

SANDON PARISH COUNCIL

**SANDON NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN**

2022 – 2036

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

MARCH 2023

Sandon Parish Council
Sandon Neighbourhood Plan, 2022-2036
Equalities Impact Assessment
March 2023



Sandon Parish Council
Recreation Ground
Rectory Chase
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) that has been prepared to accompany the submission version of the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 The Equalities Act places a duty on public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between persons who have a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not. 'Protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 1.3 This report assesses the submission version of the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that Sandon Parish Council (as the qualifying body responsible for preparing the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan) is satisfying its statutory duties in this regard.
- 1.4 EqIA is a systematic analysis of a policy or policies, in order to explore the potential for an adverse impact on a particular group or community. It is a method of assessing and recording the likely differential and/or adverse impact of a policy on people from different groups. If a policy results in unfairness or discrimination, then changes to eliminate or lessen the impact should be considered.
- 1.5 The purpose of the analysis is to increase participation and inclusion, to change the culture of public decision-making and to place a more proactive approach to the promotion of equality and fairness at the heart of public policy. The processes involved in conducting the analysis should not be looked on as an end in themselves. Instead, it should be borne in mind that the aim is the promotion of fairness and equality of opportunity and thus it is the outcomes that are of primary concern. In undertaking the EqIA, it is important to keep in mind why the Sandon NP is needed, what the intended outcomes are, and how it will be ensured that the policies will work as intended.
- 1.6 For this purposes of this EqIA an assessment has been made on whether the Sandon NP has a positive, negative or neutral impact on each of the protected characteristics (in so far as data is available).

2. Baseline Data

- 2.1 Data for the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan area is available from the 2021 Census for the following protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race and religious belief. These are summarised in the box below and Illustrated overleaf (Figure 1).
- 2.2 No data is available for the following protected characteristics: gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and sexual orientation.

Sandon Neighbourhood Area – Population Characteristics

Total Population: 1,500

Age: 21.3% of the population are aged 19 or less, 53.5% are in the working age groups (ages 20-64), with 25.2% in the older age groups (over 64). (2021 Census)

Sex: 738 (49.2%) males; 762 (50.8%) females. (2021 Census)

Country of Birth: 94.1% of residents were born in the UK; 5.9% were born in other countries.

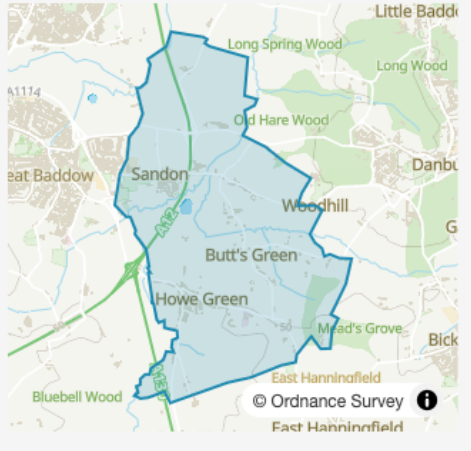
Ethnic group: 94.6% of residents are White; 0.8% of residents are Mixed/multiple ethnic groups; 3.2% are Asian/Asian British; 1.3% are Black, African, Caribbean or Black British; and 0.1% are of another ethnic group.

Religion: 52.8% of residents are Christian; 39.5% of residents do not have a religion; 1.1% of residents are Hindu; 2.1% of residents are of other religious affiliations. (2021 Census)

