



# Local Area Inclusion Plan

## Derby City 2025-2028



Derby City Council

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This Local Area Inclusion Plan expresses how the Derby local system will meet the needs of children and young people with additional needs, particularly SEND and those in Alternative Provision, so that they can succeed, thrive and live their best life.

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# Foreword

## As Strategic Director of People Services for Derby City Council I'm delighted to share with you the city's Local Area Inclusion Plan for 2025.

Our teams from across Education, Health and Social Care have been working together to understand the needs of Derby's children and young people from all backgrounds, and how best to support them in achieving active, fulfilling lives. We've ensured this approach begins at birth and follows through into adulthood, helping our young people transition from school into whichever exciting paths await them.

Driven by a combination of data and lived experiences, the aims set out within this plan target areas we're keen to strengthen, from improving early access to neurodiversity assessments and support, to championing ambitious outlooks for our school leavers. We've deepened our understanding of the challenges faced by children and families with SEND considerations by creating forums for both young people and their carers and are using these conversations to improve our services across the board.

Ensuring our young people thrive is at the heart of this plan, and I'm truly excited to see our dedicated teams and services bring this to life over the coming year.

**Andy Smith**

**Strategic Director of People Services, Derby City Council**



## Derby and Derbyshire's Integrated Care Board have worked closely with our partners across Derby City in bringing together this plan for Derby's children and young people.

Sharing information and best practice across disciplines has helped us to set out clear aims, with an ambition for a seamless and integrated approach to health, education, and social care for our young people.

Alongside our partners, in response to challenges such as the emotional and behavioural needs of children and young people and waiting times for neurodiversity assessments, we have implemented additional support through our Neurodiversity Community Hubs and the advice and signposting available through our Emotional Health and Wellbeing website:

<https://derbyandderbyshireemotionalhealthandwellbeing.uk>

These areas continue to be a key priority in our plans.

Drawing on what's been working well, and highlighting opportunities for further development, we've set out clear aims to improve the experiences of our young service users and their families, and will continue to champion their successes towards the brightest of futures.

**Dean Howells**

**Executive Director / Chief Nurse Officer, Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board**



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Being a part of the SEND Ambassadors Group has been a great experience for me. I often feel like the people in charge of making the big decisions for the city are much older and disconnected from me, and shouldn't be able to make choices that affect me without knowing what my daily life is really like.

At the Ambassador meetings we discuss important topics such as health and the environment, and I feel like I'm actually being listened to and my voice matters. As young people we're all concerned with the world we're going to inherit as adults, and being able to speak on these topics makes me feel more optimistic and like we're able to make changes for the better.

I enjoy sharing my views and hearing what the others have to say, and I'm glad that people are paying attention to what really matters in our lives!

**Niall,**  
**SEND Student Ambassador**

*When we asked young people what this meant to them, they said:*

*"I have real-life experiences, learning opportunities, good careers advice and guidance, and insight into the world of work"*

*"I have a plan for my future"*

*"I am active, independent and take part in my local community"*

*"I enjoy good physical and mental health and live a healthy lifestyle"*

*"I am supported to dream big"*

*"Those that care for me understand how they can help me and realise my potential"*



We believe we can achieve these outcomes via three interconnected aims, championing the best interests of all children and young people (CYP) and paying particular attention to the most disadvantaged children, including those with SEND and those in AP.

These aims emerged from consultation with stakeholders across the city, and from reflecting on our achievements in meeting our strategic aims as established in the 2022-25 SEND Plan and our Self Evaluation Framework. This is combined with our understanding of the demands, pressures and needs of CYP in Derby, and the strategies and developments required to address these.

