

PONSANOOTH PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT - STAGE ONE

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INTRODUCTION.

1. Completing an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is a key tool in ensuring that a Neighbourhood Plan benefits an entire community.
2. The 2010 Equalities Act makes it illegal to make decisions that impact on the Equality and Diversity rights of groups or individuals. This EIA is intended to show how Ponsanooth Parish Council's decision-making process on the Neighbourhood Plan will use evidence to support the decisions made and where the decision impacts individuals or communities, there is a robust case to show that an individual or group has not been discriminated against. The EIA will be conducted at the start of the Neighbourhood Plan process, repeated prior to the Pre-Submission Consultation and Submission stages, and will form an input to the Basic Conditions evidence.
3. The purpose of the Ponsanooth Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan is to improve the quality of life for people living and working now and in the future in the Ponsanooth Parish from an environmental, social and economic point of view. The aims and policies in the Ponsanooth Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan will emerge in response to local people's views and in the light of evidence gathered for the Parish to meet the needs expressed and address the issues identified. To confirm that the Ponsanooth Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan does not have any unintended consequences for particular groups the strategic objectives and policies in the Ponsanooth Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan must be scrutinised to ensure that they do not disadvantage any vulnerable groups.

TERMINOLOGY

4. *Diversity* - relates to our differences, the characteristics that make us unique. These can be characteristics we are born with i.e. our sex or the gender we identify with, or the people we are attracted to, our age, or our race and cultural background. It can also relate to our beliefs about the world,

religion, politics, a person's disabilities and impairments etc. The community and the people that receive services from Ponsanooth Parish Council come from different backgrounds and are all individuals. It is a duty under the Equalities Act that everyone works towards creating a culture and practice that recognises, respects, values and harnesses difference for the benefit of our communities.

5. *Equality* – seeks to ensure everyone receives fair and equal treatment. In some cases, this may mean changing the way in which we do things based on people's differences (e.g. producing information in a different format for someone with a sight impairment).

PRINCIPLE

6. In formulating the Neighbourhood Plan, Ponsanooth Parish Council will reflect the diversity of the whole community, take into account the needs of different sectors of the community, and ensure that all members of the community have the opportunity to inform the plan through the development of an Engagement Strategy.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

7. The 9 statutory Protected Characteristics under the 2010 Act are:

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

Disability

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender Reassignment

The process of *transitioning* from one gender to another.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

Man or a *woman*.

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

8. Additional non-statutory characteristics important to Cornwall that are also considered:

Socio-Economic

Cornwall as a whole is not deprived but there are areas where there are very high levels of deprivation. Income and other factors can have an impact on how someone may access services, their needs and their quality of life.

Rural Isolation

Cornwall is a very rural county and this can affect the way our users/the public can access services, particularly if combined with poor public transport/lack of car ownership etc.

Care leaving experience¹

People leaving care can experience stigma and discrimination.

WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

9. The reason for carrying out this EIA is to ensure that decisions made by Ponsanooth Parish Council on the Neighbourhood Development Plan are based on sound evidence and will not discriminate against anyone with any of the 9 protected characteristics (shown above).
10. Below is a list of *ways* in which discrimination may occur. It is important to be aware of these as the 2010 Act has added to previous legislation.

¹ In September 2023 Cornwall Council determined that experience of care be recognised alongside the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and that partner organisations in Cornwall be encouraged to do the same.

Direct – Occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic they have, or are thought to have, or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.

By Association - Applied to race, religion or belief and sexual orientation (before 2010 Act), now extended to include age, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with someone who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perception - Applies to age, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation (before 2010 Act), now extended to include disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect - Applies to age, race, religion or belief sex, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnerships (before 2010 Act), now extended to cover disability and gender reassignment. Discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share protected characteristic.

Harassment – Is defined as: “Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual” Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnerships. Employees will now be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves.

Third Party Harassment - Applied to sex already, now extended to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Victimisation - This occurs whereby an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

Additional characteristics important to Cornwall

Socio-Economic – In areas where there is deprivation, income and other factors can have an impact on how someone may access services, their needs and their quality of life, and this is an important factor when completing an EqIA. In richer areas it is possible that there may be small pockets of deprived people whose interests may be hidden and poorly understood.

Rural Isolation - Cornwall is a very rural county and this can affect the way services are delivered, worsening the impacts of deprivation and causing discriminatory impacts on people with any of the 9 protected characteristics. Rurality issues should be considered when completing an EqIA.

Care-leaving experience – people leaving care may experience stigma and discrimination when seeking work and living accommodation, in social intercourse, remaining safe in the community, receiving health care, expressing their opinion, and in cultural opportunities etc.

BASELINE DATA

Population overall.