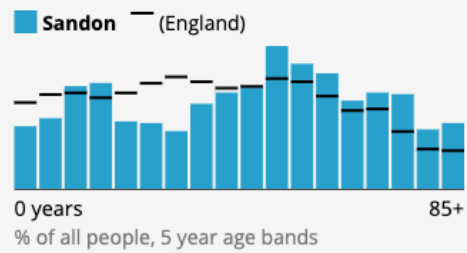
Source: ONS – 2021 Census

Sandon

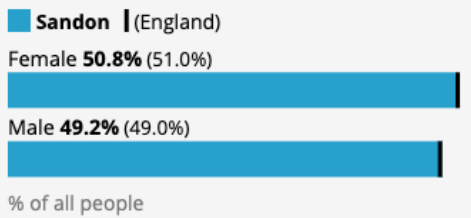
Area map



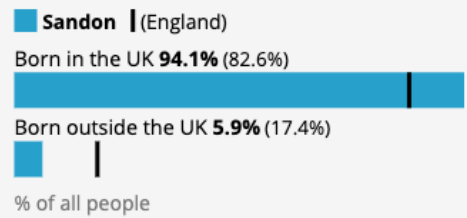
Age profile



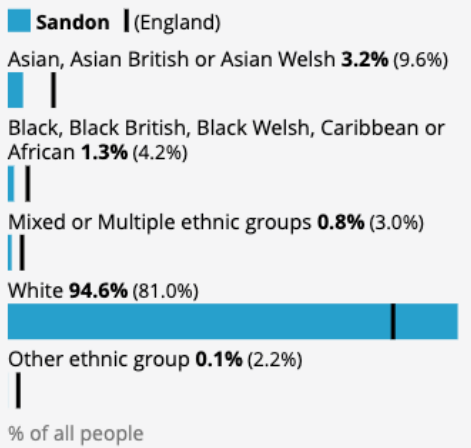
Sex



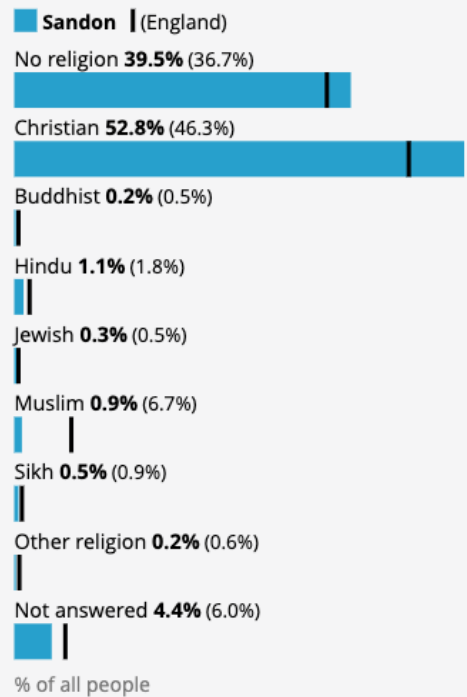
Country of birth



Ethnic group



Religion



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Figure 1: Sandon Neighbourhood Area – Population Characteristics

3. Process of Community Consultation

- 3.1 All written communications were in English. It was not considered necessary to translate them into any other language.
- 3.2 Throughout the Plan preparation process the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has sought to ensure that local residents, their representatives, local businesses, interest groups and wider interested parties, including statutory and regulatory bodies, have been actively consulted and their views sought.
- 3.3 Agendas, key reports and updates have been regularly provided online on the Sandon Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan website.
- 3.4 The overarching principles of the stakeholder engagement process has been to engage in a manner that is extensive, effective, inclusive, fair, transparent and proportionate. Various communication channels have been used to keep residents informed, invite participation and share views. These included:
- Regular updates on the Sandon Neighborhood Plan website, including notes of meetings, progress updates, information, documents and contact details.
 - Production of posters and flyers distributed in advance of consultation activities and events.
 - Regular updates were provided for and included in the Parish Council Newsletter, '*Sandon Topics*'.
 - Updates posted to the Sandon Parish Council Facebook page.
 - Public meetings of the Steering Group.
 - Presentations and updates at Annual Parish Meetings.
- 3.5 Widespread consultation was carried out during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Steering Group made every effort, using a variety of methods, to reach all of the local community. This included the following:
- A questionnaire was delivered to all households in the Parish in February 2018 seeking input on key topics for the Neighbourhood Plan. Responses were received from 163 households.
 - A questionnaire was delivered to businesses located in the Parish in early 2019.
 - A survey was prepared for school-age pupils to complete in the Autumn Term of 2019. This was undertaken in partnership with The Sandon School who converted the survey into an online form and -emailed to a sample of randomly generated

students inviting them to complete in their own time. 225 responses were received to the survey.

- Steering Group members spoke with members of the Sandon WI in February 2019 about the role and purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan and to seek their views on this.
- A talk was held with the Sandon Scouts Group at the Village Hall in February 2019, presenting the purpose of the Plan and asking for comments and feedback around key topics.
- Across March and April 2019 a community drop-in event was held to seek feedback on the vision, objectives and potential policies for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- In October and November 2019 the draft policies were uploaded to the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan website and displayed at the Sandon Christmas Fayre for comment.
- Ongoing liaison with Chelmsford City Council took place between 2019 and 2022 to seek input and advice on the emerging Plan.
- The Regulation 14 consultation including an exhibition and surveys, which was undertaken over January and February 2023.

3.6 More on the above can be found in the Consultation Statement prepared and submitted alongside the Neighbourhood Plan. Information is also available online via the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan website

3.7 Consideration has been given to all comments and responses made in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. In particular, the responses to visioning events and surveys in the early stages of the plan-making process were used to shape the vision and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan.

4. Likely Impact on Groups with Protected Characteristics

4.1 The Sandon Neighbourhood Plan Vision states that:

“In 2036 Sandon will continue to be an attractive historic Parish with its Village Greens, surrounded by open countryside and with a range of good quality housing, recreational and other facilities that meet the needs of local people while maintaining a cohesive and integrated rural community”.

4.2 The vision of the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan is expected to have a positive likely impact on groups with protected characteristics. It recognises and supports access for the whole community to local social, employment, leisure and environmental amenities.

4.3 The Sandon Neighbourhood Plan contains a series of objectives that set out how the Parish Council proposes to deliver its vision for Sandon up to 2036. Delivery of the objectives will be through a combination of planning policies, projects and community action. Each objective is reviewed to assess whether it is likely to have an impact on groups within the Parish with protected characteristics:

Objective	Likely Impact	Commentary
<p>Objective 1:</p> <p>To protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment of the Parish which will help respond to the threat of climate change, maintain the rural character of the Parish and its separation from nearby communities</p>	Positive	Objective 1 seeks to ensure that the attractive rural character of Sandon and surrounding countryside is preserved and, where opportunities arise, is improved. There is no clear impact or focus on residents with protected characteristics. However, the objective will also help preserve Sandon’s biodiversity and natural environment and supports measures that make the area more resilient to the impact of climate change. Overall, it is deemed to have a positive impact on residents with protected characteristics.