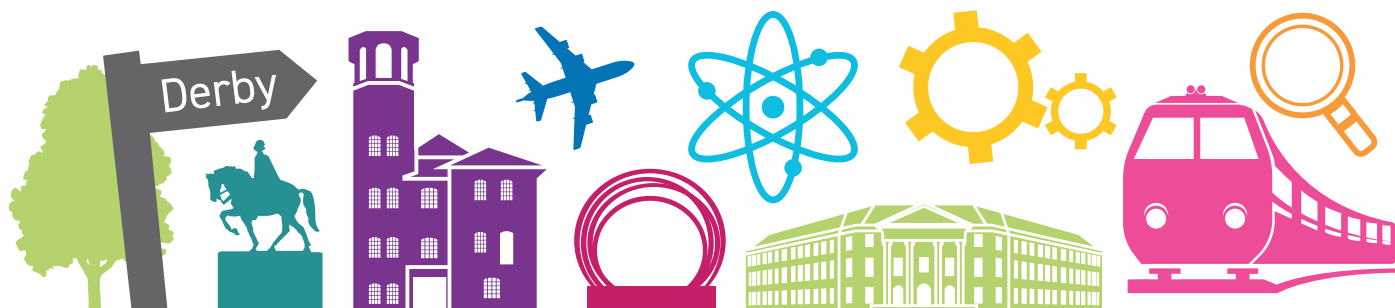
- 1. Champion an ambitious and inclusive city.**
- 2. A system that meets the needs of our young people at the right time and place.**
- 3. A strong place-based collaborative system.**



# Our community, our children and our young people

## Welcome to Derby

Derby is a compact but proud city with big ideas. We're known for our history of innovation and we want to create new opportunities for everyone today.



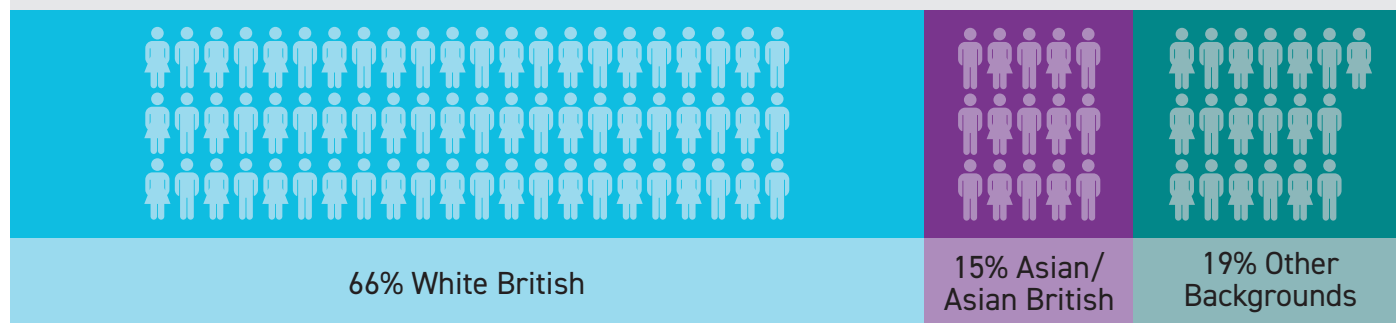
## A growing city

Over 261,000 people live in Derby.



## Diverse and proud

Derby is home to people from many different backgrounds.



## Facing challenges

1 in 3 people live in areas that are among the most deprived in England.



## Child poverty

38% of children in Derby live in poverty. 22% of 0–15-year-olds live in low-income families.\*

38%



22%

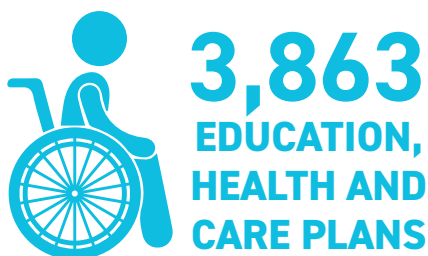
## Children of school age

Derby has 41,907 school-age (5–16) children.



## SEND support in Derby

3,863 children have Education, Health and Care Plans. Another 6,258 get SEN Support in schools.\*\*