11. Ponsanooth parish has a total population of approximately 1,600 people as of 2022. There are about 690 households, averaging approximately 2.3 persons per household, consistent with rural trends.

Age Structure.

12. The parish displays a notably aged demographic profile. Individuals aged 0-45 are underrepresented compared to national averages, while the 50+ age groups are significantly overrepresented. Those aged 85 and above align closely with the England average, indicating an older resident base overall. The proportion of residents aged 60+ is notably higher than the Cornwall average as well. This indicates potential planning considerations such as providing age-appropriate amenities, healthcare facilities, housing suited to older residents, and ensuring sufficient local services.

Health [Disability].

13. General health in Ponsanooth is fairly typical, with 47.8% reporting very good health compared to the English average (48.5%), and 31.4% good health compared to England (33.7%). Those reporting fair health was higher in Ponsanooth (15.6%) than the national average (12.7%), suggesting a slightly larger proportion of residents experiencing moderate health conditions. Ponsanooth matches exactly the English average for both "Bad Health" (4%) and "Very Bad Health" (1.2%). However, 21.1% of residents are classified as disabled under the Equality Act, matching Cornwall's figure but higher than the national average (17.3%). Very Good Health.

Gender Reassignment and Sexual orientation.

14. Census data on sexual orientation and gender preference is currently available in the 2021 Census, but only for the entire Cornwall area. This would suggest that 1.4% of the population has gay or lesbian orientation, 1.3% bisexual, and 0.3% other sexual orientations. The 2021 Census also showed that 0.1% had a gender identity different from sex registered at birth but gave no specific identity, 0.1% were trans women, 0.1% trans men, and 0.1% other identities.

15. However, only about 94% of census respondents answered this enquiry. The ONS estimated in 2020 that 3.1% of the UK population aged 16 years and over identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) in 2020, an increase from 2.7% in 2019 and almost double the percentage from 2014 (1.6%). Stonewall says that the UK Government estimate, used for policy making, that 5% to 7% of the population is lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ), is reasonable. This implies that between 150 and 220 of the usually resident population may be LGBTQ.

16. Stonewall also report an Ipsos survey that found that the vast majority of the population (84%) say they are 'straight'. The most common identity after straight is 'bi' (5%), and an additional 1% of the population identify as pansexual. In total, 7% identify as having a sexual orientation that involves being attracted to people of more than one gender. More younger people identify as lesbian, gay, bi and trans with only 71% of people born after 1997 identifying as straight, and 14% identifying as bi or pansexual.

Marriage and Civil Partnership.

17. Among residents aged 16 and older, 53.2% are married or in a civil partnership, significantly higher than both the national (44.7%) and Cornwall (47.1%) figures. Those who have never married or entered into a civil partnership account for 26.1%, lower than the averages for Cornwall (32.2%) and substantially lower compared to England (37.9%).
18. Households in Ponsanooth tend to be smaller on average than those across England. Most notably, two-person households are considerably more common in Ponsanooth (41%) than the national average (34%), suggesting a prevalence of couples without children or older adults whose children have left home. Single-person households are similar to the national rate (30.3% vs. 30.1%).

Pregnancy/Maternity.

19. No data is available for the Parish. However, ONS data for 2021 indicates an average of 64.6 conceptions per 1000 women aged 15 to 44 in SW England. As about 150 females aged 15 to 44 were recorded in the 2021 census, this would suggest that the annual number of conceptions in Ponsanooth Parish for 2021 would be around 10.

Ethnicity [Race].

20. The ethnic composition of Ponsanooth reveals a significantly less diverse population compared to the broader English average. An overwhelming majority—98.4%—of residents identify as White, considerably higher than the national figure of 81%. In contrast, representation of other ethnic groups in Ponsanooth is very limited: Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh residents account for only 0.3% compared to 9.6% across England, and there are effectively no residents (0.0%) identifying as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean, or African, compared to 4.2% nationally. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups are also relatively uncommon, at just 0.5% versus 3% in England, while those identifying with other ethnic groups represent 0.9%, slightly below the national figure of 2.2%.

Religion and Belief.

21. The population is almost evenly split between those with no religion (46.9%) and Christians (46.0%), closely aligning with Cornwall but with slightly higher proportions without religion compared to the national average. Other religions have very minimal representation (Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh each less than 1%).

Sex.

22. The gender split is nearly balanced, with females slightly outnumbering males at 50.7%, consistent with national and Cornwall averages.

Socio-Economic.

23. Socio-economic data indicates strong representation of lower managerial, administrative, and professional occupations (23.6%) and small business owners or self-employed individuals (16.1%), exceeding national averages. The proportion of residents in routine or long-term unemployed categories is relatively low, reflecting socio-economic stability.

