

Equality Analysis (EA)

Financial Year
2014/15

Section 1 – General Information (Aims and Objectives)

Name of the proposal including aims, objectives and purpose

(Please note – for the purpose of this doc, 'proposal' refers to a policy, function, strategy or project)

Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan

Identifies priorities for biodiversity conservation in the borough for the period 2014-19, setting objectives and targets for important habitats and species. Sets out what different stakeholders, including the Council, social housing providers, developers, community groups, businesses and residents, can do to help achieve the objectives and targets.

See Appendix
A

Current decision
rating



Conclusion - To be completed at the end of the Equality Analysis process

(the exec summary will provide an update on the findings of the EA and what outcome there has been as a result. For example, based on the findings of the EA, the proposal was rejected as the impact on a particular group was unreasonable and did not give due regard. Or, based on the EA, the proposal was amended and alternative steps taken)

There is nothing in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan which would adversely impact on any equalities target group. All sections of the community can benefit from enhanced biodiversity and more attractive green spaces, and it encourages community participation and thus helps community cohesion.

Name: Abdul J Khan
(signed off by)

Date signed off: 09/09/2014
(approved)

Service area:
Strategy, Regeneration & Sustainability

Team name:
Sustainable Development Team

Service manager:
Jackie Odunoye

Name and role of the officer completing the EA:
John Archer, Biodiversity Officer

Section 2 – Evidence (Consideration of Data and Information)

What initial evidence do we have which may help us think about the impacts or likely impacts on service users or staff?

Several studies published in the last few years clearly demonstrate that contact with nature and access to natural green spaces is beneficial to people's physical and mental health and wellbeing. Therefore the default position, before any differential impacts on protected groups are considered, is that more attractive, biodiverse open spaces have the potential to benefit all sections of the community.

Section 3 – Assessing the Impacts on the 9 Groups

Please refer to the guidance notes below and evidence how you're proposal impact upon the nine Protected Characteristics in the table on page 3?

For the nine protected characteristics detailed in the table below please consider:-

- **What is the equality profile of service users or beneficiaries that will or are likely to be affected?**

Use the Council's approved diversity monitoring categories and provide data by target group of users or beneficiaries to determine whether the service user profile reflects the local population or relevant target group or if there is over or under representation of these groups

- **What qualitative or quantitative data do we have?**

List all examples of quantitative and qualitative data available
(include information where appropriate from other directorates, Census 2001 etc)

- *Data trends – how does current practice ensure equality*

- **Equalities profile of staff?**

Indicate profile by target groups and assess relevance to policy aims and objectives e.g. Workforce to Reflect the Community. Identify staff responsible for delivering the service including where they are not directly employed by the council.

- **Barriers?**

What are the potential or known barriers to participation for the different equality target groups? Eg- communication, access, locality etc.

- **Recent consultation exercises carried out?**

Detail consultation with relevant interest groups, other public bodies, voluntary organisations, community groups, trade unions, focus groups and other groups, surveys and questionnaires undertaken etc. Focus in particular on the findings of views expressed by the equality target groups. Such consultation exercises should be appropriate and proportionate and may range from assembling focus groups to a one to one meeting.

- **Additional factors which may influence disproportionate or adverse impact?**

Management Arrangements - How is the Service managed, are there any management arrangements which may have a disproportionate impact on the equality target groups

- **The Process of Service Delivery?**

In particular look at the arrangements for the service being provided including opening times, custom and practice, awareness of the service to local people, communication

Please also consider how the proposal will impact upon the 3 One Tower Hamlets objectives:-

- Reduce inequalities
- Ensure strong community cohesion
- Strengthen community leadership.

