

Equality Impact Assessment - head of service review

Reference: EQIA183045635

Submitted: 12 March 2020 16:27 PM

Executive summary

Title of policy or decision: Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy - Adoption and sign off for publication FP/614/01/20

Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): Background
At Political Leadership Team (PLT) in 2017, Councillor John Spence highlighted the importance of developing quality green spaces across Essex to accompany planned growth in the county over the next twenty years. PLT agreed to the development of a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy for Essex and this was further mentioned by the Leader of the Council, Councillor David Finch, at Full Council on 8th October 2019 as part of our current action towards tackling climate change.

Climate Change is the biggest single issue facing not just Essex, but the entire world. More needs to be done to make a difference and by working with staff, partners, businesses, residents and communities, the council will lead on reducing emissions, energy usage and waste across Essex, including protecting and enhancing our GI.

Purpose

The purpose of The Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy is to understand the current and potential future value provided by our GI in terms of environmental, social and economic benefits. The aim is to guide and shape planning and other services through setting principles that inform plans and strategies to enhance, protect and create an integrated network of high-quality GI in Essex. These will enable a coherent approach and partner collaboration and maximise funding opportunities in the delivery of multi-functional natural assets.

The strategy is accompanied by an action plan which sets out priority actions to deliver the GI objectives listed below:

- * Protect existing green infrastructure, especially designated sites
- * Improve existing green infrastructure so it is better functioning for people and wildlife
- * Create more high-quality multi-functional green infrastructure, especially in areas of deficiency
- * Improve the connectivity of green infrastructure for people and wildlife
- * Increase use and inclusivity of green infrastructure across all user groups, social groups and abilities
- * Provide green infrastructure facilities to promote health and wellbeing
- * Working with partners to build and secure funding, effective governance and stewardship for new and existing green infrastructure to ensure their long-term sustainability.

Investing in GI provides a wide range of benefits including improving people's physical and mental health, creating better places, supporting economic growth and providing opportunities for community engagement in their local environment.

The strategy will aim to conserve and enhance a multi-functional green infrastructure network working in partnership with stakeholders (private, public and third sectors and community groups) to maximise the collective social, economic and environmental benefits. It will promote community led activity to enable inclusive use of green infrastructure, that will provide health and wellbeing benefits.

The strategy is intended to be a "live" document similar to the Essex Design Guide that is regularly reviewed so that it can maintain the essential characteristics of the county's environment into the future.

Next Steps

Once the strategy has been adopted, the action plan, will be further developed and formalised to achieve the GI objectives in the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.

A Green Essex Network will be established to oversee the operations and delivery of the strategy and partner GI actions. Through this network we will explore the viability to establish a Green Essex charitable foundation to raise funds to support the delivery of GI across Essex. The network will build on the current online Knowledge Hub partnership of 61 members engaging equality groups, stakeholders and individuals to shape the design and development of individual GI projects from the action plan for implementation by delivery partners.

What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?: Enable inclusive economic growth, Help people get the best start and age well, Help create great places to grow up, live and work, Transform the council to achieve more with less

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Enable inclusive economic growth: Enable Essex to attract and grow large firms in high growth industries

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help people get the best start and age well: Enable more vulnerable adults to live independent of social care, Improve the health of people in Essex

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help create great places to grow up, live and work: Help to secure stronger, safer and more neighbourly communities, Help secure sustainable development and protect the environment

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Transform the council to achieve more with less: Develop the capability, performance and engagement of our people

Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?: a new policy (or decision)

Please provide a link to the document / website / resource to which this EqIA relates:

\\chesfs12\TeamShare\Spatial Planning & Regeneration\Environment\Environmental Strategy\Green Infrastructure strategy\1. GI Strategy\Final Version of GI Strategy March 20

Please upload any documents which relate to this EqIA, for example decision documents:

\\chesfs12\TeamShare\Spatial Planning & Regeneration\Environment\Environmental Strategy\Green Infrastructure strategy\1. GI Strategy\Final Version of GI Strategy March 20