Rural Isolation.

24. Indicators of rural isolation include a significant reliance on private cars for commuting, with 56.2% driving cars or vans, and 32.1% working primarily from home. There is a notably higher rate of multiple vehicle ownership in households (14.5% with three or more vehicles) compared to Cornwall and England averages. Access to services and amenities may thus be more challenging for residents without private transportation.
25. **Conclusions.** The demographic and socio-economic profile of Ponsanooth highlights the potential for substantial age-related inequality, and challenges in retaining younger populations. The pronounced older demographic means that policies should assist in the delivery of targeted services and amenities, such as healthcare, age-appropriate housing, and leisure facilities, and ensure new development generally is accessible.
26. The significant ethnic homogeneity of the population raises important considerations regarding diversity and inclusion, as the overwhelmingly White demographic contrasts sharply with broader national diversity trends. Policies will need to ensure that community inclusivity is enabled and that new development does not raise potential barriers faced by minorities
27. It is not a very diverse community and is likely to share traditional values. There is clearly a risk that the needs of younger people, in earlier and less well-off life stages, could be obscured by the burgeoning needs of older people, and that the needs of the few people in minority groups could be overshadowed. It is important therefore that in preparing the NDP, steps are taken to ensure that the well-being of all the community is safeguarded and enhanced.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Name of Officer/s completing assessment:	Steve Besford-Foster
Date of Assessment:	May 2025
Name of document or policy being assessed:	Creation of Ponsanooth Parish Neighbourhood Plan
1. What are the aims, objectives, outcomes, purpose of the policy, service change, function that you are assessing?	A local land-use plan adopted by Ponsanooth Parish Council that meets the sustainable development needs of the Ponsanooth Parish Community, is supported by the Ponsanooth Parish community at referendum, and eventually becomes part of the statutory Development Plan for Cornwall.
2. Who implements or delivers the policy, service or function? State if this is undertaken by more than one team, including any external partners.	Ponsanooth Parish TC is 'qualifying body' under Localism Act with power to create the NDP. The NDP is drawn up by a Steering Group made up of Councillors, local people and organisations.
3. Who will be affected by this proposal? For example, who are the external/internal customers, communities, partners, stakeholders, the workforce etc.	All local residents All local businesses All those with a 'stakehold' in Ponsanooth Parish Visitors to Ponsanooth Parish

<p>4. What are the likely positive or negative impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? What particular groups are affected more than others and why?</p>	<p>The NDP should lead to a balanced approach to development up to 2030 that meets current needs whilst protecting the interests of future generations. In so doing the NDP may include policies for new housing, employment areas, retail, leisure and entertainment, which whilst benefiting the community at large may be perceived to be against interest of particular individuals (e.g. people whose immediate living environment may be affected). In the NDP process, it is possible that some residents, such as young people, or those suffering from ill-health and persons with disabilities, may be less engaged and their 'voice' dis-proportionately muted in comparison to other groups, to their disadvantage. Given the preponderance of older people there is a risk that the interests of younger people may be under-valued in the process, leading to the adoption of policies which are disadvantageous to them.</p> <p>As the community is relatively un-diverse and likely to hold traditional values, there is a risk that the needs of the few people in minority groups could be overshadowed. Also, it is possible that some resultant developments are not as accessible as may be possible if not effectually influenced/controlled (for example the creation of environments that are wheelchair unfriendly).</p> <p>It is also a risk that inappropriate language may be used in community-based engagement processes.</p>
<p>5. Have the impacts identified in (4) above been assessed using up to date and reliable evidence and data? Do you need to engage or consult with any identified group/s?</p>	<p>The process of writing the NDP will include measures to ensure that all sectors are given reasonable opportunity to have a say in the process, for example by widespread engagement opportunities, using a range of formats for information giving/gathering that considers the needs of those within particular characteristic groups, seeking representation from all sectors on the Steering Group, and engaging with representative organizations, in accordance with the Ponsanooth Parish NDP Communications and Engagement Plan. Also it is appropriate to ensure that the emerging policies in the NDP take into account the high level of people who identify or are categorised as disabled.</p> <p>With regard to inappropriate language, Steering Group members will be encouraged to use terminology that is currently regarded as being inoffensive (See Appendix A).</p> <p>When the draft NDP is completed, it will be assessed under Stage Two of the process, using the template attached at appendix B, to ensure that protected characteristics are recognised and adequately addressed.</p>
<p>6. Are any of these identified groups considered to be vulnerable? If so have you consulted with or plan to consult with any relevant representative organisation.</p>	<p>Young people and vulnerable adults, older people, persons with disabilities and care-leavers may be affected. Representative organizations will be engaged with.</p>
<p>7. What plans do you have in place, or are developing, that will mitigate the likely identified negative impacts? For example, what plans, if any, will be put in place to reduce the impact?</p>	<p>Proposals for development put forward in the NDP will be checked for negative impacts (using a 'proofing checklist' in Stage 2 based on the criteria of this EqIA statement) and mitigation measures devised.</p>