<p>Objective 2:</p> <p>To preserve and where possible enhance the historic character of the Parish and to enhance the quality of the built heritage and their setting, archaeology and historic landscape features.</p>	Neutral	<p>The purpose of Objective 2 is to protect the historic environment of Sandon Parish and to ensure that any new development is built to a good quality design standard. This will help maintain a sense of place and identity, with good design contributing to safe and welcoming spaces for all. Although considered beneficial for the community as a whole, the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment is not deemed to have a clear impact or focus on residents with protected characteristics.</p>
<p>Objective 3:</p> <p>To protect and enhance open green spaces and recreational facilities within the Parish, ensuring spaces are multifunctional in order to maximise health and well-being benefits to the community and to provide good access to these amenities.</p>	Positive	<p>The purpose of Objective 3 is to ensure that open green space and open countryside is protected and available for recreational use, and is intended to help provide access to green space for residents with protected characteristics and thus have a positive impact.</p>
<p>Objective 4:</p> <p>To support housing that responds to the needs of all sectors of the community, including market and affordable housing, accommodation that is or can be made adaptable for a variety of life stages, including independent living housing for older people and people with disabilities, elderly accommodation and care and reflect quality of place, the character and quality of the built and natural environment.</p>	Positive	<p>The purpose of Objective 4 is to support housing developments in accordance with the Local Plan policies but require them to be proportionate to the local scale, responsive to the needs of the parish, as well as making provision for the kind of housing that is needed within the Parish. It is thus expected to have a positive impact on residents with protected characteristics.</p>
<p>Objective 5:</p> <p>To require that new developments are designed to ensure Sandon</p>	Neutral	<p>Objective 5 requires that any new development is designed to the best standards of design and takes every opportunity to contribute to the</p>

continues to be a sustainable settlement.		achievement of sustainable development whilst respecting the historic character and rural setting of the parish. Although high quality design is an important development consideration, there is no clear impact or focus on residents with protected characteristics.
<p>Objective 6:</p> <p>To require that the infrastructure within the Parish has the capacity to accommodate new development without adversely affecting the local environment.</p>	Positive	The purpose of Objective 6 is to ensure that local infrastructure is able to cope satisfactorily with any additional demands placed on it by new development. The provision of infrastructure that supports development and daily life is considered to have a positive impact for all, including residents with protected characteristics.
<p>Objective 7:</p> <p>To actively support measures for connectivity for the proposed new large scale developments to the north of the Parish with the rest of the Parish.</p>	Positive	Objective 7 promotes measures to encourage easier access and integration with the rest of the Parish and its facilities including, for example, a safe and secure network of footpaths, wheelchair access where possible, cycle ways and bridleways. Supporting improved accessibility for all residents to homes, jobs, public transport and recreational facilities is deemed to have a positive impact on residents with protected characteristics.
<p>Objective 8:</p> <p>To support and improve local community facilities such as the Churches, Pub, garden centre and Village Hall and Sports Club.</p>	Positive	Objective 8 seeks to protect and where possible improve community facilities in the Parish, supporting daily life, social inclusiveness and community cohesion. It is deemed to have a positive impact on residents with protected characteristics.
<p>Objective 9:</p>	Positive	Although highway matters are the responsibility of Essex County Council, Objective 9 seeks to take

<p>To support measures to improve highway safety, reduce the speed and quantity of through traffic, and improve sustainable transport options such as cycle routes, bus services and the local footpath network.</p>		<p>opportunities to improve road safety and upgrade provision for the more sustainable forms of transport, supporting improved access for all residents by active and healthy means. It is thus deemed to have a positive impact on residents with protected characteristics.</p>
<p>Objective 10: To support initiatives which meet the needs of the local economy and local businesses, while at the same time preserving the rural nature of the village. Employment opportunities in residential areas will be supported where they are appropriate to Sandon in terms of scale, character, and traffic impact.</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Objective 10 seeks to sustain existing local small businesses and encourage new small business to become established, where it fits with the rural nature of the surroundings. The provision of employment opportunities is not directly related to but is considered to have a positive impact on residents with protected characteristics.</p>

- 4.4 All of the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan objectives are considered to have a **positive or neutral impact** on those with protected characteristics. There are no individual objectives that are considered likely to have a negative impact.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Sandon Neighbourhood Plan provides a suite of objectives and policies to respond to the vision for the benefit of the local community as a whole including those with protected characteristics.
- 5.2 In preparing the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan, Sandon Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have sought to engage widely with all of the local community. They have gone beyond minimum consultation requirements to gather the views of the community.
- 5.3 In conclusion, the assessment finds the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan to be appropriate and that the duty of care prescribed by the Equalities Act (2010) is met.

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Sandon Neighbourhood Plan: 2022 - 2036

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