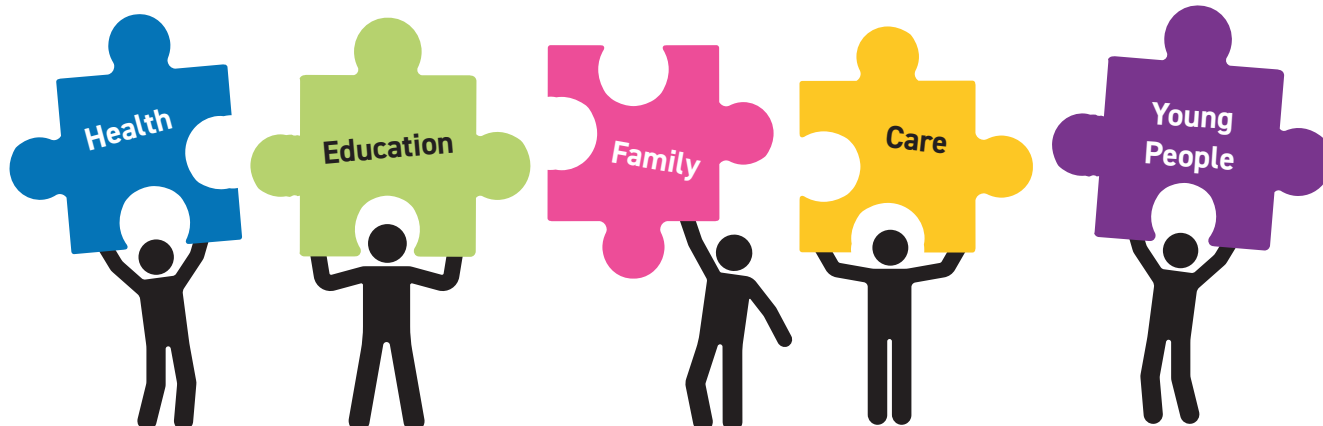


6,258  
SEN SUPPORT



## Working together for better outcomes

Leaders across the city want to build a more inclusive system that supports every child and family.



\*<https://www.gov.uk/statistics>, 2024. \*\*May 2025.



## Aim 1

## *Champion an ambitious and inclusive city*

We want every young person in Derby to feel supported and have the opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or needs. Our aim is to ensure every school's culture and practice is inclusive and consistent, enabling better outcomes for children and to make Derby a place where all children and young people can thrive, dream big, and have clear plans for their future in a child-centric learning environment.

### *Our objectives*



- A city that supports all young people to gain real-life experiences, dream big and work with them to have a plan for their future through the Derby Promise.
- A city that fosters a culture of belonging and is a safe place to thrive so that children and young people can participate in their community.
- A city that collaboratively addresses systemic issues that are barriers to success.

### *Data*



- In Early Years and Key Stage 1 CYP achieve across maths, reading and writing.
- In Key Stages 2 and 4 our outcomes are below the national average.
- 7.9% of 16-25 year olds in Derby are NEET.

### *What's working well*



#### **Derby city inclusion charter**

A common code of practice with five key principles to inclusion, almost every school in Derby has pledged to commit to the charter, working together to advocate and develop relational, trauma and attachment informed practice across schools in the city. We believe in maintaining a community within each school, so that children and young people feel they belong and are valued and visible, and able to grow and thrive within their school.

#### **In-year fair access**

Our robust system wide in-year fair access process and behaviour panel has maintained low exclusions. This includes working together with parents to address unusual levels of elective home education, lower than national rates of attendance, and maximising staying put and providing a sense of 'belonging' for young people known to or previously known to a social worker.

#### **Opportunity area**

Derby has been an opportunity area since before the pandemic. The priority pre-pandemic was to narrow the gap and raise aspirations, however the focus must remain on an inclusive curriculum and improving outcomes. The sector will continue to lead on establishing an aspirational curriculum, and through the Derby Promise be supported with an industry-led curriculum, enhanced through artificial intelligence. 97% of community schools are rated good and outstanding.



## Early years strategy

Our Early Years Strategy recognises the progress that we have made as a city in improving outcomes for our most disadvantaged children. Derby ranks 10th in the country for the achievement of children with SEN or in receipt of FSM for GLD attainment in 2023/4, reflecting the impact when children with additional needs are a focus. High rates of attendance at the age of 2,3 and 4 (FIGS) offer a clear opportunity to improve outcomes for all. Through the Early Years Strategy, the city is working together to improve the standards of the workforce, recruitment of staff and develop an aspirational curriculum for 0-7 year olds. There remain challenges in narrowing the gap between achieving a Good Level of Development in Derby compared to national figures, which is amplified by a recruitment and retention challenge.