8. Do you have plans in place to monitor the impact of the proposals once they have been implemented? The full impact of the decision may only be known after the proposals have been implemented.	Implementation impacts will be monitored by the Council when reviewing and making recommendations on Planning applications
9. What course of action does this EIA suggest you take? More than one of the following may apply	
Outcome 1: No major change required. The EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and/or all opportunities to promote equality will be taken in the arrangements to prepare the NDP.	✓ There is potential for discrimination but steps to promote equality are built into the process for creating the NDP.
Outcome 2: Changes to the NDP Vision, Objectives and Policies may be required to remove barriers identified by the EqIA or better promote equality.	See above.
Outcome 3: Some policy actions may need to be retained despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality identified. You will need to ensure that the EIA Stage 2 clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact	Not applicable at the current stage.
Outcome 4: Stop and rethink the policy when the EqIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination	Not applicable at the current stage.
10. Summary of proposals	
No significant negative impacts have been identified at this time in this EqIA, but there are clear risks that some groups may fail to become involved in writing this community based NDP, with the result that their interests are not represented proportionately in the final NDP. However the NDP will be reviewed at each stage of development. The process following on will need to be informed through the Communications and Engagement Plan that assesses how groups and individuals can be included in plan making, potential barriers to engagement and potential solutions.	
11. Key Impacts – Risk of exclusion of certain groups with particular needs and subsequent poor developments or needs not met.	
12. Course of action – Adoption of Engagement Strategy to ensure all are involved in creating the NDP, ‘Equalities proofing’ of proposals and policies.	

Appendix A: Guide to terminology to avoid offence.

The aim is to use inclusive language wherever possible.

Do Not Use	Do Use
Blind	Has a visual impairment (many people who are registered blind have some sight).
Coloured	Black, Asian, Chinese etc. Only refer to people's race or ethnicity if it's relevant to the information being communicated
Crippled	People with impairments and long-term health conditions
Deaf mute/profoundly deaf/hard of hearing	Use 'deaf' if you know someone has no hearing. If a person has some hearing use 'hearing impairment'
Dumb	(Has / with a) speech impediment
Dwarf / midget	Someone with restricted growth or short stature
Fits / Spells / Attacks	Seizures
Half-cast	Mixed race
Handicapped person	Disabled person or person with a disability
Mentally handicapped / mentally disabled /mentally defective/ retarded/ subnormal	(Has / with) learning disability
Mental patient, insane, mad	Person with a mental health condition
Mongolism	Downs Syndrome
Negro & other derivatives	Black
Non - white	Black (an all-encompassing term where visible skin colour difference exists)
Normal people / able-bodied people	Non-disabled people
Spastic	Person with Cerebral Palsy
Suffering from / victim of / stricken by / afflicted by	Has / with... arthritis, a mental health problem, diabetes etc
The disabled, handicapped	Disabled persons / persons with disabilities
The elderly	Older person/people
Confined to a wheelchair/ Wheelchair bound	Wheelchair user
Queer, camp, butch, etc	LGBTQ – or use each of these words as appropriate: Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Trans-sexual, Questioning (nb the use of the word Queer may be acceptable within LGBTQ groups but should not be assumed to be acceptable generally).
Some tips on behaviour when meeting people:	

- use a normal tone of voice, don't patronise or talk down
- don't be too precious or too politically correct – being super-sensitive to the right and wrong language and depictions will stop you doing anything
- never attempt to speak or finish a sentence for the person you are talking to
- address disabled people in the same way as you talk to everyone else
- speak directly to a disabled person, even if they have an interpreter or companion with them.

Language around sex and gender identity is evolving constantly. Try to use gender-neutral terms, rather than those that make sex distinction:

- You or they/their/them, not he/she or him/her
- People/person or individual(s), rather than man/men or woman/women
- Everyone/colleagues, rather than ladies and gentlemen/guys
- Parent or guardian, rather than mother or father
- Partner, rather than husband or wife
- Sibling, rather than brother or sister
- Artificial or synthetic, rather than man-made
- Humankind, not mankind
- Workforce, not manpower
- Cover or staff, rather than to 'man'

Appendix B: Equality Statement Stage 2

Please see separate document titled 'Ponsanooth NDP Equality and Diversity Statement Part 2 Revised March 2026.pdf'