

Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: September 2012	Directorate: Environment Culture and Communities	Section: Leisure and Culture (Parks & Countryside)
1. Activity to be assessed	The activity being assessed is the new Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (2012). This document has been produced to support the work carried out by Bracknell Forest Council in the management and development of parks and open spaces over the next 5 years.	
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing	
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Richard Walton (Head of Parks & Countryside)	
5. Who are the members of the EIA team?	Richard Walton, Graham Pockett (Parks & Countryside Development Officer), Carl Bustin (Senior Ranger), Rachel Broom (Senior Ranger)	
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	Key objectives of the Strategy are: A. Provision: Protect and establish public open space for recreation, play, sport, health, biodiversity, heritage and climate change mitigation and adaption that is appropriate to need; strategically located; and adaptable to future requirements B. Maintenance: Provide safe and welcoming public open space; attain and improve quality standards C. Use and Enjoyment: Make sure public open space supports well-being; encourages participation; and facilitates social inclusion	
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken for the Parks & Countryside service in March 2009. This summarises the facilities managed by the service (providing for recreation, landscape and nature conservation). The available evidence at the time of the assessment indicated that the service is well used by residents; satisfaction levels are high; and the type of user closely correlates to the local demographic.	
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.
		What evidence do you have to support this? E.g. equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation

			<p>of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data</p>
<p>8. Disability Equality</p>	<p>Y √</p>	<p>Positive.</p> <p>A key principle within the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy is to sustain and raise quality standards. This specifically includes assessment of accessibility criteria and implementation of works to improve access opportunities for people with disabilities. Positive measures include path surfaces, vegetation management, signage and information provision.</p>	<p>At a national level, The Urban Green Spaces Taskforce observed that some sectors of society use green space less than others, particularly older people (aged over 65), people with disabilities, women, black and minority ethnic people and children and young people aged 12-19 (Urban Green Nation: Building the evidence base, 2010).</p> <p>This is also reflected within 'Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: The national survey on people and the natural environment Annual Report' from the 2010-11 survey.</p> <p>There is a good range of best practice guidance available; including 'By all reasonable means' (Countryside Agency 2005). This includes information on maintenance standards and barriers to access. Issues such as path erosion and scrub encroachment are identified as physical barriers to access. Lack of accessible information and lack of confidence are also recognised barriers.</p> <p>The principle of Least Restrictive Access (LRA) identifies<i>"that all work, whether planned improvement or ad hoc maintenance, must meet the highest possible access standards for that piece of work. Where the highest access standards cannot be achieved – for example, because of insufficient funds, lack of consent by a landowner or practical difficulties – there should always be a clearly reasoned and documented justification for the decision to use a lower standard."</i></p> <p>At the local level, quality standards have been identified in accordance with national guidance. This has included consultation with groups and individuals who have relevant understanding and appreciation of varying disabilities e.g. carrying out audits with members of Be Heard, South Hill Park site visit with the Access Advisory Panel, regular liaison through the Local Countryside Access Forum.</p>

9. Racial equality	Y √		Positive Quality standards include consideration of public safety and security. Related works include measures such as scrub management to improve sight lines / natural surveillance.	The article Culture, Heritage and Access to Open Space as published in Open Space People Space (2007) identifies that satisfaction levels for ethnic minority children for leisure activity is lower, often related to fears over personal; safety and racial abuse. In addition to examples above, national guidance is also available through initiatives such as Secured by Design (established in 1989 and co-ordinated by the Association of Chief Police Officers)
10. Gender equality	Y √		Positive As summarised above (8. and 9.)	As summarised above.
11. Sexual orientation equality		N √	Neutral It is possible that there may be a positive impact on this group resulting from improved confidence about personal safety due to quality improvements. However, appropriate research has not been identified indicating that this protected characteristic will be effected more significantly than any other group	At this stage, no evidence has been identified of a differential impact on this protected characteristic
12. Gender re-assignment		N √	Neutral As above (11.)	At this stage, no evidence has been identified of a differential impact on this protected characteristic
13. Age equality	Y √		Positive As above (8. and 9.)	As summarised above
14. Religion and belief equality		N √	Neutral	At this stage, no evidence has been identified of a differential impact on this protected characteristic
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality		N √	Neutral	At this stage, no evidence has been identified of a differential impact on this protected characteristic

