area: 81% Not disabled under the Equality Act 11% Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a little 8% Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a lot</p> <p>We also have the results of the October 2024 Public Library User Survey (PLUS), undertaken every 3 years. Of customers that took part in during the surveying period: 72% of customers do not consider themselves to have a disability or condition.</p>
<p>(Disability) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback</p>	<p>2.97% of registration customers county wide reported that they felt there was a barrier accessing the registration service due to a recognised characteristic. Feedback from registration customers who also left a comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lift / stairlift if there isn't one. If there is and we missed it, a clear sign in the entrance! (regarding Hastings) •



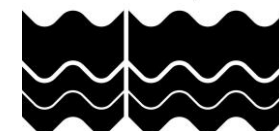
<p>(Disability) What does this mean? Impacts identified</p>	<p>Changes to the internal layout, and access into the library building, must take accessibility for disabled customers into account when planning and designing the space.</p> <p>Hastings library has disabled access with accessible public toilets. We will continue to design spaces and support customers with disabilities and with long-term health conditions.</p> <p>Clear signage is available throughout the library building, along with a virtual tour available to view on the website ahead of visiting in person, to help reduce potential anxiety of unknown spaces.</p>
<p>(Disability) What can you do? All potential actions</p>	<p>We will continue to work with Property Services to consider and/or address any building amendments required to provide or ease access to our buildings to ensure that the proposed co-location is compliant, where possible, and making reasonable adjustments to support customers accessing the service, where possible.</p> <p>Hastings library has ground level access on the ground floor; however, consideration and planning will be given for circumstances for if the lift is out of service. Contingency plans will include emergency alternative provision on the ground floor for if the occasion occurred where the lift was broken and the customer was unable to climb the flights of stairs.</p> <p>Refurbishments took place at Hastings library in 2017/18 which included considerations to the carpet and lighting, creating sensory-friendly environments to reduce sensory overload. Spaces will continue to be designed with flooring that includes colour and patterns which are suitable for customers with visual impairments.</p> <p>In Hastings library there is a lift for customers and staff to access all floors of the building. There is an accessible toilet located on the ground floor, and as part of scoping works toilets will be reviewed to understand if works could be included to change a cubicle to a Changing Places toilet to improve access.</p> <p>The registration office area will be designed to reduce barriers for customers that may use a wheelchair or be using walking aids. We will support disabled children and adults with disabilities and with long-term health conditions.</p>

	In 2022 all libraries were fitted with hearing loops at the counter to support those with hearing impairments as part of on-going work to improve accessibility.
Gender reassignment - In the Act a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected	
(Gender reassignment) What do you know? Summary of data	<p>Data from the latest East Sussex Registration Survey 2024 providing the demographic of customers in 2024/25 states:</p> <p>99.6% identify as the same sex as registered at birth 0.4% identify as a different sex as registered at birth</p> <p>This mirrors to the latest Census 2021 results for the East Sussex area:</p> <p>99.6% identify as the same sex as registered at birth 0.4% identify as a different sex as registered at birth</p> <p>We also have the results of the October 2024 Public Library User Survey (PLUS), undertaken every 3 years. Customers were asked to describe their gender identity:</p> <p>70.46% Female 29.23% Male 0.18% Non-binary 0.07% Transgender 0.04% Gender fluid 0.04% Genderqueer</p>
(Gender reassignment) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	TheRegistration Service and the Library Information Service are open to all individuals, but we recognise that accessing services can be challenging. Our teams support inclusive practice and with a commitment to equality. Virtual tours of our library locations are available online to view ahead of visiting to help reduce the risk of anxiety and get a feel for the space and layout.
(Gender reassignment) What does this mean? Impacts identified	TheRegistration Service and the Library Information Service are committed to making trans-inclusive spaces.
(Gender reassignment) What can you do? • All potential actions	<p>We will continue to work with local and national partners to ensure we provide a welcoming environment for transgender and non-binary people. East Sussex Registration and the Library Information Service will continue to explore this characteristic further and take this into account with any proposed works going forward.</p>