Assessing the equality impact

Use this section to record how you have assessed any potential impact on the communities likely to be affected by the policy (or decision): Development of the Strategy

Desk top research to inform the strategy was undertaken to understand perception and usage of green spaces by a range of social groups (further summary of findings included in the Essex Green Infrastructure strategy Appendices B). A study undertaken in 2005 reviewed the perception of underrepresented groups in inner cities in accessing the countryside. This study found that while there were specific barriers to each group the majority were put off due to the cost to travel to the site (due to lack of transport) and the charges once there, fear for their safety, fear of segregation, accessibility due to lack of facilities and perceptions that they are not entitled to be there or not welcome to visit. The Green Essex Strategy has an objective on Inclusivity - Increase use and inclusivity of green infrastructure across all social groups and abilities.

ECC worked with the University of East Anglia, who have used publicly available datasets such as

open street map, OS MasterMap and local development plan data to produce a more accurate picture of our GI. A green infrastructure GIS mapping model has been created which includes layers showing:

- * GI assets for Greater Essex
- * Number of GI Functions and Benefits each GI assets provide
- * Public Rights of Way and cycle network,
- * Productive Spaces (Agricultural land and meadows)
- * Proposed Development sites of over 50 hectares
- * Analysis of the GI provision was scored against social economic demographic information (e.g. Lower Super output areas and Index of multiple deprivation such as ethnic groups and age over 65+), using the Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) that sets out the recommended distance to accessible green space as follows:
 - * No person should live more than 300 metres from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 hectares (0.02km²) in size.
 - * There should be at least one accessible 20-hectare (0.20km²) green space site within 2 kilometres from home.
 - * There should be one accessible 100-hectare (1km²) green space site within 5 kilometres.
 - * There should be one accessible 500-hectare (5km²) green space site within 10 kilometres.
 - * At least 1 hectare (0.01km²) of Local Nature Reserve should be provided per 1,000 population.

The study found the prevalence of GI varies with socio-economic characteristics such as population density and affluence, though there is no simple trend for provision to be lower in neighbourhoods with higher levels of multiple deprivation. Across Greater Essex as a whole over 80% of residents live in locations meet at least two of the four ANGSt benchmarks for GI proximity, though for three authorities (Braintree, Chelmsford and Tendring) this proportion is less than 60%. It is also possible to identify some specific localities where it would appear particularly appropriate to seek opportunities to increase GI provision. Some of these are neighbourhoods where indicators of socioeconomic deprivation coincide with limited extent of GI and others occur where major housing developments are planned at sites where existing proximity to GI is poor. The results therefore identify several needs and opportunities to enhance GI across the county and inform strategic planning in Greater Essex. Further details of the UEA study is available in the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy Appendices C.

Health Impact Assessment

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was undertaken to identify the potential impact of the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy on the health of Essex residents. It aims to highlight potential positive impacts on health as well as areas that require further consideration to mitigate negative health impacts. The HIA concluded that there are a large number of potential health benefits that could arise from the strategy, namely:

- * Improved mental well being
- * Increased physical activity and improved physical health
- * Improved social cohesion and reduced social isolation

The HIA highlighted the risk that could arise around ensuring equitable access to green space across the county and across all groups of people, as well as ensuring the safety in and adequate maintenance of green spaces. The full HIA is available in the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy Appendices C

Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy (formally known as Green Essex Strategy) Consultation ECC's Research and Citizen Insight team ensured the phrasing and terminology in the Strategy was accessible to all and that easy view options were made available. Paper copies of the consultation were also available on request and at libraries. A communication plan was developed to ensure inclusivity through using a variety of communication channels (i.e. social media, traditional media and utilising other communication networks across the council, District, City and Boroughs, Clinical Commissioning Groups etc) to reach a wide audience.

An online forum was set up on a Knowledge Hub network called Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy Partnership where news, events, useful information and live versions of the strategy were shared. This allowed knowledge sharing and informal consultation on the strategy as it was being

written. There are 61 members that represent public, private and third sector organisations and community groups.

