

Bristol City Council

Parks and Green Space Strategy

Equalities Impact Assessment

Bristol Parks. December 2006



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Executive summary

This Assessment ensures new Parks and Green Space Strategy policy and/or subsequent service planning objectives act to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations within the community

The Assessment considers differential impact with regard to:

- Race;
- Gender;
- Age;
- Disability; and
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Though not a defined equalities group the Assessment also considers communities that may be disadvantaged by where they live as acknowledged through Neighbourhood Renewal designation.

Assessment outcomes

The Assessment finds that existing Bristol Parks' services do not adversely impact on any equalities group through discriminatory practices. However the Assessment clearly identifies that some vulnerable groups and individuals expect and need more from Parks services than currently delivered in order for them to more easily use them.

The Assessment finds that *positive measures* additional to adopting general policies to improve safety, quality and maintenance are needed to meet the needs of Black and other minority ethnic communities and people that describe themselves as having a long-term limiting illness, health problem or disability and that these should be supported by an appropriate action plan and performance measurement.

Strategic recommendations that will act to address the above outcomes and strengthen Bristol Parks' compliance with key equalities legislation are to:

1. Take steps to improve safety in parks – improving the perception of safety and security in all different types of green spaces will have a greater positive impact on disabled people, ethnic groups, women, young people and older people. Raising the quality of park and green spaces in Bristol, through improved park facilities and park maintenance, is fundamental in improving real and perceptions of safety;
2. Increase the number of on-site staff – the role(s) should be clearly defined and incorporate responsibilities to introduce visitors to sites and develop a culture of safety. On-site staff should be purposefully aware of the presence of vulnerable groups and take action to welcome and reassure them;
3. Carry out a programme of work with ethnic groups and disabled groups to enhance these communities' use of parks;
4. Provide education and training for staff – to develop a greater awareness of the different experiences and needs of disabled people and ethnic groups with regard

to parks and green spaces and Parks' direct services and to encourage the promotion of equality of opportunity;

5. Adopt green space provision standards that consider the distribution and access requirements of equalities communities in their application and interpretation;
6. Incorporate compulsory, and more comprehensive, access audits into capital projects, site improvement plans and management plans that relate to the scale of changes proposed;
7. Improve the provision of information in terms of content, format and distribution. Improving both the accessibility and targeting of information regarding existing and future park facilities will be beneficial for disabled people and ethnic groups;
8. Develop a network of contacts with groups within the equalities strands of race, disability and age (young people) to enhance consultation support strategic equalities objectives and equalities actions;
9. Make better use of detached youth work teams either through existing providers or by developing new provision. Their aim should be to identify the local needs of young people and facilitate more responsible use of parks by them;
10. Ensure that the delivery of actions to address adverse impact is the responsibility of an identified person(s) that has the authority to monitor progress and compliance and act when targets are not being met;
11. Agree an improved performance framework that will be monitored departmentally and at service level. This should be an early objective for strategy delivery.

These recommendations correspond with those derived from national research bringing confidence to the methods used and conclusions made. In addition to objectives proposed to meet assessment recommendations, national research and guidelines can also support policies and actions to meet the needs of equalities groups in the city.

1. Introduction

1.1. Equalities Impact Assessments

The function of an equalities impact assessment is to determine whether a policy will have a differential impact on the equalities groups it identifies and whether that impact is adverse / has discriminatory outcomes.

All new policies for Bristol City Council are required to have equalities impact assessments carried out that address the equalities strands of gender, disability, race, young people, older people, lesbian gay, bisexual and transgender people – where policies mean “the full range of formal and informal decisions you make in carrying out your duties, and in all the ways which you use powers – or decide not to”.

Bristol City Council Equalities and Social Inclusion Team

This Impact Assessment provides for the Bristol Parks and Green Space Strategy. The Strategy will both inform and contain new City Council policy and an equalities impact assessment is therefore mandatory. The scope of the Strategy requires that a full assessment be carried out.

1.2. Guidance

The Green Space Strategy Equalities Impact Assessment will adhere to a format provided by the Council’s Equalities and Inclusion Team and, following advice from CABE Space, also refer to the latest impact assessment guidance from the DIALOG (Diversity in Action in Local Government) team of the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DEA) for local government.

1.3. Impact Assessment aim

The aim of this Impact Assessment is to consider the existing service provided by Bristol Parks and determine if current practice is having a differential impact on equalities groups and whether that impact is adverse. The Assessment will then act to inform the strategy so that it may preclude indirect discriminatory policy and actions and introduce positive measures to address any current differential impacts.

The Assessment will ensure new strategy policy and/or subsequent service planning objectives act to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations within the community

As required the Impact Assessment will consider differential impact with regard to:

- Race;
- Gender;
- Age;
- Disability; and
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

The Assessment will also consider communities that may be disadvantaged by where they live as acknowledged through Neighbourhood Renewal designated areas.

Though not a defined equalities group the assessment and reporting process will provide a logical vehicle to highlight need within these communities and make recommendations.

The impact assessment will support work to move Bristol Parks towards achieving Level 3 of the Equality Standard.

2 Relevant legislation

2.1. Race

The Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 has introduced new general and specific duties for public authorities.

The new general duties require public authorities to pro-actively fight racism. This duty means that in everything they do (in relation to policy, service delivery and employment), public authorities should have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good race relations between people of different racial groups.

2.2. Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) introduced new laws to end discrimination against Disabled people. The Act covers employment, goods, services and facilities, buying or renting land or property, schools and educational establishments, public transport and enforcement procedures.

The DDA defines a "disabled person" as a person with "a physical (including sensory impairments) or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

Disability discrimination occurs when:

- A disabled person is treated less favourably than someone else;
- and the treatment is for a reason relating to the person's impairment;
- When there is a failure to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

'Reasonable adjustments' include "the need to take steps to take account of disabled persons impairments, even where that involves treating them more favourably".

From December 2006, public authorities will have a general duty to promote disability equality by having due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under DDA 1995;
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their impairments;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- Take steps to account of disabled persons' impairments, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

2.3. Gender

The Sex Discrimination Act makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of gender. Specifically sex discrimination is not allowed in employment, education, advertising or when providing housing, goods, services or facilities.

The Act prohibits direct and indirect discrimination.

- Direct discrimination is where a woman or man is treated less favourably than a person of the opposite sex in comparable circumstances is, or would be, because of his/her sex.
- Indirect discrimination is where a provision or criterion or practice applied (or would be applied) to both sexes but which puts one sex at a particular disadvantage and cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.

2.4 Age

The new legislation in the 2006 regulations relate only to employment not the provision of goods, facilities and services and hence is not relevant for this impact assessment.

2.5 Sexuality

The regulations relating to sexuality do not cover service delivery but relate to employment and harassment. This legislation is not relevant to the scope of the Strategy and hence not relevant for this impact assessment

2.6 Equality Act

The Equality Act 2006:

- Extends the prohibition on discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to the provision of goods, facilities and services, education, the use and disposal of premises, and the exercise of public functions;
- Prohibits sex discrimination on the exercise of public functions;
- Creates a "gender duty" on public authorities requiring them to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

3. Scope

3.1 Parks and Green Space Strategy

The scope of the Impact Assessment is determined by the policy content of the Parks and Green Space Strategy and its extent in terms of priorities and the subsequent directing of resources. Refer to the Parks and Green Space Strategy for a full understanding of its content and scope (www.bristol.gov.uk/parks).

The Strategy is being taken forward as vital to improving Bristol's green spaces and also in response to government changes to planning regulations. The new Local Development Framework which will replace Bristol's Local Plan adopts the Strategy's local green space provision standards for quality, quantity and distance as planning guidance. New local standards have been adopted to ensure the Strategy is compliant with Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 – Planning for open space, sport and recreation.

The Strategy will affect future plans for all Bristol Parks' key services for a 20-year period from 2007.

The Strategy has five broad policy themes which the impact assessment considers as each may have a differential impact on a particular equalities strand.

1. As planning guidance the Strategy provides a function for the Bristol Core Strategy and the spatial strategy within it. The spatial strategy identifies the areas within the city for potential land-use change. Research for the Impact Assessment highlights the need to predict where this might have an adverse impact on a particular equalities community;
2. The Strategy aims to deliver more equal access across the city to different types of green spaces, park experiences and facilities. This may involve changing the type or function of a particular space e.g. from sports space to play space. When such a change is proposed, the impact assessment highlights the need to assess whether that change might have an adverse impact on a particular equalities community and require mitigating measures. The Strategy recognises 5 types of green space: formal green space, informal green space, natural green space, sports space and children and young people's space.
3. The Strategy identifies and adopts provision standards that the public can expect the council to work towards:
 - A quality standard – which identifies an aspiration for all sites to be good quality as determined by a thorough, objective assessment;
 - A distance standard – which identifies a maximum distance people should expect to walk to get to different types of green spaces;
 - A quantity standard - what amount of green space of different types of green space people living in Bristol should get access to.

An assessment of where these standards have been met in the city will help identify those areas of Bristol where investment in green spaces is most needed - helping the council 'spend better'.

4. The Strategy provides a framework for a significant investment and improvement in parks and green spaces over a 20-year period. The impact assessment will ensure Strategy polices direct improvements in a way that

positively affect all our communities, and no community adversely, and encourage more frequent use of green spaces by them.

5. The Strategy will provide a framework to guide management plans and improvement plans for many of the city's major parks and green spaces.

The Parks and Green Space Strategy is supported by a separate Allotments Strategy and also by the council's Playing Pitch Strategy, which was completed in September 2005. The Green Space Strategy includes sub-strategies for Wildlife and Play.

3.2 Equalities groups

Within the considered equalities strands are specific groups that are commonly identified in equalities work and which were targeted for the participation process. The groups were identified with the guidance of the council's equalities team and the Bristol Black Development Agency. These groups were:

- Black/Black British: African Caribbean
- Black/ Black British: African
- Black Asian: Pakistani/Bangladeshi
- Black Asian: Indian
- Chinese British/ Chinese
- People with physical impairments
- People experiencing poor mental health
- People with a learning disability
- People with sensory impairments
- Children and young people – aged 8-19 yrs
- Older people – over 60 years
- Men
- Women

3.2 Exclusions

The Parks and Green Space Strategy is supported by four sub-strategies:

- Parks' play strategy;
- Playing Pitch Strategy;
- Parks' wildlife strategy;
- Parks' allotments strategy.

The impact assessment will not inform the Playing Pitch Strategy which was adopted in September 2005 and hence research omits detailed questions on sports facilities and preferred sports. The research does include assessing respondents' willingness to travel to sporting facilities.

The impact assessment does not inform the Allotments Strategy which will be adopted by Bristol Parks before the Green Space Strategy. Separate research was carried out to identify the needs of allotments holders and potential holders.

In addition, a decision was taken not to inform the future provision of other specific Parks' services that the Strategy will not address in detail e.g. tree management. The role parks and green spaces play or may play in health was also not explored to any depth.

Bristol Parks obligations with regard to employment and enforcement procedures are not covered by the impact assessment.

4. Research and consultation

The main body of research information is contained in seven sub-documents to the equalities impact assessment which relate to each equalities strand that the impact assessment considers. Only a summary of the sources and methods is provided here.

4.1 Methodology

The Impact Assessment asks:

- 1) Does the current service and will the Strategy result in quantitatively or qualitatively different outcomes for different groups (have a lower participation or uptake; receive a poorer service)?
- 2) If there are different outcomes, do these outcomes arise from:
 - a) Unlawful discrimination?
 - b) Failure to take into account the different needs, experiences, issues or priorities of different groups in relation to a particular policy (needs/outcome)?

In addition, the current service and the Strategy is reviewed to see if they:

- c) Fail to take into account different requirements that have a statutory basis (requirements/outcome)

The Impact Assessment may provide a number of possible outcomes:

1. The Assessment shows that services have a different impact measured by race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation;
2. The Assessment shows a different impact which is demonstrated to be adverse adverse impact on one or more groups;
3. The Assessment shows no differential impact in service delivery;
4. There is insufficient evidence to judge whether there is differential impact;
5. The Assessment indicates that there is unmet need across one or more groups.

To these ends the Assessment:

1. considers existing council monitoring data to look for any differential impact from current Parks' services;
2. commissions new research to further inform any differential impact and inform Strategy policy;
3. incorporates a full consultation with specified target groups;
4. provides recommendations to inform Strategy policy and any service or equalities action plans;
5. recommends ways actions may be monitored.

4.2 Consideration of existing (inc. council monitoring) data

The Bristol City Council empirical data sources are derived from monitoring practices the council employs to evaluate the impact of its services.

- Local data sources considered:
 - Fieldfare Trust – “Report to Bristol City Council on access to heritage estates and four urban parks”. 1998.
 - Bristol Partnership – “Bristol Women Say”. 2002.
 - Bristol Partnership – “Neighbourhood renewal strategy 2004-2011”. March 2004.

- Bristol North and Bristol South and West Primary Care Trusts – “The health of Bristol 2002”.
- Bristol City Council empirical data sources considered:
 - Quality of Life report 2002, 2003, 2004.
 - Quality of Life 2003 – Young People’s questionnaire.
 - “Making Play Matter”. 2003.
 - “Playing for Real (draft)”.
 - “Equalities Policy: Equal opportunities and anti-harassment”. April 2003.
 - “Bristol Women Say” survey report 2005.
 - Women’s Equality: A Strategy 2004-2006.
 - Bristol Parks review research report
 - Bristol Parks’ Quality of Life data report

4.3 Interim impact verdict from assessment of existing data

Black and minority ethnic communities	The data indicates that Black and other minority ethnic communities may have specific needs from Bristol Parks’ services that are not currently being met. However the data cannot be used to identify an impact on any particular ethnic group.
Disabled people	The data indicates that people that describe themselves as having a long-term limiting illness, health problem or disability have specific needs from Bristol Parks’ services that are not currently being met.
Age - Young people	The data cannot identify a differential impact on young people because of its incompatibility with other data. The data identified that young people have distinct needs and that further research with both children and young people is required.
Age - Older people	The data does not indicate that Bristol Parks’ services are having a differential impact on older people. The data does identify that older people have distinct needs and that further research with older people is required.
Gender	The data does not indicate that Bristol Parks’ services are having a differential impact on people because of their gender. The data does identify that women in particular have distinct needs with regard to Parks services.
Lesbian, gay and bisexual people	No monitoring data is available to identify whether current Parks’ services are having a differential impact on lesbian, gay or bisexual people.
People living in Neighbourhood Renewal areas	The data indicates that the Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) designation does not predict that people living in those areas will experience an adverse impact from services provided by Bristol Parks. The data indicates that there are adverse impacts in NR areas and non-NR areas of the city.

The main source of the differential impact found for the strands of race and disability is data from Bristol City Council’s Quality of Life survey 2004. It should be noted however that the sample size for these strands is not large and, although there are significant differences, confidence intervals are wide. In 2004 the response from Bme communities was 162 individuals and for disabled people 443 individuals.

4.4 New equalities research

Additional research was carried out for all the equalities strands covered by the impact assessment. Some objectives for research were the same for each equalities strand and others specific to that strand. Objectives that were generic were to:

- Examine further whether a differential impact exists for that equalities strand.
- Determine what the barriers to access are that specifically prevent people from using parks and green spaces.
- Determine what types of green space people prefer to use.
- Determine what types of facilities people prefer in parks and green spaces.
- Determine how far are people willing to travel to get to different types of green space.

Objectives that were specific were to:

Black and minority ethnic communities	People living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether different ethnic groups in Bristol have specific cultural needs. • Determine whether there are any specific needs connected to religion/faith. • Determine how the demographic profile of the Black and minority ethnic community might affect need. • Provide evidence for new policies that will act to counter the current adverse effect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify which areas of the city people perceive they are receiving a poorer service from Bristol Parks – i.e. they are less satisfied. To cross-reference this data with quality assessment data carried out as part of the Strategy process. • Identify whether there is any difference in the facilities that people are asking for in areas of low satisfaction in comparison with other areas.
Age	Disabled people
Young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine what needs and preferences young children aged 8-11 yrs have for parks and green spaces. • Determine how those young people that currently visit green spaces use them and which spaces they commonly visit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether residents with differing disabilities (physical, sensory or intellectual impairments and mental health problems or limiting long term illnesses) have specific needs that are not currently being met. • Provide evidence for new policies that will act to counter the current adverse effect.

4.5 Research participants

Not all approaches to representatives of equalities groups targeted were successful. Some were partially successful. A restriction on time prevented one group from being contacted. All approaches were facilitated by Bristol's equalities fora, the council's equalities team, the council's community development team, MIND and the Black Development Agency. The table below identifies the success of approaches made:

Black/Black British: African Caribbean	Green
Black/ Black British: African	Yellow
Black Asian: Pakistani/Bangladeshi	Red
Black Asian: Indian	Green
Chinese British/ Chinese	Yellow
People with physical impairments	Green
People experiencing poor mental health	Green

People with a learning disability	Red
People with sensory impairments – visual	Green
Children and young people – aged 8-19 yrs	Green
Older people – over 60 years	Green
Men	Green
Women	Green
Lesbian, gay and bisexual people	Red
People living in Neighbourhood Renewal areas	Yellow

Successfully included	Green
Partial success	Yellow
Not included in a way where need can be measured	Red

4.6 Participatory methods

A number of methods were employed in a way that encouraged the participation of all individuals in the group being consulted.

Method	Participants	Number participating
A quality assessment of two parks by disabled users that referred to the method used in the P&GSS for all sites.	Bristol Physical Access Chain	5
A general survey (online and paper) with targeted questions referring to P&GSS and SPD objectives	<i>(Members of the public)</i> Bristol Women's Forum Bristol Race Equality Forum Bristol Older People's Forum Bristol Disability Equality Forum	797
A series of workshops with bespoke consultation tools to carry out testing of 'Bristol standards' for green space provision.	Fishponds, Southville, Horfield, Southmead, Withywood, St Pauls, Hengrove, Focus Group 1, Focus Group 2.	96
A computer-based survey for schools with targeted questions referring to P&GSS and SPD objectives	Burnbush Primary, St Bernadettes Secondary, Stoke Bishop Primary, Upper Horfield Primary, Westbury Park School, Shirehampton Primary, Ilminster Avenue Primary, Parson St School, Southville Primary, St George Primary, St Peter and Paul Primary	293
Focus group sessions targeting an assessment of the physical and psychological barriers that prevent the use of parks and specific issues that refer to P&GSS and SPD objectives	Bristol Physical Access Chain Disability Equality Forum – advisors Bristol Women's Forum Malcolm X Elders Sikh resource centre session Black Development Agency session Visually impaired persons group Bristol Older People's Forum Carers of disabled children Mental Health Service Users group	155

	African footballers group	
Focus groups with young people targeting an assessment of the physical and psychological barriers that prevent the use of parks and specific issues that refer to P&GSS and SPD objectives	City of Bristol Youth Forum Freedom Youth group Southmead Youth Forum St. Pauls Adventure Playground The Listening Partnership.	47
Outreach, on-site consultation with young people to address specific issues that refer to P&GSS and SPD objectives	Green spaces were visited in: Southmead, Horfield, Easton, Knowle West, Lawrence Weston	176
	Total	1569

5. Final assessment of impact

- The Assessment finds that existing Bristol Parks' services do not adversely impact on any equalities group through discriminatory practices. However the Assessment clearly identifies that some vulnerable groups and individuals expect and need more from Parks services than currently delivered in order for them to more easily use them.
- The Assessment finds that individuals and communities identified by race, gender, disability and age have needs that are not being met by existing Bristol Parks' services.
- The Assessment finds that for older people and women many particular needs can be met through the adoption of general policies and measures to improve the perception of safety in parks, by raising their quality and by raising the quality of their management and maintenance.
- The Assessment finds that *positive measures* additional to adopting general policies to improve safety, quality and maintenance are needed to meet the needs of Black and other minority ethnic communities and people that describe themselves as having a long-term limiting illness, health problem or disability and that these should be supported by an appropriate action plan and performance measurement. Positive measures would act to improve the promotion of good relations with these communities. This work will add benefit to Bristol City Council's compliance with the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).
- The Assessment finds that there is insufficient evidence to conclude whether current, pre-Strategy services are likely to be having a differential impact on lesbian, gay or bisexual people but differential impact is unlikely.
- The Assessment finds that specific, positive actions and measures are needed to meet the needs of young people. The Assessment finds that there is insufficient evidence to conclude whether current, pre-Strategy services are having a differential impact on young people.

This report has already highlighted the influence of Quality of Life data in determining this and the fact that small sample sizes indicate a need for caution. However the substantial new research carried out has helped generate the overall impact finding.

6. Key Recommendations

The breadth of assessment research has enabled specific recommendations for the Parks and Green Space Strategy and Bristol Parks' service plans to address over time. Detailed sets of recommendations are contained in Appendices A-G which relate to the six equalities strands the impact assessment considers. These will help inform equalities action plans over the term of the Strategy.

Listed below are strategic recommendations that will act to address the likely adverse impacts identified, ensure Bristol Parks' services are meeting the widest need and strengthen compliance with key equalities legislation:

Recommendation:	Target equalities strand
1. Take steps to improve safety in parks – improving the perception of safety and security in all different types of green spaces will have a greater positive impact on disabled people, ethnic groups, women, young people and older people. Raising the quality of park and green spaces in Bristol, through improved park facilities and park maintenance, is fundamental in improving real and perceptions of safety;	All
2. Increase the number of on-site staff – the role(s) should be clearly defined and incorporate responsibilities to introduce visitors to sites and develop a culture of safety. On-site staff should be purposefully aware of the presence of vulnerable groups and take action to welcome and reassure them;	All
3. Carry out a programme of work with ethnic groups and disabled groups to enhance these communities' use of parks;	Race Disability
4. Provide education and training for staff – to develop a greater awareness of the different experiences and needs of disabled people and ethnic groups with regard to parks and green spaces and Parks' direct services and to encourage the promotion of equality of opportunity;	Race Disability
5. Green space provision standards should consider the distribution and access requirements of equalities communities in their application and interpretation.	Race Age Disability
6. Incorporate compulsory, and more comprehensive, access audits into capital projects, site improvement plans and management plans that relate to the scale of changes proposed;	Disability
7. Improve the provision of information in terms of content, format and distribution. Improving both the accessibility and targeting of information regarding existing and future park facilities will be beneficial for disabled people and ethnic groups;	Race Disability
8. Develop a network of contacts with groups within the equalities strands of race, disability and age (young people) to enhance	Race Age

consultation support strategic equalities objectives and equalities actions;	Disability
9. Make better use of detached youth work teams either through existing providers or by developing new provision. Their aim should be to identify the local needs of young people and facilitate more responsible use of parks by them;	Age
10. Ensure that the delivery of actions to address adverse impact is the responsibility of an identified person(s) that has the authority to monitor progress and compliance and act when targets are not being met;	All
11. Agreeing an improved performance framework, and performance indicators, that will be monitored departmentally and at service level should be an early objective for strategy delivery.	Race Age Disability

6.1 Benchmarking

The recommendations derived from Bristol Parks' research correspond with those derived from national research and bring confidence to the methods used and conclusions made. In addition to objectives proposed to meet assessment recommendations, national research and guidelines can also support future policies and actions to meet the needs of equalities groups in the city. Bristol Parks is also able to draw on this additional research to inform policy where local research is inconclusive or missing.