	All toilets in Hastings library are unisex for customers, with fully enclosed units with a toilet, washbasin, and hand-drying facilities. Privacy and dignity for all customers is essential. There is clear signage to inform customers the toilets are for universal use. There is limited space in Hastings however consideration during planning will be given to the current provision to whether it can be extended, with a unisex toilet for staff in the building.
Pregnancy and maternity - Protection is during pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave.	
(Pregnancy & maternity) What do you know? Summary of data	The latest Office for National Statistics 2022 edition of conception rates for the East Sussex area per 1,000 women: Hastings 74.0 Eastbourne 67.2 Rother 72.5 Wealden 70.3 Lewes 67.6
(Pregnancy & maternity) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	For individuals in this category, the access and use of lifts within library buildings is critical. We will retain an open plan floor to support easy access with buggies/ pushchairs. Hastings library has baby changing facilities.
(Pregnancy & maternity) What does this mean? Impacts identified	Lifts, easy access to seating to rest/ feed babies is important to provide throughout library buildings. Additionally, any mother/ parent or carer can feed their baby in a library at any time.
(Pregnancy & maternity) What can you do? All potential actions	We will continue to design our spaces so that pregnant/ new mothers have adequate spaces to sit/ stay/ feed within the library. We will continue to work with colleagues in Property to ensure that the lift is serviced in accordance with the term maintenance program and endeavour to fix issues promptly as and when they arise. We will retain an open plan floor to support easy access with buggies/ pushchairs.
Race (ethnicity) - This includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, and includes refugees and migrants ⁵ , and Gypsies and Travellers.	
(Race / ethnicity) What do you know?	Data from the latest East Sussex Registration Survey 2024 providing the demographic of customers in 2024/25 states:

Summary of data	<p>92.8% White 2.9% Asian 2.1% Mixed 1.9% Black 0.4% Other ethnic group</p> <p>With the top 5 main languages being: 96.3% English (English or Welsh in Wales) 0.4% Polish 0.4% Romanian 0.3% Portuguese 0.2% Spanish</p> <p>This compares to the latest Census 2021 results for the East Sussex area: 93.9% White with 0.2% White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller (There is likely to be under-recording as people may be reluctant to self-identify for fear of discrimination and mistrust of organisations and authorities) 2.1% Asian 2.3% Mixed 0.8% Black 0.9% Other ethnic group</p> <p>With the top 5 main languages in Hastings being: 94.8% English (English or Welsh in Wales) 0.8% Romanian 0.5% Polish 0.3% Russian 0.3% Kurdish</p> <p>We also have the results of the October 2024 Public Library User Survey (PLUS): 95.5% White with 0.1% White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller 1.5% Asian 2.1% Mixed 0.7% Black</p>
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	0.2% Other ethnic group
(Race / ethnicity) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	Hastings has higher pockets of residents with English as an Additional Language (EAL). We will continually endeavour to facilitate sessions in our building for this cohort. Feedback from schemes the Library and Information Service have initiated, including refugee support and the work based at Hastings library, has been overwhelmingly positive.
(Race / ethnicity) What does this mean? Impacts identified	The potential co-location is not considered to have an impact for registration or library users from different ethnic backgrounds as the building will continue to offer flexibility of space for any planned library initiatives.
(Race / ethnicity) What can you do? All potential actions	Consider future possible activities in the delivery of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy and ensure that buildings are fit for purpose. Ensure any marketing campaigns and promotions are representative of diversity across the county. Co-locating services in this way may provide an opportunity to for ESCC to foster good relationships between people with different characteristics. All residents in East Sussex will at some point use the Registration Service for a birth, marriage or death registration. This gives the Libraries and Information Service an opportunity to foster relations between different types and groups of people, as service users who may not previously have been customers of the Library and Information service come into the library building for perhaps the first time. The Library and Information Service could consider curating displays/holding events that are relevant to Registration customers, such as information about different marriage/death customs within different ethnicities and races.
Religion or belief - Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief.	
(Religion /& Belief) What do you know? Summary of data	Data from the latest East Sussex Registration Survey 2024 providing the demographic of customers in 2024/25 states: 49.8% No religion



45.4% Christian
1.1% Muslim
0.6% Buddhist
0.4% Hindu
2.7% Other religion or philosophical belief

This compares to the latest Census 2021 results for the East Sussex area:

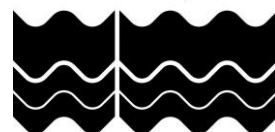
47.8% No religion
49% Christian
1.2% Muslim
0.5% Buddhist
0.4% Hindu
0.2% Jewish
0.04% Sikh
0.8% Other religion or philosophical belief

For the Hastings area:

55% No religion
40.5% Christian
2.1% Muslim
0.7% Buddhist
0.6% Hindu
0.2% Jewish
0.04% Sikh
1% Other religion or philosophical belief

We also have the results of the October 2024 Public Library User Survey (PLUS):

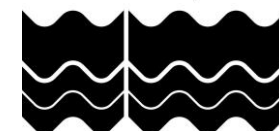
47.7% No religion
48.5% Christian
0.5% Muslim
1.1% Buddhist
0.2% Hindu
0.6% Jewish



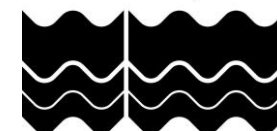
	1.5% Other religion or philosophical belief
(Religion /& Belief) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	Some feedback was received from one customer in response to the April eNewsletter: April is also the month of Easter and Easter Eggs, however disappointingly NO mention of this in your email.
(Religion /& Belief) What does this mean? Impacts identified	The potential co-location is not considered to have an impact for registration or library users with different religions as the building will continue to be an inclusive space.
(Religion /& Belief) What can you do? All potential actions	Staff will continue to promote an inclusive environment for people of all faiths and beliefs. Co-locating services in this way may provide an opportunity to for ESCC to foster good relationships between people with different characteristics. All residents in East Sussex will at some point use the Registration Service for a birth, marriage or death registration. This gives the Libraries and Information Service an opportunity to foster relations between different types and groups of people, as service users who may not previously have been customers of the Library service come into the library building for perhaps the first time. The Library and Information Service could consider curating displays/holding events that are relevant to Registration customers, such as information about different marriage/death customs within different religions/beliefs.
Sex - Women and men are protected under the Act.	
(Sex) What do you know? Summary of data	Data from the latest East Sussex Registration Survey 2024 providing the demographic of customers in 2024/25 states: 63% Female 37% Male This compares to the latest Census 2021 results for the East Sussex area: 52% Female 48% Male
(Sex) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	Library customers that completed equalities monitoring questions as part of feedback surveys in 2024/25: 76% Female 24% Male

(Sex) What does this mean? Impacts identified	Women have the potential to be disproportionately affected by changes as they represent a higher number of our customers; however, the potential changes are not considered to have an impact for registration or library users of different sex.
(Sex) What can you do? All potential actions	We will continue to support an inclusive environment for people of all sex.
Sexual orientation - The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people.	
(Sexual orientation) What do you know? Summary of data	<p>Data from the latest East Sussex Registration Survey 2024 providing the demographic of customers in 2024/25 states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 91% Straight or heterosexual 5% Gay or lesbian 3% Bisexual 1% Other sexual orientation <p>This compares to the latest Census 2021 results for the East Sussex area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 96.4% Straight or heterosexual 2% Gay or lesbian 1.3% Bisexual 0.3% Other sexual orientation <p>For the Hastings area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 94.9% Straight or heterosexual 2.5% Gay or lesbian 2% Bisexual 0.5% Other sexual orientation
(Sexual orientation) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	No feedback received from service users or staff.

(Sexual orientation) What does this mean? Impacts identified	The potential co-location is not considered to have an impact for registration or library users of different sexual orientations.
(Sexual orientation) What can you do? All potential actions	<p>East Sussex Registration and the Library and Information Service strive for inclusivity of the LGBTQ+ community. The building will be maintained to an acceptable standard and will continue to operate as a safe space which can host events and activities. We will continue to work with corporate, local and national partners to ensure safe and accessible environments to the LGBTQ+ community.</p> <p>Co-locating services in this way may provide an opportunity to for ESCC to foster good relationships between people with different characteristics. All residents in East Sussex will at some point use the Registration Service for a birth, marriage or death registration. This gives the Libraries and Information Service an opportunity to foster relations between different types and groups of people, as service users who may not previously have been customers of the Library an Information Service come into the library building for perhaps the first time. The Library and Information Service could consider curating displays/holding events that are relevant to Registration customers, such as books that are relevant or speak to the experiences of those with different sexual orientations.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership - Only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.	
(Marriage & civil partnership) What do you know? Summary of data	<p>This latest Census 2021 results for the East Sussex area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 46% Married 11% Divorced 8% Widowed 2% Separated, but still married 0.4% In registered civil partnership 0.05% Formally in a civil partnership now legally dissolved 0.02% Surviving partner from civil partnership 0.03% Separated, but still in a registered civil partnership 32% Never married and never registered a civil partnership <p>For the Hastings area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38% Married



	13% Divorced 6% Widowed 3% Separated, but still married 0.4% In registered civil partnership 0.05% Formally in a civil partnership now legally dissolved 0.03% Surviving partner from civil partnership 0.04% Separated, but still in a registered civil partnership 40% Never married and never registered a civil partnership
(Marriage & civil partnership) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	No feedback received from service users or staff.
(Marriage & civil partnership) What does this mean? Impacts identified	The potential co-location is not considered to have an impact for registration or library users of different relationship statuses including those married or in a civil partnership.
(Marriage & civil partnership) What can you do? All potential actions	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage.
Armed Forces - protected by the Armed Forces Act 2021 which aims to help prevent service personnel, veterans and their families being disadvantaged when accessing public services. The duty applies to specifically housing, education or healthcare functions, but check whether any impacts may apply in your case.	
(Armed forces) What do you know? Summary of data	There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.
(Armed forces) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	No feedback received from service users or staff.
(Armed forces) What does this mean?	The proposed co-location is not considered to have an impact for registration or library users of Armed Forces.



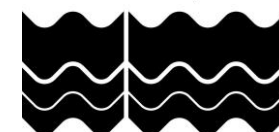
Impacts identified	
(Armed forces) What can you do? All potential actions	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage.
Impacts on community cohesion - Consider impacts on how groups see one another or how the council's resources are seen to be allocated. Include opportunities to positively impact on good relations between groups.	
(Community cohesion) What do you know? Summary of data	The Library and Information Service has been recognised with a library of sanctuary award in 2023. This is in recognition to commitment to creating a culture of welcome for people seeking sanctuary, providing safe spaces for refugees, working alongside key partners and community groups.
(Community cohesion) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	Customers were also asked what they visited the library for, this included 7% attending for an event or activity 5% attending to socialise / relax 3% to study / do homework 2% to read, including newspapers 1% use print and photocopying facilities 1% for IT for You support sessions 1% jigsaw / games 1% parking permits / bus passes / NHS / community flyer / general information
(Community cohesion) What does this mean? Impacts identified	The maintenance and upkeep of library buildings provides the physical safe environment for the activities for local community groups to access.
(Community cohesion) What can you do? All potential actions	Undertake annual maintenance of Hasting library, and ensure the co-location is delivered in a timely manner with minimal disruption. The Libraries and Information Service will continue to promote community cohesion by using the building to bring together groups of people and individuals with different characteristics. The service can also foster good community relations by providing a safe space where people can explore books and information about different communities, and where they can meet those with different characteristics in a neutral space.

Additional categories

(identified locally as potentially causing or worsening people's experience of inequality)

Rurality - issues can include isolation, access to services (e.g.: GPs, pharmacies, libraries, schools), low income / part-time work, infrequent public transport, higher transport and fuel costs and lack of affordable housing. Deprivation can be more dispersed and less visible.	
(Rurality) What do you know? Summary of data	There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.
(Rurality) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	No feedback received from service users or staff.
(Rurality) What does this mean? Impacts identified	The proposed co-location is not considered to have an impact for registration customers and library users from rural areas.
(Rurality) What can you do? All potential actions	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage.
Carers - A carer is anyone, of any age, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid.	
(Carers) What do you know? Summary of data	There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.
(Carers) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback	No feedback received from service users or staff.
(Carers) What does this mean? Impacts identified	The proposed co-location is not considered to have an impact for registration customers and library users who are also carers.
(Carers) What can you do? All potential actions	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage.

<p>People with care experience: the term ‘care experienced’ refers to anyone who has been, or is currently, in care or from a looked after background at any stage in their life, no matter how short.</p> <p>Consider financial impacts for things like travel or access to projects; maintaining continuity of care and support (including mental and physical health and wellbeing, community and social connections), and access to opportunities.</p>	
<p>(Care experience) What do you know? Summary of data</p>	<p>There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.</p>
<p>(Care experience) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback</p>	<p>No feedback received from service users or staff.</p>
<p>(Care experience) What does this mean? Impacts identified</p>	<p>The proposed co-location is not considered to have an impact for registration customers and library users who have care experience.</p>
<p>(Care experience) What can you do? All potential actions</p>	<p>No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage.</p>
<p>Other people that may be differently affected and/or whose views are seldom heard - this will vary by service, but includes people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are homeless or in insecure housing, • in prison, • with low levels of literacy, • are digitally excluded, • experiencing severe loneliness (a feeling of lack or loss of companionship) • experiencing or in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction (and their families), • have or are experiencing domestic or sexual abuse 	
<p>(Other impacts) What do you know? Summary of data</p>	<p>Questions about loneliness and isolation were added to the Public Library User Survey following the Covid 19 and numerous lockdowns. Results of the October 2024 Public Library User Survey (PLUS), undertaken every 3 years:</p> <p>42% of customer feel isolated often, some of the time, or occasionally</p> <p>40% of customers feel lonely often, some of the time, or occasionally</p>
<p>(Other impacts) What do people tell you? Summary of feedback</p>	<p>Partners in health care and social services have identified the library buildings as important spaces for the wellbeing of clients. Support, access to resources, and training is available for library users if needed in a warm, safe and welcoming space.</p>



<p>(Other impacts) What does this mean? Impacts identified</p>	<p>The Hastings Library building is a centrally located, warm, safe and welcoming space. Individuals to have as much or as little interaction as they choose.</p>
<p>(Other impacts) What can you do? All potential actions</p>	<p>As above, the maintenance of library buildings is key to delivering a high-quality registration and library service. We will continue to work with in supporting these groups within the wider community, working with both internal and external stakeholder to promote the service offer which is available for all to access.</p> <p>The facilities offered within a library help combat loneliness by providing a meeting point, events, and activities to take part and meet people. The Library and Information Service also offers a safe space to connect with others via the public computers with friends/ relatives or a meeting opportunity within the library itself. We are keen to promote resources and to combat isolation and loneliness within the community.</p>
<p>Staff impacts: if your proposal affects staff, have you consulted with the Staff Networks? (contact details are on the equality pages of the intranet: search for 'staff networks')</p>	
<p>The proposed co-location is in the planning and scoping stage and therefore has not been shared with staff networks for consultation, however, the proposal is not considered to have a disproportionate impact on staff.</p> <p>Staff in the Libraries and Information Service are used to dealing with different types of customers and already provide a service to parking customers. It is likely that they will need to provide some signposting to ensure Registration customers are directed to the correct place within the library building. A small number of Registration customers will be using the service at a very distressing time in their lives. Ensuring that the library staff are well trained to handle these situations will help to support them in this work.</p>	

Assessment of overall impacts, summary of actions and any further recommendations

Comments received as part of the PLUS 2024 survey have been reviewed as part of this EqlA and the potential co-location for the Hastings registration office into Hastings library. This survey takes place every three years and allows the Library and Information Service to review operational activity and make changes where possible. This data has been analysed and is available for review here: [PLUS 2024 Report](#) and [PLUS Review 2021 - 2024](#)

There are some negative potential impacts that have been identified for those with a protected characteristic of: age; disability; and maternity/pregnancy.

These relate to:

The siting of the Registration service on the upper floor of the library, which necessitates the need for constant lift access for some groups. The Libraries and Information service will run an Access Survey to ensure accessibility requirements are properly understood and designed into the new floor plan, as well as ensuring regular maintenance of the lift and building is undertaken.

There are some positive potential impacts that have been identified for those with a protected characteristic of: race/ethnicity; religion/belief; sexual orientation; and for community cohesion.

The potential for Registration services to attract new users to the library who share characteristics, or have different characteristics, provides an opportunity for the Libraries and Information Service to foster good relations between different groups by promoting relevant reading material on different cultures, beliefs, faiths and sexual orientations. It also promotes the mixing of different people in a neutral and safe space, where there is the potential to explore different ideas and meet others with different characteristics.

3. List detailed data and/or community feedback that informed your EqlA

Source and type of data (e.g. research, or direct engagement (interviews), responses to questionnaires, etc.)	Date	Gaps in data (were there any people you didn't hear from? Does research include information on all characteristics?)	Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with? (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
ONS Census	2021	Individuals may be unwilling or unable to participate in the census, or limitations in data collection methods	Used along with ESR survey, and LIS PLUS survey to help inform decisions
East Sussex Registration Survey	2024/25	This survey did not ask questions about all protected characteristics	This has been a helpful comparison to the 2021 Census. Review and comparison when the results of the next Census are available
Public Libraries User Survey (PLUS)	2024	This survey did not ask questions about all protected characteristics	The questions will be reviewed ahead of next survey run, due in 2027

4. Prioritised Action Plan

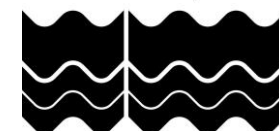
NB: The Council's duties are ongoing: actions must be completed and further equality assessment made if needed.

Review the actions identified above and prioritise by considering actions that will have benefits for multiple characteristics, actions that remove the biggest barriers or have greatest impact, and actions that are possible within current resources.

Transfer these actions to service or business plans and monitor to ensure they achieve the outcomes identified.

Your departmental equality lead will follow up at an agreed time to ensure actions are being implemented.

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
<i>To jump back to potential actions identified above, click on the relevant hyperlink: Actions from previous EqlA, Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage & Civil Partnership, Pregnancy & Maternity, Race, Religion & Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Armed Forces, Community Cohesion, Rurality, Carers, Care Experience, Other Impacts, Staff Impacts</i>				
Age and Disability Older people and certain disabilities may find changes to the library layout difficult to navigate	Ensure that access audit considers age of customer and disability.	Building is compliant with required standards where possible.	Completed access audit.	As part of the co-location project.
Age and Disability Older people and certain disabilities may find changes to the library layout difficult to navigate	Ensure lift audit and contingency plans to include emergency alternative provision on the ground floor.	Building is compliant with required standards where possible.	Completed lift audit and contingency option available.	As part of the co-location project.
Age, Disability and Pregnancy & maternity Older people are more likely to have medical conditions, such as incontinence, that necessitate easy access to toilets.	Ensure sufficient toilet provision is available to registration and library users. Changing Places toilet, where possible, to improve access.	Accessible toilets in Hastings library with baby changing facilities for use of both registration and library users.	Completion of review and CAD drawings for proposed layouts.	As part of the co-location project.



<p>People with certain disabilities may have mobility issues which could limit their access to toilets. They may need to use the toilet more often.</p> <p>Parents, especially those with babies and young children, may require public toilets with baby-changing facilities.</p>	Explore the option to expand current toilet provision.			
Pregnancy and maternity: Access and breastfeeding.	Design spaces so that pregnant/ new mothers / families have adequate spaces to sit/ stay/ feed.	Better support and spaces for feeding and seating.	Spaces reviewed/ improved and installed.	As part of the co-location project.
All: Users of East Sussex Registration and the Library and Information Service have full access and continued service to facilities and offer.	Keep users of the ESR and LIS updated on any changes in layout and location.	Better use of spaces for staff and customers.	Continued use of East Sussex Registration and the Library and Information Service by customers.	As part of the co-location project.

EqlA sign-off: (for the EqlA to be final the following people must review and agree it)

Staff member completing Equality Impact Assessment: Katie Upton

Date: 02/09/2025

Equality lead: Sarah Tighe-Ford

Date: 02/09/2025

Directorate Head of Service:

Natalie Anderson

Date: 03/10/2025

Guidance endnotes

¹ Our duties in the Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a legal duty to demonstrate that we have identified and considered the actual and potential impact of our activities on people who share any of the legally ‘protected characteristics’: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership. This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. This template provides evidence of this consideration.

In the Act we must give ‘due regard’ (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- **avoid, reduce, minimise or eliminate any negative impact** (if you identify unlawful discrimination, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).
- **promote equality of opportunity** by removing or minimising disadvantages; taking extra steps to meet people’s needs; encouraging participation; and treating disabled people differently, including more favourably where necessary.
- **foster good relations** by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

² **EqlAs are always proportionate.** The greater the potential adverse impact on a protected group (e.g. disabled people), the more thorough our process must be. Consider:

- The nature of the service, or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The number of people affected
- The size of the likely impact
- The vulnerability of the people affected

³ The following principles, drawn from case law, explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act:

- **Knowledge:** all Council employees must be aware of our legal duties and comply with them appropriately in our daily work.
- **Timeliness:** assessment must be completed and considered at the time a decision is taken - not afterwards.
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral, rigorous part of your decision-making process and influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what more is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the Council is responsible for ensuring that any contracted services, which are provided on its behalf, can and do comply with these legal duties.

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- **Review:** this continuing duty applies when you develop/agree a policy or service and when it is implemented and reviewed.
 - **Proper Record Keeping:** you must keep records of the process, the impacts and the actions that you will implement.

⁴ Your EqIA must get to grips fully and properly with actual and potential impacts. Our legal duties to identify equality impacts don't stop us taking decisions, or introducing changes that are needed. They do require us to take decisions and make changes conscientiously and deliberately confront the anticipated impacts on people.

⁵ **Refugees and migrants** means people whose intention is to stay in the UK for at least one year (excluding visitors, short term students or tourists). This definition includes asylum seekers; voluntary and involuntary migrants; people who are undocumented; and the children of migrants, even if they were born in the UK.