## More children educated in local schools

There has been an investment of £24m in building provision, inclusive environments and resources. Mainstream preference underpins the city's approach to enabling children with SEND to access local schools, accessing an aspirational curriculum so that they can go on to realise their ambitions. This includes those who cannot attend school due to medical needs, and those who need a flexi learning package with therapeutic support. Together we have built a system-wide EBSNA pathway that supports children with emotional wellbeing needs to remain in education. Despite this parents remain unconfident in the local offer.

## Preparing for adulthood

Preparation for adulthood begins in the early years and continues through to 25 and is at the centre of the Derby Promise. It is our ambition as a Local Area that as many young people as possible meet the Preparing for Adulthood outcomes across the four pathways of independent living, good health, employment and friends, family and community. An ambitious and inclusive city needs to consider how it prepares children and young people for life after school and what support is available to those at post-16 to access good quality independent careers information, advice and guidance, work experience, supported internships, apprenticeships and employment. The current levels of Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) 16-17 and 18+ for all young people in Derby is an area of focus for the City.

## Our priorities



- 1. Increase attainment for CYP with SEND and those in alternative provision to meet the national average.**
  - Through developing and sharing curriculum material
  - Creating a city that reads together,
  - Improving adaptive teaching and learning
  - Raising aspirations through an industry-led curriculum
  - Celebrating diversity in our schools through a curriculum that is diverse, ambitious and creative.
- 2. Through the Derby Promise expand the opportunities for independent careers information and guidance, and work experience by providing a bridge to all the key economic developments in Derby and across EMCCA. This includes supported internships, apprenticeships and employment for those NEET and with additional needs.**
- 3. Ensure a coherent approach across education, health and care to Children Missing Education (CME) including those electively home educated and those not accessing a full-time curriculum and personal development offer.**

## Aim 2

# *A system that meets the needs of our children at the right time and the right place*

**We want to make sure every child in Derby gets the right support when they need it, in the right way. We aim to prevent problems from getting worse by offering early help, so children and families have positive experiences of the system.**

We know that poverty impacts the educational development of children by 22 months, but this can be addressed directly via quality first teaching and an adaptive curriculum. We also know that the social and emotional development, communication skills and interaction skills of children and young people have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, and those young people are still trying to navigate the education system. Research has shifted the focus of support away from a specialist model of diagnosis and directing children to a special school for most CYP, to one that is grounded in a shared agenda of early intervention; targeted support; recognising child development, emotional wellbeing and the impact of the environment before escalation; and an education setting that enables access to the most appropriate and broadest curriculum, providing an offer that fosters broader horizons by access to excellent personal and social development.

## *Our objectives*



- To enable access to early support and intervention.
- Thus prevent escalation of need.
- Ensure that CYP and their families have positive experiences of the system.

## *Data*



- Derby's permanent exclusions are significantly below the national average.
- A disproportionate number of CYPs are not in school.
- There are significant waiting times for some NHS specialist services.

## *What's working well*



### **Meeting needs earlier**

The demand for specialist services in Derby is on a consistent upward trajectory, reflecting a medical model of additional needs rather than supporting children earlier. This means that often only specialist provision is commissioned. This means that children and young people in Derby wait too long to have their needs met through assessments, and where appropriate, diagnosis and plans across education, health and care. Our focus must be to meet needs earlier to ensure appropriate support through an improved communication programme and Local Offer; high-quality plans at pre-EHCP and post-EHCP that support positive outcomes; and supporting parents to understand the integrated therapeutic curriculum in place in mainstream and local special schools. The demands have also emphasised the pressures on mainstream provision and universal and targeted services. In turn this has led to

strengthening the culture of parents, carers, children and young people to access the support there is in place earlier. This includes a neurodiversity hub, local family hubs, and inclusive youth activity programmes and improved provision at SEN support level. By adopting this approach, those that need specialist interventions can access them in a more timely manner.

### Developing our workforce

Schools have access to our specialist teams in local mainstream provision (including those for multisensory and neurodiversity) which provide specialist teaching and learning strategies, and mentoring and coaching for staff; we have provided a graduated approach framework so that staff know the types of intervention they could use to meet needs. We are implementing a range of innovative whole-setting approaches to meeting individual children's needs, including workforce development in trauma and attachment, play therapy, forest schools and packages of support that can combine mainstream school with outside personal development and specialist therapy.