16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	N √	Neutral	At this stage, no evidence has been identified of a differential impact on this protected characteristic
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carer's/ex-offenders) and on promoting good community relations.	<p>People on lower incomes are likely to be more dependent on recreation opportunities closest to home. Limited choice (when compared with more affluent groups) could result in negative impacts e.g. if there are not sufficient parks and open spaces located close to residential areas.</p> <p>The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy supports work (led through the planning process) to facilitate appropriate provision of new facilities close to residential areas as a key component in delivering sustainable development.</p> <p>The Strategy also includes actions to increase community involvement in the management and maintenance of parks and open spaces.</p>		
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A		
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	N/A		
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N √	Please explain for each equality group
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	<p>Use of public open space is monitored through GreenSTAT. This is a web based questionnaire format that assesses factors such as reason for visit, satisfaction and visitor profile. As summarised on the website "<i>GreenSTAT is a system that gives local residents the opportunity to comment on the quality of their open spaces and how well they feel they are being managed and maintained. It allows site managers to compare the results with others up and down the country to give a truly national voice of what we think about our open spaces.</i>"</p> <p>Data collation is either via individual questionnaires submitted on-line by service users, or through targeted on site interviews. Alongside these surveys, visitor counts will be carried out to identify and monitor levels of use.</p> <p>Site audits will also be carried out to assess quality standards and to identify improvement projects.</p>		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N √	The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy does not include objectives or actions which will negatively impact on any of the protected characteristics and / or benefit one group to the disadvantage of another. Quality standards and related site improvement works will provide benefit to all groups and individuals.

23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.

Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
<p>The action plan for the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy is set out in section 6.4 of the document. This sets out key work areas under the themes of quantity, quality and use.</p> <p>Example actions include:</p> <p>Identify and secure new Open Space of Public Value as part of strategic green infrastructure within site allocations (as set out within the Local Development Framework)</p> <p>Sustain and improve Quality Standards for parks and open spaces through a prioritised programme of enhancement</p> <p>Identify and implement measures to address barriers to participation (e.g. site audits, consultation with key groups / individuals, scrub management, path surfacing, information provision)</p> <p>Raise awareness of parks and open spaces through targeted marketing and publicity</p> <p>Support and extend community involvement in the management and development of green spaces</p> <p>Review existing methodologies for collecting and collating visitor data. Develop a clear and consistent methodology for seeking visitor feedback and calculating levels of use</p>	<p>Continuous (linked to Plan periods)</p> <p>2012-2017</p> <p>2012 – 2017</p> <p>2012 - 2017</p> <p>2012 - 2017</p> <p>2012 - 2017</p>	<p>Cross service: Head of Planning Policy, Head of Development Management, Head of Parks & Countryside)</p> <p>Senior Rangers</p> <p>Senior Rangers</p> <p>Projects Officer</p> <p>Rangers</p> <p>Parks & Countryside Development Officer / Senior Rangers</p>	<p>Provision set out in policy and subsequently provided alongside new residential development</p> <p>Quality Assessment score of good, very good or excellent</p> <p>Quality Assessment score of good, very good or excellent</p> <p>High levels of use and satisfaction across all sectors / characteristics</p> <p>High levels of use and satisfaction across all sectors / characteristics</p> <p>High levels of use and satisfaction across all sectors / characteristics</p>
<p>24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?</p>	<p>Parks and Open Spaces Strategy</p>		
<p>25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Countryside Access Forum utilised to advise on all aspects of outdoor recreation • Site / path audits carried out to assess quality standards (including liaison with representative groups re. visitors with disabilities) 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• External assessment of key sites through participation in the Green Flag award scheme• Visitor surveys to monitor use and identify areas for improvement• Audience Development Plans in place for South Hill Park and Lily Hill Park identifying key actions to increase participation• Capital projects implemented to raise quality standards
26. Chief Officers signature.	Signature:  Date: 2 nd October 2012