Please Note -

Reports/stats/data can be added as Appendix

| Target Groups | Impact – Positive or Adverse | Reason(s) |
|---------------|------------------------------|---|
| Race | Positive | <p>No racial group will suffer adverse impacts from the proposals in the LBAP, and people of all races can potentially enjoy the health benefits of access to nature and more attractive, biodiverse open spaces. There has for many years been a perception that biodiversity conservation is a white, middle-class interest. In Tower Hamlets we have been working hard to dispel this myth and, particularly through working with groups involved in food-growing, have been able to reach a diverse racial audience.</p> |
| Disability | Positive | <p>Enhancing biodiversity in open spaces has no adverse impact on accessibility, and where possible projects will improve access. Enhancing biodiversity in open spaces can significantly enhance the experience of disabled people visiting these spaces. For example, bee-friendly planting can be in the form of a sensory garden, using plants which are interesting to smell and touch, designed specifically for the enjoyment of blind people. An increase in birdsong may also be particularly enjoyed by people with limited vision.</p> <p>Biodiversity enhancements that involve tree and shrub planting have the potential, if poorly designed or sited, to provide cover where people could hide. This could reduce safety for users of an open space, or at least the perception of safety, which is sufficient to deter people from using an open space. Disabled people may be particularly vulnerable in this respect. The location and design of all projects involving tree and shrub planting will ensure that the safety and security of site users is fully safeguarded. Conversely, the LBAP encourages community participation in creating more attractive open spaces. This will lead to greater legitimate use of the space, which will discourage crime and anti-social behaviour and hence improve perceptions of safety.</p> |
| Gender | No differential impact | <p>Both men and women enjoy the health benefits of access to nature and more attractive, biodiverse open spaces. There is roughly equal gender representation in participation in biodiversity conservation at all levels, including visiting nature reserves, membership of environmental organisations and working as professional ecologists.</p> |

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| | | Biodiversity enhancements that involve tree and shrub planting have the potential, if poorly designed or sited, to provide cover where people could hide. This could reduce safety for users of an open space, or at least the perception of safety, which is sufficient to deter people from using an open space. Women may be particularly vulnerable in this respect. The location and design of all projects involving tree and shrub planting will ensure that the safety and security of site users is fully safeguarded. Conversely, the LBAP encourages community participation in creating more attractive open spaces. This will lead to greater legitimate use of the space, which will discourage crime and anti-social behaviour and hence improve perceptions of safety. |
| Gender Reassignment | No differential impact | Biodiversity enhancements that involve tree and shrub planting have the potential, if poorly designed or sited, to provide cover where people could hide. This could reduce safety for users of an open space, or at least the perception of safety, which is sufficient to deter people from using an open space. Gender-reassigned people may be particularly vulnerable in this respect. The location and design of all projects involving tree and shrub planting will ensure that the safety and security of site users is fully safeguarded. Conversely, the LBAP encourages community participation in creating more attractive open spaces. This will lead to greater legitimate use of the space, which will discourage crime and anti-social behaviour and hence improve perceptions of safety. |
| Sexual Orientation | No differential impact | <p>People of all sexual orientations can enjoy the health benefits of access to nature and more attractive, biodiverse open spaces.</p> <p>Biodiversity enhancements that involve tree and shrub planting have the potential, if poorly designed or sited, to provide cover where people could hide. This could reduce safety for users of an open space, or at least the perception of safety, which is sufficient to deter people from using an open space. LGBT people may be particularly vulnerable in this respect. The location and design of all projects involving tree and shrub planting will ensure that the safety and security of site users is fully safeguarded. Conversely, the LBAP encourages community participation in creating more attractive open spaces. This will lead to greater legitimate use of the space, which will discourage crime and anti-social behaviour and hence improve perceptions of safety.</p> |
| Religion or Belief | Positive | No religion or faith group will suffer adverse impacts from the proposals in the LBAP, and it contains nothing which would be contrary to the teachings of any religion. Most religions include some degree of belief that nature is important and should be looked after. |
| Age | Positive | People of all ages can enjoy the health benefits of access to nature and more attractive, biodiverse open spaces. Older people may have more limited ability or opportunity than other sections of the community to travel long distances to enjoy nature, and so particularly benefit from having natural spaces close to home. |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | Biodiversity enhancements that involve tree and shrub planting have the potential, if poorly designed or sited, to provide cover where people could hide. This could reduce safety for users of an open space, or at least the perception of safety, which is sufficient to deter people from using an open space. Older people and children may be particularly vulnerable in this respect. The location and design of all projects involving tree and shrub planting will ensure that the safety and security of site users is fully safeguarded. Conversely, the LBAP encourages community participation in creating more attractive open spaces. This will lead to greater legitimate use of the space, which will discourage crime and anti-social behaviour and hence improve perceptions of safety. |
| Marriage and Civil Partnerships. | No differential impact | People can enjoy the health benefits of access to nature and more attractive, biodiverse open spaces regardless of relationship status. There is no reason to think the proposals in the LBAP would have any differential impact in relation to this characteristic. |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | Positive | <p>Pregnant women and mothers with young children may have more limited ability or opportunity than other sections of the community to travel long distances to enjoy nature, and so particularly benefit from having natural spaces close to home.</p> <p>Biodiversity enhancements that involve tree and shrub planting have the potential, if poorly designed or sited, to provide cover where people could hide. This could reduce safety for users of an open space, or at least the perception of safety, which is sufficient to deter people from using an open space. Pregnant women and mothers with young children may be particularly vulnerable in this respect. The location and design of all projects involving tree and shrub planting will ensure that the safety and security of site users is fully safeguarded. Conversely, the LBAP encourages community participation in creating more attractive open spaces. This will lead to greater legitimate use of the space, which will discourage crime and anti-social behaviour and hence improve perceptions of safety.</p> |
| Other Socio-economic Carers | Positive | Carers are likely to have more limited ability or opportunity than other sections of the community to travel long distances to enjoy nature, and so particularly benefit from having natural spaces close to home. |

