

Test Valley Borough Council

Population Equality

information

2026

Introduction

This report outlines demographic information about the population of Test Valley, including age, disability, gender reassignment, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief (includes lack of belief), race and marriage. Compiling, analysing and presenting this data forms part of our longstanding commitments to empower our communities, ensure all voices are heard and help us meet the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

In April 2023, we adopted our new Corporate Plan 2023-2027: *A Place for Everyone – Supporting our Communities to Thrive*. Inclusion is one of the key priorities underpinning the corporate plan, reinforcing our commitment to strengthening and supporting equality and diversity. Our communities told us how important inclusiveness was to them, and we have developed our Plan accordingly - to respond to their most pressing concerns whilst ensuring that we meet the needs of individuals and groups in our communities.

As a public body we work to:

- Ensure equality of opportunity
- Ensure fair treatment
- Ensure equal access to services, to information and to employment.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, race, ethnic or national origin, age, religion or belief, or sexual orientation for our employees and for service users.
- Promote good relations between different groups and individuals within our community.
- Ensure quality services for everyone in the community.

We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all, fair treatment and equal access to our services, for all of our residents.

Our duties under the Equality Act 2010

We are required to publish information that demonstrates our compliance with the Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010.¹ This means that we have to show that we have had, in the exercise of our functions, **due regard** to the need to:

- **eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act**
- **advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it**
- **foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.**

Having **due regard** for advancing equality means:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

We must demonstrate that we considered how the decisions we make and the services we deliver affect people who share different protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- sex (gender)
- sexual orientation
- religion or belief (includes lack of belief)
- race
- marriage and civil partnership.

¹For more information on the Equality Act, and our duties under it, please visit [Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities - GOV.UK](#)

Definitions

Sex

The UK government defines sex as the biological aspects of an individual as determined by their anatomy, which is produced by their chromosomes, hormones and their interactions. It is something that is assigned at birth and is generally male or female

Gender

The UK government defines gender as a social construction relating to behaviours and attributes based on labels of masculinity and femininity; gender identity is a personal, internal perception of oneself and so the gender category someone identifies with may not match the sex they were assigned at birth. An individual may see themselves as a man, a woman, as having no gender, or as having a non-binary gender – where people identify as somewhere on a spectrum between man and woman.

Disability

A disabled person is defined under the equality Act 2010 as someone with 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."

About the Data

The data in this report, unless stated otherwise, comes from the 2021 Census.

If you have any questions about the data above, please contact the Policy Team at policyteam@testvalley.gov.uk

The Data

<p>Population and Age†</p>	<p>The population of Test Valley at the 2021 census was 130,492. At the 2011 census, this figure was 116,398 – meaning the population of the borough has increased by 12.1% over ten years. In Hampshire, and nationally the population has increased by 6.3%.</p> <p>According to the Hampshire Small Area Population forecast the population of Test Valley in 2026 is 136,075. This is expected to grow to 140,071 by 2030.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41% of the population live in Andover, and 18% of the population live in Romsey. • 16.6% of the population are school children and students • 6.1% are military veterans. <p>The average age for a resident in Test Valley is 44, the figure is the same in Hampshire as a whole. Nationally the average age is 40.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25.08% of the Test Valley population is over 65. • 54.88% of over 65s are women and 45.12% of over 65s are men. • 21.60% of Test Valley residents are 18 years of age and under. • 51.17% of those aged 18 and under are girls and 48.83% are boys
<p>Gender</p>	<p>According to the Hampshire Small Area Population forecast for 2026, 51.9% of Test Valley residents are women and 48.1% are men.‡</p> <p>17 (36.95%) of Test Valley’s 43 Borough Councillors are women and four of the eight (50.0%) Cabinet members are female.</p>
<p>Ethnicity</p>	<p>According to the 2021 Census, 88.0% of the population in Test Valley is White British, with 12.1% of the population from Black, Asian, other white or Mixed/Multiple ethnic backgrounds.</p> <p>There are 76 main languages spoken in Test Valley, and 95.8% of residents have English as their first language§</p>

¹ 2026 Small Area Population Forecast, Hampshire County Council, accessed March 2026. Further information about these forecasts is available from the HCC website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/facts-figures/population/estimates-forecasts>

§ Census 2021

<p>Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showmen and Boater (GTRSB)</p>	<p>Very little data regarding the number of Gypsies and Travellers in the borough at any one time is available. The latest EMTAS (Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service) figures record 120 children from GTRSB backgrounds in Test Valley schools.**</p> <p>At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 259 people who identified as White Roma, Gypsy or Irish Traveller living in the borough.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>At the time of the 2021 census, 15.6% of the borough’s population were disabled, as defined by the Equality Act, of which 5.8% were limited a lot in their day-to-day activity and 9.8% were limited a little.</p> <p>Nationally, 17.3% of the population were disabled, of which 7.5% were limited a lot in their day-to-day activities, and 10.2% were limited a little.</p>
<p>Religion</p>	<p>53.7% of people living in Test Valley have a religious belief or faith, whilst 40.6% stated they had no religion (5.7% of people did not state a religion).</p> <p>50.5% of people stated their religion as Christianity, this was the most common religion stated.</p> <p>0.9% of people identified as Muslim, 0.8% of people identified as Hindu, 0.5% identified as Buddhist, 0.4% identified as Sikh, 0.1% as Jewish, and 0.5% as adhering to another religion.</p>
<p>LGBTQ+</p>	<p>In Test Valley, 91.5% of people identified as heterosexual/straight, and 6.1% did not answer. 1.1% were gay or lesbian, 1% were bisexual and 0.2% stated another sexual orientation.</p> <p>The 2021 Census records 233 same-sex marriages in the borough, and 144 same-sex civil partnerships.</p> <p>241 people responded that were transgender – meaning they had a gender identity that was different from the gender assigned at birth. In Test Valley, trans people male up this makes up 0.4% of the borough’s population.</p>
<p>Socio-economic</p>	<p>The English Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 is designed to identify areas where communities lack resources and are in need. To do this, seven factors are considered. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • income deprivation • employment deprivation • education, skills and training deprivation • health deprivation and disability • crime

** Hampshire County Council Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service data, 2026.
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/emtas/data>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• barriers to housing and services• living environment deprivation. <p>Much of Test Valley is not considered to be deprived, according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2025. However, Andover Harroway and Andover Romans ward have areas which fall amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.^{††}</p> <p>2.5% of economically active people in Test Valley are unemployed, compared with 5.2% nationally.^{‡‡}</p>
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^{††} The English Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019. Accessed March 2026:

http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html

^{‡‡} Annual Population Survey. Accessed March 2026:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/methodologies/annualpopulationsurveyapsqmi>