### Specialist wait times

A pilot project aiming to address the long ND assessment waiting lists for under 5s was implemented in autumn 2024. The project has been an incredible success, bringing together health, education and care services to ensure that children get the right support at the right time. The Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools Project (PINS) is a nationally-funded pilot project for 2024/25 and 2025/26. In Derby, PINS is upskilling school staff and providing early interventions, while helping to shape whole-school SEND provision.

### Mental health support teams in schools

Better access to emotional wellbeing and mental health services through mental health support teams in schools have led to more children and young people accessing wellbeing support. The prevalence of children and young people known or previously known to children's social care demonstrates the impact of the environment on children's ability to sustain good emotional resilience, which requires more targeted interventions. Thus, a new integrated inclusion service has been established to ensure a more holistic family approach to addressing needs at a school level. Working with the Inclusion Strategy Group the focus is to consolidate and embed the training on belonging, trauma and attachment at a classroom level.

## Our priorities



- 1. Strengthen and expand the targeted early intervention strategies and support for 0-25 across education, health and care that reduce the need for specialist services. Respond earlier to identified Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) and mental health needs and tackle prolonged wait times for specialist interventions. Improve the transition into adult services.**
- 2. Address the poor timeliness and strengthen the quality of communication, plans, reviews and assurance of their impact on CYP and how resources are used. Implement AI solutions.**

## Aim 3

# *A strong, collaborative system that helps children live their best life*

**We want to create a system where children and young people in Derby have the support they need to thrive and succeed. This means working together with families, schools, and other services to ensure children have the best opportunities for their future.**

The system-led partnership in Derby has meant that we can establish an ambitious and inclusive system, aligning priorities and resources to enable young people to live their best life. It also means that we can openly and transparently hold the system to account and measure impact.

## *Our objectives*



- **Co-production: valuing the uniqueness of all**
- **Transparency: clear and honest communication across the system**
- **Partnership and collaboration: a seamless, integrated system**
- **We have a skilled workforce**
- **Learning: we value learning, reflection and iterative development**
- **Holding the system to account on meeting the outcomes established by young people**

## *Data*



- **Over 2,000 CPD sessions have been delivered across schools.**
- **Need to improve consistency of our communications with parents, carers and families.**
- **There is a requirement to establish a financially stable system.**

## *What's working well*



### **Working together**

We have built a strong partnership across education, health, and care services in Derby to make sure support is easier to access through the effective collaboration of services. Several collaborative groups help guide this work, such as strategic groups that represent schools, task and finish groups across the city and ultimately the Local Area Inclusion Partnership Board and Health and Wellbeing Board.

### **A joint understanding of needs**

Our refreshed JSNA has enabled the partnership to understand needs, demands, and then to shape the joint commissioning strategy for Derby. To ensure this is current, the boards focus on operating within an intelligence-led system.



## Listening to families, children and young people

Understanding how parent/carers, children, young people and young adults experience the system provides the cornerstone of our programme of improvement. There is a SEND Parent/Carer Forum that ensures engagement at a strategic level, and a programme of work with the wider forum will improve the direct communication of those leading the system. A hundred young SEND ambassadors ensure we are also grounded in the voice of children, young people and young adults; representation is embedded in local boards. Work is underway to expand representation for those in alternative provision and enable a better bridge of these voices of experts-by-experience in driving the pathway improvements for those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

## Quality assurance

The city-wide quality assurance programme means that we have a better sense of the impact of multidisciplinary support at a child level, but also provides continuous assurance that the packages of support, including alternative provision, provide good outcomes for children and young people.

## Workforce development

A city-wide workforce development strategy is beginning through the development of education setting staff in mainstream provision to build their capacity to meet the needs of children and young people with additional needs. To date 2,000 staff have been trained in trauma-informed practice and attachment theory, and unconditional positive regard, with a further 100 trained in play therapy. All schools have had Educational Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA), Autism Education Trust, and sensory training rolled out. Our plan is to roll out positive behavioural strategies, total communication and CBT for specialist and targeted interventions, with Thrive and SLC techniques used at a universal and targeted level.