Section 4 – Mitigating Impacts and Alternative Options

From the analysis and interpretation of evidence in section 2 and 3 - Is there any evidence or view that suggests that different equality or other protected groups (inc' staff) could be adversely and/or disproportionately impacted by the proposal?

Yes? No?

If yes, please detail below how evidence influenced and formed the proposal? For example, why parts of the proposal were added / removed?

(Please note – a key part of the EA process is to show that we have made reasonable and informed attempts to mitigate any negative impacts. An EA is a service improvement tool and as such you may wish to consider a number of alternative options or mitigation in terms of the proposal.)

Where you believe the proposal discriminates but not unlawfully, you must set out below your objective justification for continuing with the proposal, without mitigating action.

Section 5 – Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Have monitoring systems been put in place to check the implementation of the proposal and recommendations?

Yes? No?

How will the monitoring systems further assess the impact on the equality target groups?

The Biodiversity Officer will ensure that safety is fully considered in all projects involving tree and shrub planting, and that opportunities are taken where possible to improve access for all people where this can be incorporated into a biodiversity project.

The Steering Group will consider equalities issues at least annually to assess whether there is a need for further improvement.

Does the policy/function comply with equalities legislation?
(Please consider the [OTH objectives](#) and [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) criteria)

Yes? No?

If there are gaps in information or areas for further improvement, please list them below:

How will the results of this Equality Analysis feed into the performance planning process?

Section 6 - Action Plan





*As a result of these conclusions and recommendations what actions (if any) **will** be included in your business planning and wider review processes (team plan)? Please consider any gaps or areas needing further attention in the table below the example.*

| Recommendation | Key activity | Progress milestones including target dates for either completion or progress | Officer responsible | Progress |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|----------|
| <p>Example</p> <p>1. Better collection of feedback, consultation and data sources</p> <p>2. Non-discriminatory behaviour</p> | <p>1. Create and use feedback forms. Consult other providers and experts</p> <p>2. Regular awareness at staff meetings. Train staff in specialist courses</p> | <p>1. Forms ready for January 2010 Start consultations Jan 2010</p> <p>2. Raise awareness at one staff meeting a month. At least 2 specialist courses to be run per year for staff.</p> | <p>1.NR & PB</p> <p>2. NR</p> | |

| Recommendation | Key activity | Progress milestones including target dates for either completion or progress | Officer responsible | Progress |
|----------------|--------------|--|---------------------|----------|
| | | | | |

Appendix A

(Sample) Equality Assessment Criteria

| Decision | Action | Risk |
|---|---|--|
| As a result of performing the analysis, it is evident that a risk of discrimination exists (direct, indirect, unintentional or otherwise) to one or more of the nine groups of people who share <i>Protected Characteristics</i> . It is recommended that the use of the policy be suspended until further work or analysis is performed. | Suspend – Further Work Required | Red  |
| As a result of performing the analysis, it is evident that a risk of discrimination exists (direct, indirect, unintentional or otherwise) to one or more of the nine groups of people who share <i>Protected Characteristics</i> . However, a genuine determining reason may exist that could legitimise or justify the use of this policy. | Further (specialist) advice should be taken | Red Amber  |
| As a result of performing the analysis, it is evident that a risk of discrimination (as described above) exists and this risk may be removed or reduced by implementing the actions detailed within the <i>Action Planning</i> section of this document. | Proceed pending agreement of mitigating action | Amber  |
| As a result of performing the analysis, the policy, project or function does not appear to have any adverse effects on people who share <i>Protected Characteristics</i> and no further actions are recommended at this stage. | Proceed with implementation | Green:  |