Particularly good needs-based guidelines exist for providing services that meet the needs of Black and minority ethnic communities and people that describe themselves as having a long-term limiting illness, health problem or disability.

Relevant guidelines and research to support the provision and delivery of accessible parks and green spaces for some equalities stands are (this list is by no means comprehensive):

- Black Environment Network – “Ethnic communities and green spaces: a guide for green space managers.” 2005.
- Play Inclusion Project – “Kids Inclusion Framework for Local Authorities: Policy into practice to include disabled children and young people in play and childcare services”. 2005.
- The Countryside Agency – “By all reasonable means: inclusive access to the outdoors for disabled people”.
- Access for All Advisory Service - Fieldfare Trust for Newcastle City Council Parks and Green Spaces Strategy Team. April 2003.
- ODPM – “Developing Accessible Play Space – a good practice guide”. 2003.
- The Sensory Trust – “A guide to accessible greenspace”. 2001.
- National Playing Fields Association – “Can Play Will Play – playgrounds for disabled children”. 2004.

- Department for Culture, Media and Sport – “Getting Serious About Play, a review of children’s play”.
- National Playing Fields Association – “Best Play – what play provision should do for children”. 2000.
- Children’s Play Council – “Play Indicators Project” (draft). 2006.
- The Children’s Society – “Good Childhood? – a question for our times”. 2006.

6.2 Research gaps

A recommended response to the impact assessment to be integrated into service planning is the bridging of research gaps in the assessment process. As illustrated, some approaches to particular groups within the equalities strands were unsuccessful or only partially successful. It would be a positive measure to make a further effort to engage with:

- Black Asian: Pakistani/Bangladeshi communities
- Black/ Black British: African communities
- men from all ethnic groups;
- people with learning difficulties.

A further recommendation would be to:

- enable a comparison of young people’s responses according to where they live in the city;
- improve data for young people’s willingness to walk to green spaces;
- increase P&GSS-focussed data from people living in different areas of the city to enable a more meaningful comparison.

7. Equalities action plan and service planning response

Bristol Parks will adopt a 3-year Equalities Action Plan alongside its Service Plan which will incorporate both its priority equalities actions and those of the council's Culture and Leisure Services department. The action plan will be developed by a Service Equalities Working Group that is supported by external equalities groups and experts – some of which have made a significant contribution to the research data in this report.

The Working Group will develop priorities for the Action Plan and set objectives. The objectives suggested below are those that would begin to best meet the strategic recommendations given in this assessment.

Recommendation	Response	Objectives		
		Process	Impact	Outcome
Take steps to improve safety in parks – improving the perception of safety and security in all different types of green spaces will have a greater positive impact on disabled people, ethnic groups, women, young people and older people.	P&GSS policy. Equalities Action Planning.	Implementation of the draft Bristol quality standard across all green spaces (good). Develop 'public safety' audit process considering site maintenance, design, lighting, staffing and audience development. Incorporate into improvement and management plans.	Increased confidence by all communities about using parks and green spaces.	Increased frequency of use of all spaces. Increased frequency of use of spaces by Bme communities and disabled people. Decrease in levels of recorded crime & asb.
Increase the number of on-site staff – the role(s) should be clearly defined and incorporate responsibilities to introduce visitors to sites and develop a culture of safety. On-site staff should be purposefully aware of the presence of vulnerable groups and take action to welcome and reassure them.	P&GSS policy.	Develop new park manager/keeper/ranger role with enhanced JD. Introduce programme of increasing on-site staff in green spaces in a way that affords good access. Introduce training support programme for park manager/keeper/ranger role.	Increased confidence by all communities about using parks and green spaces. Improved relationships with park users. New and improved park activities and events.	Increased frequency of use of all spaces. Increased frequency of use of spaces by Bme communities and disabled people. Decrease in levels of recorded crime & asb.

Recommendation	Response	Objectives		
		Process	Impact	Outcome
Carry out outreach work with ethnic groups and disabled groups via a worker with a clear role for enhancing these communities' use of parks.	P&GSS policy. Equalities Action Planning.	Develop new participation officer role in partnership with Bme and disabled groups. Develop and introduce participation programme.	Increased knowledge of parks and park facilities among Bme groups and disabled people. Increased confidence by Bme groups and disabled people about using parks and green spaces.	Increased frequency of independent use of spaces by Bme communities and disabled people. On-site facilities and communication improved for Bme communities and disabled people.
Provide education and training for staff – to develop a greater awareness of the different experiences and needs of disabled people and ethnic groups with regard to parks and green spaces and Parks' direct services.	Equalities Action Planning.	Develop and introduce comprehensive equalities training and support programme for frontline officers.	Increased confidence amongst park staff in identifying and responding to the specific needs of Bme groups and disabled people.	Increased frequency of independent use of spaces by Bme communities and disabled people. Projects involving Bme communities and with disabled people developed by Frontline officers.
The spatial distribution of disabled people, young people, and Black and minority ethnic communities should be incorporated in to the decision-making framework that both the Strategy and SPD 9 adopt to inform decisions on proposed land-use change where that results in a loss of green space or a change in type/function.	P&GSS policy.	Overlay distribution of Bme groups, disabled people and young people with P&GSS spatial and typology data. Identify areas of strategic need. Develop robust equalities checklist for decisions on proposed land-use change where that results in a loss of green space or a change in type/function.	Officers providing accurate advice on likely equalities impact of land-use or typology change proposals.	No equalities community experiencing a discriminatory outcome from land-use or typology change.

Recommendation	Response	Objectives		
		Process	Impact	Outcome
Incorporate more compulsory, comprehensive access audits into capital projects, site improvement plans and management plans that relate to the scale of changes proposed.	P&GSS policy.	<p>Develop and introduce compulsory access element into Project Briefs and Project Initiation Documents.</p> <p>Increase number of officers, through training, competent in carrying out access audits for disabled people with physical, sensory and mental impairments and people with learning difficulties.</p>	Progressively improved access (to include physical, communication and interpretation) to parks and green spaces for disabled people with physical, sensory and mental impairments and people with learning difficulties.	Increased frequency of use of spaces by all disabled people and people with learning difficulties.
Improve the provision of information in content, formats and distribution. Improving both the accessibility and targeting of information regarding existing and future park facilities will be beneficial for disabled people and ethnic groups.	Equalities Action Planning.	<p>Develop online access information and programme to 'least restrictive access' principle for all significant parks and green spaces.</p> <p>Develop new basic information on parks and green spaces to be incorporated in hard copy leaflets for targeted distribution.</p> <p>Develop new on-site information standard and implementation policy so that the needs of Bme communities and disabled people are better catered for.</p>	Increased knowledge and understanding of parks and green spaces amongst Bme communities and disabled people with physical, sensory and mental impairments and people with learning difficulties.	Increased frequency of independent use of spaces by Bme communities, disabled people and older people.

Recommendation	Response	Objectives		
		Process	Impact	Outcome
Develop a contacts with groups and organisations to act as advisors, or create a new advisory body, within the equalities strands of race, disability and age (young people) to enhance consultation and the monitoring of strategic equalities objectives and equalities actions in service plans.	P&GSS policy. Equalities Action Planning.	Involve target Bme communities, disabled people, older people and young people in P&GSS public consultation workshops/seminars. Build working relationships with these groups in a sustainable manner i.e. in a format that is best able to accommodate their needs re time and resources.	More Bme groups, disabled people, older people and young people participating in ensuring parks and greens paces are improved in a way that meets their needs.	Increased frequency of independent use of spaces by Bme communities, disabled people, older people and young people. Increased legitimate use of spaces by young people. Decrease in levels of recorded asb.
Ensure that the delivery of actions to address adverse impact is the responsibility of an identified person(s) that has the authority to monitor progress and compliance and act when targets are not being met;	P&GSS policy.	Identify role and incorporate in JD of new or existing post. Provide for more regular Management Team discussions on equalities actions and targets.	More accountability within Parks for achievement of equalities objectives and progression of action plans.	Successful completion of equalities objectives and achievement of PI's.
When setting a Bristol distance standard the Strategy should reflect that Black and minority ethnic communities are not willing to walk as far to get to different types of space than other communities. Reasons for this are likely to be concerned with fear over personal safety which may be allayed to a degree by remaining in familiar surroundings;	P&GSS policy.	Overlay distribution of Bme groups with P&GSS spatial and typology data. Apply distance standard to existing typology and do gap assessment.	Increased knowledge and understanding of impact of distance standard on existing Bme communities. Officers providing accurate advice on likely impact of land-use or typology change proposals.	No Bme community experiencing a discriminatory outcome from land-use or typology change.

Recommendation	Response	Objectives		
		Process	Impact	Outcome
Develop partnerships to create and steer the targeted use of detached youth workers in parks and green spaces. Their aim should be to engage with and identify the local needs of young people and facilitate more responsible use of parks by them	P&GSS policy. Equalities Action Planning.	For YPS and voluntary sector youth services providers, investigate face-to-face time detached workers spend in parks and green spaces. Investigate new Service Level Agreement with YPS and voluntary sector youth services providers to enable effective on-site consultation with young people.	More consistent, appropriate and effective consultation with young people using green spaces.	Better targeted provision for young people in parks and green spaces. Increased legitimate use of spaces by young people. Decrease in levels of recorded asb.

7.1 Priorities

Priorities for addressing the findings of this report will be developed and decided by the Equalities Working Group. The Group will also respond to corporate equalities objectives. In line with the findings in this report, the group is likely to promote positive measures to support access to Bristol Parks Services by Bme communities and Disabled people.

Priorities will be informed by both the council's Race Equality Scheme and Disability Equality Scheme. The Race Equality Scheme is current from 2005 to 2008 and the Disability Equality Scheme from 2006 to 2009. Schemes for gender and sexual orientation are currently being developed.

7.1.1 Race equality scheme

There are no actions in the council's race equality scheme that are the specific responsibility of Bristol Parks. Actions that are relevant are:

Action	Department responsible
Clear evidence of impact assessment leading to policies that meet needs and aspirations of all racial groups.	All
Speakers of community languages able to access information on-line. Employees able to print off translated versions on request.	All

7.1.2 Disability Equality Scheme (draft)

Actions in the council's (draft) disability equality scheme that relate directly to Bristol Parks (through the Department of Culture and Leisure Services) are:

Action	Department responsible
Improve disabled people's access to exercise	Culture and Leisure Services

Actions that relate indirectly to Bristol Parks and actions that the service might choose to adopt are:

Action	Department responsible
To increase awareness and understanding about Disabled people in all our variety and disability equality issues to all services in Bristol.	Chief Executives
To increase Disabled people's influence on council decision-making.	Chief Executives
To improve Disabled people's access to information providers in the city.	Chief Executives
To improve access on rights of way in the city including reducing pavement parking and improving audible signals.	Planning, Transport and Sustainable Development
To improve the numbers of and monitoring abuse of Disabled people's parking bays and restrictions	Planning, Transport and Sustainable Development

8. Monitoring

Performance measures and performance monitoring will be established by the Equalities Working Group.

Performance in terms of equalities groups' use and perceptions of parks and green spaces is currently measured using the council's annual Quality of Life survey. The survey measures respondents' satisfaction with:

1. The quality of local public parks and green spaces;
2. The amount of local public parks and green spaces;
3. Their access to local public parks and green spaces;
4. Their access to children's play facilities; and measures
5. The frequency with which they visit public parks and green spaces.

Small sample sizes with regard to responses from some equalities groups result in wide confidence intervals for some indicators and monitoring the success addressing differential impact or the meeting of different needs will need:

- an improvement in sample sizes, particularly from Black and other minority communities, by improved targeting of the survey; and/or
- additional, regular research – particularly with Black and other minority communities, Disabled people and young people.

The latter will incur a significant additional cost to Bristol Parks and significant efforts have already been made to improve sample sizes and hence the reliability of Quality of Life data.

Acknowledgements

Bristol Parks would like to acknowledge the support of the councils Equalities and Community Cohesion team and Youth and Play Services, Bristol Parks Forum and Bristol's primary schools.

The following groups and organisations made a significant contribution to the Impact Assessment:

- Bristol Race Forum
- Bristol Women's Forum
- Bristol Disability Forum
- Bristol Young People's Forum
- Bristol Older People's Forum
- Freedom Youth – Bristol young people's LGB forum
- Listening Partnership – Bristol young people's disability forum
- Southmead Youth Forum
- Malcolm X Elders
- Bristol Sikh Resource Centre
- Bristol Black Development Agency
- MIND service users reference group
- Bristol Physical Access Chain
- Visually Impaired Persons self-help group (Bristol Centre for Deaf People)

The following schools made a significant contribution to the Impact Assessment:

- Burnbush Primary;
- St Bernadettes Secondary;
- Stoke Bishop Primary;
- Upper Horfield Primary;
- Westbury Park School;
- Shirehampton Primary;
- Ilminster Avenue Primary;
- Parson St School;
- Southville Primary;
- St George Primary;
- St Peter and Paul Primary.

Young people were engaged whilst using green spaces using an arts-based participation exercise. The consultants visited parks, green spaces and youth clubs in five areas of Bristol:

- Southmead;
- Horfield;
- Easton;
- Knowle West; and
- Lawrence Weston.