The strategy underwent a 9 week public consultation between May and July 2019 including to better understand the existing use of green spaces and what measures would encourage people to use these spaces more. Over 1,000 responses were received from residents, organisations and community groups with the most popular reasons for using green space identified as for leisure time, health reasons, dog walking and for horse riding. Concerns raised included:

- * Developers deprioritise GI provision within their site plans.
- * Insufficient funds and resources to deliver the strategy.
- * The need to focus on improving what we have before investing in new GI.
- * The need to better promote, educate and raise awareness of what we already have.

The findings of the consultations are summarised in the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy Appendices A.

Does or will the policy or decision affect:

Service users: Yes

Employees: Yes

The wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities: Yes

Which geographical areas of Essex does or will the policy or decision affect?: All Essex

Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?: Yes

Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?: Yes

Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies?: Yes

Description of impact

Description of Impact. If there is an impact on a specific protected group tick box, otherwise leave blank.

You will be given the opportunity to rate identified impacts as positive, negative or neutral on the next

page: Age, Disability - learning disability, Disability - mental health issues, Disability - physical impairment, Disability - sensory impairment, Gender / sex, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy / maternity, Race

I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics: I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics

Describe any actions that have already been taken to mitigate negative impacts on any of the protected characteristics: The Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy will have a positive impact on all users and social groups. The Health Impact Assessment concluded that there are a large number of potential benefits that could arise from this strategy; however, it is important to be aware of the risks that could arise. These largely fall around ensuring equitable access to green space across the county and across all groups of people as well as ensuring safety and adequate maintenance of green spaces. Two of the strategy's objectives focus on improving inclusivity of our green infrastructure and enhancing the health and wellbeing benefits for people. Discussion have started with Health & Wellbeing and Public Health Teams, Meaningful Lives Matter, Country Parks, Active Essex and Adult and Children's Social care to explore opportunities to involve their clients in future GI projects, Improve facilities and access to green spaces and raise awareness of current activities and opportunities to tailor activities, as well as for volunteering, training and skills development and employment opportunities (i.e. cafe, ranger service).

Age

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: The Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy will have a

positive impact on all members of society regardless of age as the green infrastructure created and / or enhanced in local communities will be accessible to all ages.

Older People

There is a forecasted increase in the number of older people in Essex, which brings many specific considerations for planners, developers and those responsible for green spaces, not least an increase in people living with conditions such as dementia.

A recent report published by Natural England (2016) highlights how engagement with nature and the great outdoors could benefit people living with dementia and their carers. The Strategy focuses on increasing use of green infrastructure across this and other user groups will provide positive impact.

Young People

A study by the Natural Learning Initiative of North Carolina State University (2012) found that connecting children with nature and green spaces benefits their intellectual, emotional, social and physical development, giving them the best possible start in life.

There are still clear inequalities with children living in lower income areas being less likely to visit the natural environment compared with those living in areas of higher income.

New GI projects resulting from the implementation of the Action Plan which will accompany the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy will consider the needs of all ages in providing suitable access. The individual GI projects will provide, hands-on opportunities for people of all ages to volunteer or work together to deliver quality environmental improvements for the primary benefit of local communities. Creating more attractive green spaces through new or enhancing existing should provide more opportunities for young people, as well as adults, to increase their physical activity. The GI Strategy and projects provide the same opportunities to each age group with help and / or infrastructure tailored to meet their specific requirements (where appropriate and possible). Improving the quality, attractiveness, accessibility and connectedness of green spaces, particularly in the most deprived areas, should offer an opportunity to increase use and enjoyment for adults, with consequent health, well-being and quality of life benefits.

Leisure, recreational walking and dog walking have been identified as the most prevalent form of physical activity and actions such as the creation of promoted and inter-connected paths, creation of inter-connecting paths to green spaces and circular walks will facilitate and increase opportunities for these activities.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: There may be opportunities for training, apprenticeships, volunteering, etc, particularly for young unemployed or under-employed people through the various project delivery mechanisms and management and maintenance of green space such as Country Parks facilities, thereby helping to address high youth unemployment.

Older people however will also be positively impacted as they will have equal opportunity to participate in the programme and projects.

Provision of improved walking and cycling routes as part of the GI Strategy will enable people to access employment, everyday services, and the countryside without the need for access to a car. By connecting children with nature and green spaces will benefits children's intellectual, emotional, social and physical development, giving them the best possible start in life.

Better marketing and promotion of our existing and new green infrastructure through a marketing strategy and their facilities such as our visitor centres, promoted paths (e.g. Essex Way and Fritch Way), the England Coast Path (when completed) in Essex, and activities available (especially activities for various social groups and green therapies) will encourage more people to use green infrastructure and connect with nature.

The Strategy includes proposals which will have a positive impact on all user and social groups including:

- * Develop and promote Healthcare and wellbeing through green infrastructure activities – the benefits of engagement with the natural environment to those living with dementia have already been documented.
- * Increase access to the Outdoor Pursuits Centres. These centres provide activities for young people including during school holidays and increased access to this provision could therefore help address obesity rates in children (31.8% of Year 6 pupils are considered obese).

Disability - learning disability

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Common barriers to leisure for those with learning disabilities identified by Mencap (2017) include:

- * Lack of accessible venues and facilities
- * Lack of accessible information
- * Financial constraints
- * Mobility and transport considerations

<https://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/esss-outlines/disability-access-leisure>

The main barriers in using green space include:

- * Physical e.g. steps, slopes, lack of toilet facilities, inaccessible private transport, lack of accessible car parking.
- * Psychological e.g. lack of confidence, fear over personal safety, lack of motivation, unfamiliarity.
- * Organisational e.g. lack of information and interpretation, guide dog facilities, site guides.

The GI provision supported by the Strategy intends to benefit all sectors of the community.

New projects undertaken to deliver the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy objectives will consider the needs of people with learning disabilities. Where appropriate, the individual GI projects will provide hands-on opportunities for people with learning disabilities to volunteer or work together to deliver quality environmental improvements including for the benefit of local communities.

Specific GI projects would be scoped and designed to be as inclusive as possible to increase participation by disabled users including signage and interpretation and where possible sensory gardens etc.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: The GI created or improved as an outcome from the strategy should be designed for different disabilities, including, where appropriate, shallow path gradients, clear signage, sensitive seating and resting points, to ensure that there is equal opportunity to access the green spaces for the benefit of health and well-being.

The beneficial impact will also be felt through the involvement of disabled people with learning disabilities in the design and decision-making process, as well as delivery of GI projects, the creation of activities and opportunities for volunteering and employment through working with the services and organisational groups such as Meaningful Lives Matter.

The Strategy' objectives a number of proposals were identified that will have a positive impact on all user and social groups which include:

- * Easier access to and raise awareness of the information on the facilities available at our green spaces, such as our Country Parks to help plan the visit.
- * Public realm green infrastructure improved to reduce pollution and improve character and sense of place. Where appropriate

Disability - mental health issues

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: There are a number of studies to demonstrate the benefits of our green infrastructure on people's health and wellbeing. The strategy aims to encourage Ecotherapy, also known as nature therapy or green therapy - provides individuals with an opportunity to explore their relationship with nature as a form to treat health and wellbeing issues.

Good quality natural landscape in urban areas can affect how people feel, including reducing stress and sadness, and lifting the mood. New projects related to the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy will consider the needs of people with mental health issues. It may also provide opportunities for employment, training, skills development, volunteering, etc. to provide confidence to return to work, through the management and activities programmes developed for new and existing green spaces, such as our Country Parks.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: The green infrastructure created or improved as an outcome from the strategy should be designed to ensure that there is equal opportunity to access the green spaces for the benefit of health and well-being. Where possible there will also be beneficial impacts to mental health when affected individuals are involved in the design and decision-making process of creating or improving GI provision.

The strategy will improve access and raising awareness of the green spaces, facilities and activities available to encourage people to incorporate more green exercise and nature contact into daily routines helping to improve wellbeing and social inclusion through nature-based solutions. As a result, high quality green space and nature-based solutions will be used to a greater extent as a treatment for mental and physical health through referrals to environmental therapy such as green exercise programme run by Active Essex, Active Southend and High Woods Big Garden in Colchester. This will involve working with Mental Health Agencies, wider health partners, Active Essex, Active Southend and community voluntary sector to develop these green therapy and activities.

Through the strategy's objectives a number of proposals were identified that will have a positive impact on all user and social groups which include:

- * Develop and promote Healthcare and wellbeing through green infrastructure activities.
- * Explore environmental therapies delivered through mental health services.
- * Through greening the public realm it will create a sense of place and improve the air quality that will have a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing, which can contribute to reducing pressure on the health services.

Disability - physical impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: The main barriers in using green space include:

* Physical e.g. steps, slopes, lack of toilet facilities, inaccessible private transport, lack of accessible car parking (some cities have developed car free zones in a bid to become more sustainable, but this overlooks those people who solely rely on their own transport to be able to get to places).

* Psychological e.g. lack of confidence, fear over personal safety, lack of motivation, unfamiliarity

* Organisational e.g. lack of information and interpretation, guide dog facilities, site guides.

<https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk/information/articles/inclusive Greenspace.html>

The Green Infrastructure provision supported by the Strategy aims to improve accessibility and inclusivity to green spaces and their facilities. New projects will consider the needs of people with physical

disabilities.

The delivery of the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy action plan through individual projects may provide local people and those with physical impairment with opportunities for volunteering through the management programme and activities developed for new and existing green spaces.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: The GI created or improved as an outcome from the strategy should be designed for different disabilities, e.g.: shallow path gradients, clear signage, sensitive seating and resting points, to ensure that there is equal opportunity to access the green spaces for the benefit of health and well-being.

The beneficial impact will also be felt through the involvement of disabled people with physical disabilities in the design and decision-making process, as well as delivery, through working with the services and organisational groups such as Adult and Children Social Care.

Better marketing and promotion of our existing and new green infrastructure through a marketing strategy and their facilities such as our visitor centres, promoted paths (e.g. Essex Way and Flich Way), the new coast path in Essex, and activities available (especially activities for various social groups and green therapies) will encourage more people to use green infrastructure and connect with nature.

The following objectives will have a positive impact on all user and social groups which include:

- * Develop and promote Healthcare and wellbeing through green infrastructure activities.
- * Support the development of new Visitor Centres and facilities. These would be designed to ensure access was possible and encouraged by people with physical disabilities. This includes improved disabled access to the centres and/or improved disabled toilet facilities.
- * Create green infrastructure in new developments such as Garden Communities, with best practice guidance on its design and management for multiple benefits. New GI would need to be designed to seek to ensure accessibility by people with physical disabilities.

Disability - sensory impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Almost half of blind and partially sighted people feel 'moderately' or 'completely' cut off from people and things around them.

The main barriers in using green space include:

- * Physical e.g. steps, slopes, lack of toilet facilities, inaccessible private transport, lack of accessible car parking.
- * Psychological e.g. lack of confidence, fear over personal safety, lack of motivation, unfamiliarity.
- * Organisational e.g. lack of information and interpretation, guide dog facilities, site guides.

The GI provision supported by the Strategy will ensure any new projects consider the needs of people with sensory impairment and improve accessibility and inclusivity to green spaces through its design including limiting path gradients, signage and interpretation that conforms to best practice for those with impaired vision, etc.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: The GI created or improved as an outcome from the strategy should be designed for different disabilities to ensure that there is equal opportunity to access the green spaces for the benefit of health and well-being. Where possible disabled people including those with sensory impairments (or groups representing them) will be involved in the design and decision-making process, to ensure appropriate features are included to improve the experience for these users. Through the strategy's objectives a number of proposals were identified that will have a positive impact on all user and social groups which include:

* Promote activities to raise awareness of green infrastructure and its benefits across all social, demographic, ethnic and diversity groups to provide people confidence to use the green space.

* Support the development of new Visitor Centres and facilities to improve disability access to visitor centre facilities.

*Public realm green infrastructure improved to reduce pollution and improve character and sense of place – where possible these will be designed to provide benefits for disabled people (including those with sensory impairments).

*Create green infrastructure in new developments such as Garden Communities, with best practice guidance and principles on its design and management for multiple benefits ensuring the needs of those with sensory impairment are considered.

Gender / sex

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: There is evidence that women and men experience and respond to urban green space in different ways. Studies have shown that women, perceive themselves to be more vulnerable, and are more fearful in urban green spaces than men and can fear for their safety. Therefore, appropriately managed green space and tailored activities working with partners such as Active Essex and Active Southend may offer women opportunities to be more physically active than in other urban contexts.

The strategy aims to improve accessibility to green spaces taking into consideration through the design of new green spaces and improvements to existing green spaces to address these issues.

A consultation response from the Essex Bridleway Association stated that most horse riders are women or young people, and the lack of bridleway provision in Strategy/Projects could disproportionately affect these people with protected characteristics. In response, additional references to bridleway provision has been added to the strategy.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Improving the quality of local GI should have a beneficial impact for both sexes, but particularly women with higher lone parent and caring responsibilities, as good quality, well connected green spaces are a free and easy way to access opportunities for improved health and well-being, outdoor learning, recreation, active travel, etc.

In the volunteering opportunities that will arise, all training and opportunities to gain qualifications will be available to all , thereby reducing gender stereotyping.

People are more likely to use green spaces and other green infrastructure, if they are well maintained where sites are cleared of litter and graffiti, damaged benches and signages/wayfinding repaired, and overgrown areas opened up (whilst leaving some natural areas for wildlife). As sites became easier to access, more visible, better used and more widely owned by local communities, it will reduce the sense of fear, increase the sense of civic pride.

Better marketing and promotion of our existing and new green infrastructure and related facilities through a marketing strategy will encourage more people to use green infrastructure and connect with nature.

Through the strategy's objectives a number of proposals were identified that will have a positive impact on all user and social groups which include:

* Promote activities to raise awareness of green infrastructure and its benefits to all user groups will increase user numbers, making people feel less isolated thus reducing the sense of fear of a place and encouraging more women along with young people and families to use the space.

* Create green infrastructure in new developments such as Garden Communities, with best practice guidance on its design and management for multiple benefits, can be designed in

such a way as to minimise any perception of fear of safety.

* Establish inter connecting paths between green infrastructure, that provides access for all.

Gender reassignment

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Trans people face barriers in almost every aspect of life - from bullying at school to lack of facilities.

No evidence has been found to determine whether trans people use green spaces less often, but we should take into consideration the potential barriers in the use of toilet facilities at some of our sites.

The GI provision supported by the Strategy intended to benefit all sectors of the community.

Extent of impact: Trans people face barriers in almost every aspect of life - from bullying at school to lack of facilities.

No evidence has been found to determine whether trans people use green spaces less often, but we should take into consideration the potential barriers in the use of toilet facilities at some of our sites.

The GI provision supported by the Strategy intended to benefit all sectors of the community.

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: It is not easy to say what the impact will be for the gender reassignment protected characteristic, but by promoting an open approach to community involvement in the development and delivery of projects coming out of the strategy, this should afford equal opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination as a basis for involvement. Also, consideration should be given for un-sexed toilet facilities where possible.

Through the strategy's objectives a number of proposals were identified that will have a positive impact on all user and social groups which include:

* Support the development of new Visitor Centres and facilities to consider improvement to provide uni-sexed toilet facilities.

Pregnancy / maternity

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: No evidence is available to suggest pregnant women or mothers do not access green spaces. Families will tend to use a green space if it has access to play facilities. However, a consideration could be taken on the availability of suitable facilities such as baby changing and feeding areas at some of our sites and ensuring they feel safe.

The GI provision supported by the Strategy intended to benefit all sectors of the community.

As the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy GI projects will be delivering improved local green spaces, pregnant women and those caring for young children should benefit from the improved experience of space for play, relaxation, less environmental pollution, and tailored programme activities and events etc.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: The impact from the improved and better-connected local GI projects coming out of the strategy should be enjoyed by those in society who are pregnant or have caring responsibilities for young children, as improved access and accessibility should benefit them greatly in terms of the improved provision of baby changing and play facilities where appropriate that will impact on their health and well-being.

Better marketing and promotion of our existing and new green infrastructure, their related facilities and programme of activities through a marketing strategy will encourage more people to

use green infrastructure and connect with nature.

Through the strategy's objectives a number of proposals were identified that will have a positive impact on all user and social groups which include:

- * Promote activities to raise awareness of green infrastructure and its benefits.
- * Support the development of new Visitor Centres and facilities to improve the provision of baby changing and feeding area facilities.
- * Establish inter connecting paths between green infrastructure, that provides access for all, that also creates a safe environment , improved air quality and promote active travel for allow mothers to feel safe and confident to take their children out to access green spaces, that will improve their health and wellbeing.

Race

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Studies have revealed that many minority ethnic communities are disengaged and make limited use of their natural environment. They are not familiar with what goes on beyond the urban boundary and some have never been into the countryside. (Black Environment Network, 2005, Engaging Ethnic Communities in Natural and Built Heritage).

The GI provision supported by the Strategy intended to benefit all sectors of the community and through individual projects may provide local people and ethnic and minority people with opportunities for employment, training, skills development, volunteering, etc. through the management programme and activities developed for new and existing green spaces. Delivery partners will be encouraged to ensure that race is not a barrier to participation. Through the delivery of the GI action plan that will be further developed, the individual projects in diverse urban areas, have the potential to be more integrative by ensuring that good design makes areas appealing for different cultural groups and that a programme of outreach and celebration engages all minority groups.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Delivery partners will be encouraged to ensure that race is not a barrier to participation in that there should be opportunities for engagement irrespective of a person's race or ethnicity.

The Green Essex Network and delivery partners will engage representatives and services from different racial or ethnic groups which are particularly pertinent to a local area to ensure that the green infrastructure established and designed (such as improved routes and green spaces) break down barriers between communities and offer opportunities to reflect local cultures and develop a shared understanding.

Marketing and promotion of our existing and new green infrastructure, their facilities and their programme of activities (which included tailored activities) improved through a marketing strategy will encourage more people to use green infrastructure and connect with nature.

Through the strategy's objectives a number of proposals were identified that will have a positive impact on all user and social groups which include:

- * Promote activities to raise awareness of green infrastructure and its benefits across all social, demographic, ethnic and diversity groups.
- * Create a distinct Green Essex identity through the development of a Green Essex Network to encourage a strong community engagement that will break down barriers.
- * Explore environmental therapies and challenges across all social, demographic, ethnic and diversity groups to understand and tailor activities to create a safe environment to provide confidence for a person of race and ethnicity to enjoy and gain the benefits from a green space.

Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

Does your EqlA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?: No

Details of person completing the form

I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance: I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance

Date EqlA completed: 12/03/2020

Name of person completing the EqlA: Jayne Rogers

Email address of person completing the EqlA: Jayne.Rogers@essex.gov.uk

Your function: Infrastructure & Environment

Your service area: Environment & Climate Action

Your team: Energy & Low Carbon Programme

Are you submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team?: Yes

Name of person completing the EqlA: Jayne Rogers

Function: Infrastructure & Environment

Service area: Environment & Climate Action

Team: Sustainability & Resilience

Email address of Head of Service: john.meehan@essex.gov.uk