## Our priorities



- 1. Establish a financially sustainable system.**
- 2. Develop and implement a city-wide workforce development programme across education, health and care, working with the University, health providers and special schools to build the confidence and skills of staff to meet needs.**
- 3. Increase our understanding of the experience of the system through widespread quality assurance and surveys with parents/carers, children and young people. From this, coproduce with them a clear communication plan celebrating and building confidence in the work underway in Derby to ensure access to a high-quality Local Offer.**
- 4. Establishing a consistent and clear system-wide PFA pathway across education, health and care to support neurodiverse and LD children, young people and young adults, including access to employment and supported accommodation.**

# How we measure success and stay accountable

In Derby, we are committed to ensuring that the systems in place for children and young people truly make a difference. To measure success, we rely on outcomes-based accountability and have established clear outcomes that are tracked through key performance indicators (KPIs). This means that we can assess how well the system is working, make improvements where needed, and stay focused on the most important goals.

## *The 6 key outcomes and how we measure them:*

### 1. I am active, independent, and participate in society:

Engagement in youth activities (CYP Aspirations survey)	Participation in Independent Travel Training (ITT) programmes	Number of young people in supported accommodation in adult services	Reduction in social isolation (CYP Aspirations survey)
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### 2. I have a plan for my future:

Timeliness and quality of EHCPs and neurodiversity assessments	Availability of effective support before a diagnosis at SEN support/Individual Education Plan level	Establish a consistent and clear Planning For Adulthood pathway	Attendance rates, part-time timetables, and children missing education (CME) by vulnerable groups
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### 3. I have real-life experiences, learning opportunities, good careers advice, and guidance, and insight into the world of work:

Increase in young people (16-25) in education, employment, or training	Feedback from CYP Aspirations survey	Skills audit results	Tracking career advice and work experience opportunities
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### 4. I enjoy good physical and mental health and live a healthy lifestyle:

Annual health assessments for young people over 14	Timeliness of Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) assessments	Monitoring waiting times for mental health services	Health-related indicators like weight management and physical health
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### 5. Those that care for me understand how they can help me realise my potential:

Feedback from parents/carers and young people through surveys	Young people's feedback from forums and individual plans to understand their experiences of support
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### 6. I am supported to dream big:

Educational outcomes at all Key Stages (measuring whether children in Derby are achieving better than the national average)	Data on exclusions and suspensions	Annual feedback from the CYP Aspirations survey
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## *How we are held accountable:*

The governance arrangements under Aim 3 ensure that we stay focused on the six outcomes and continue to improve. These arrangements include:

- A clear accountability framework where the system is monitored and evaluated.
- Feedback loops from parents, carers, and young people, ensuring their experiences and input shape the system.
- Regular quality assurance checks and ongoing evaluation of how services are meeting the needs of children and young people.
- Collaboration among key groups, such as the SEND Parent/Carer Forum, local authorities, and health services, which ensures everyone stays aligned and accountable.
- By using these systems to measure success and gather feedback, we ensure that the work we do is having a positive impact on children and young people in Derby and that we continue to meet their evolving needs.



We can give you this information in any other way, style or language that will help you access it. Please contact us on **01332 640825** or **derby.gov.uk/signing-service**

#### **Punjabi**

ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ, ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ, ਜਿਹੜੀ ਇਸ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਇੱਥੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ: **01332 640825** ਜਾਂ **derby.gov.uk/signing-service**

#### **Polish**

Aby ułatwić Państwu dostęp do tych informacji, możemy je Państwu przekazać w innym formacie, stylu lub języku. Prosimy o kontakt: **01332 640825** lub **derby.gov.uk/signing-service**

#### **Slovak**

Túto informáciu vám môžeme poskytnúť iným spôsobom, štýlom alebo v inom jazyku, ktorý vám pomôže k jej sprístupneniu. Prosím, kontaktujte nás na tel. č.: **01332 640825** alebo na stránke **derby.gov.uk/signing-service**

#### **Urdu**

یہ معلومات ہم آپ کو کسی دیگر ایسے طریقے، انداز اور زبان میں مہیا کر سکتے ہیں جو اس تک رسائی میں آپ کی مدد کرے۔ براہ کرم **01332 640825** یا **derby.gov.uk/signing-service** پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں