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**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
EQUALITY ANALYSIS / IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)**

**This document is available in other formats. Please contact
tim.woodhouse@kent.gov.uk or telephone on 07710 368080**

Directorate: GET

Name of policy, procedure, project or service – Country Parks 2017-2021 Strategy

What is being assessed? Country Parks 2017-2021 Strategy

Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer - Tim Woodhouse

Date of Initial Screening – 6th May 2017

Date of Full EqIA : NA

Update each revised version below and in the saved document name.

Version	Author	Date	Comment
V1	Tim Woodhouse	6 th May 2017	Initial draft
V2	A Agyepong	6 July 2017	Comments for review
V3	T Woodhouse	6 July 17	Typos
V4	Tim Woodhouse	7 th July 2017	Updated following AA's comments

Screening Grid

Characteristic	Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect this group less favourably than others in Kent? YES/NO If yes how?	Assessment of potential impact HIGH/MEDIUM LOW/NONE UNKNOWN		Provide details: a) Is internal action required? If yes what? b) Is further assessment required? If yes, why?	Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group? YES/NO - Explain how good practice can promote equal opportunities
		Positive	Negative	Internal action must be included in Action Plan	If yes you must provide detail
Age	No	Low	None	<p>On any given day, our parks are used by people of all ages (families with babies and young children, school trips, walking groups, dog walkers, older people etc).</p> <p>Our 2106 visitor satisfaction survey sampled 639 people (4% of whom were 16-24 years old, 34% were 25-44 years old, 38% were 45-64 years old, and 24% were 65+).</p> <p>We will conduct more accurate research into the demographic profile of our park users by capturing data through visitor surveys and at the time of purchasing formal products such as season tickets. We will take appropriate action where possible to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.</p>	<p>If the research supports a gap in provision for a specific age range then new or alternative provision or marketing can be explored to achieve age related equal opportunities.</p> <p>Accessibility to and of the parks is a continued priority within the new Strategy, and this will benefit older park users and groups or families with younger park users.</p> <p>Currently every Forest School staged by the Service is carefully shaped for the attending class, in conversation with the teaching staff who will be accompanying the children. In this way, every Forest School delivered can demonstrate that the protected characteristics of disability, age and religious belief have been taken into account.</p>

Disability	No	Medium	None	<p>We will conduct more accurate research into the demographic profile of our park users by capturing data through visitor surveys and at the time of purchasing formal products such as season tickets. We will take appropriate action where possible to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.</p>	<p>Our 2016 visitor satisfaction survey sampled 639 people, 6% of whom described themselves as disabled.</p> <p>Our two principal parks are well equipped to provide people with a wide variety of disabilities a positive, enjoyable, health promoting experience.</p> <p>These parks, Shorne Woods and Lullingstone, have Tramper Mobility Scooters which allow people with temporary or permanent mobility problems to access the parks. Shorne Woods also has an all-terrain wheelchair for hire which allows people with limited mobility and dexterity to access the park when accompanied by a carer. Shorne Woods also has a well-designed sensory garden which can provide a positive experience for people with a wide range of disabilities. Many individuals and groups of people with learning disabilities also enjoy the parks on a regular basis.</p> <p>Accessibility to and of the full range of our parks is a continued priority within the new Strategy, and this will provide people with a wide variety of disabilities a positive, enjoyable, health promoting experience.</p>
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Gender	No	Low	None	<p>Our 2106 visitor satisfaction survey sampled 639 people, 64% of whom were female.</p> <p>We will conduct more accurate research into the demographic profile of our park users by capturing data through visitor surveys and at the time of purchasing formal products such as season tickets. We will take appropriate action where possible to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.</p>	If the research supports a gap in provision for a specific gender then new or alternative provision or marketing can be explored to gender related equal opportunities.
Gender identity	No	None	None		
Race	No	Low	None	<p>Our 2016 visitor satisfaction survey sampled 639 people, 97% described their ethnicity as “white-British”.</p> <p>We will conduct more accurate research into the demographic profile of our park users by capturing data through visitor surveys and at the time of purchasing formal products such as season tickets. We will take appropriate action where possible to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.</p> <p>The analysis of this research will be done on a park by park basis to ensure that the demographics of the local community are taken into account.</p>	If the research supports a gap in provision for a specific race then new or alternative provision or marketing can be explored to achieve race related equal opportunities.

Religion or belief	No	Low	None	<p>We will conduct more accurate research into the demographic profile of our park users by capturing data through visitor surveys and at the time of purchasing formal products such as season tickets. We will take appropriate action where possible to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.</p> <p>The analysis of this research will be done on a park by park basis to ensure that the demographics of the local community are taken into account.</p>	<p>If the research supports a gap in provision or marketing for a specific religion or belief group then new or alternative provision can be explored to achieve religious or belief group equal opportunities.</p>
Sexual orientation	No	None	None		

<p>Carer's responsibilities</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>We will conduct more accurate research into the demographic profile of our park users by capturing data through visitor surveys and at the time of purchasing formal products such as season tickets. We will take appropriate action where possible to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.</p> <p>We believe that our parks are popular meeting places for new parents to meet with other new parents as well as to socialize with their families.</p> <p>We will conduct more accurate research into the demographic profile of our park users by capturing data through visitor surveys and at the time of purchasing formal products such as season tickets. We will take appropriate action where possible to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.</p>	<p>We will respond positively to any carers' organisations who would like to use the parks as an opportunity to provide respite for their carers.</p> <p>Our parks can provide carers with the opportunity to bring their cared for person to the countryside for a positive and enjoyable experience. Hire of the all terrain wheelchair at Shorne Woods assists with this in some cases.</p> <p>Accessibility to and of the full range of our parks is a continued priority within the new Strategy, and this will provide carers for less mobile people – irrespective of age - a positive, enjoyable, health promoting experience.</p> <p>New parents can become socially isolated if they don't have strong support networks. We will continue to ensure that our parks remain suitable places for new parents to be active and socialize and consider stronger links with support agencies to support initiatives such as breast feeding friendly cafes and improved changing and welfare facilities</p> <p>Accessibility to and of the full range of our parks is a continued priority within the new Strategy, and this will provide less mobile mums-to-be as well as parents and carers of toddlers and babies a positive, enjoyable, health promoting experience.</p>
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Part 1: INITIAL SCREENING

Proportionality - Based on the answers in the above screening grid what RISK weighting would you ascribe to this function – see Risk Matrix

Low	Medium	High
Low relevance or Insufficient information/evidence to make a judgement.	Medium relevance or Insufficient information/evidence to make a Judgement.	High relevance to equality, /likely to have adverse impact on protected groups

State rating & reasons

I would rate the Country Parks Strategy as **Low**. We have identified a need to collect better equality and diversity data however there is no indication that the Strategy will have an adverse impact on protected groups.

Context

There are approximately 1.6 million visits to the KCC Country Parks every year. Most of these are individuals, couples or families who turn up, pay for parking and enjoy the parks in an informal manner. The vast majority do not hold season tickets. This informal and fluid customer base has historically made accurate data capture for equality and diversity monitoring purposes difficult. However, during 2016 we identified that need to improve our understanding about who is using our parks and have already improved our data capture for our more formal products (ie when customers book birthday parties, buy a season ticket or book a formal education visit. Further data capture for other products is also planned for later in the year).

The 2016 Visitor Satisfaction Survey also gives us a flavour of who is using the parks as it surveyed 639 park users and collected demographic data from them. However this was a random sample and shouldn't necessarily be taken as representative.

Our lack of data, and our desire to ensure our parks are enjoyed by all sectors of society is why Objective 6 of the draft strategy commits us to “undertake research and action to ensure that visitors to our parks reflect the diverse population of Kent.

Aims and Objectives

The strategy has three aims

- 1) Provide a network of high quality and biodiverse country parks
- 2) Increase visitor numbers to the country parks
- 3) Ensure the service is as financially self-sustaining as possible.

Beneficiaries

Kent residents and visitors

Information and Data used to carry out your assessment

- The 2016 Country Parks Visitor Satisfaction Survey

- Observations from the Country Parks team
- Kent statistical overview <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/Facts-and-figures-about-Kent>

Going forward we intend to gather more specific data including that around protected characteristics by capturing data through visitor surveys and at the time of purchasing formal products such as season tickets. We will take appropriate action where possible to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.

We will conduct more accurate research into the demographic profile of our park users and take appropriate action to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.

The analysis of this research will be done on a park by park basis to ensure that the demographics of the local community are taken into account along with the individual facilities and resources that are available at each park.

Who have you involved and engaged with

There will be a full public consultation regarding the Country Parks Strategy in 2017. By utilizing contacts that the KCC Consultations team has gathered over recent years, a wide range of groups representing people with the protected characteristics will be invited to take part.

Potential Impact

One aim of the Strategy is to increase visitor numbers to the parks where capacity exists and it contains a specific objective to ensure that the parks are enjoyed by all sectors of the community.

Adverse Impact and how can these adverse impacts be mitigated

At this stage no adverse impacts have been identified in implementing the Country Parks Strategy.

JUDGEMENT

Set out below the implications you have found from your assessment for the relevant diversity groups. If any negative impacts can be justified please clearly explain why.

Option 2 – Internal Action Required

YES

Although there is no indication that the strategy will have an adverse equality impact on any of the protected characteristics the strategy is due to go out to full public consultation. If any concerns are raised as part of that, or as part of the planned research, then Actions will be taken to mitigate the impact or change the strategy in order to be compliant with the Equality Act 2010

A lack of quality data means that more accurate research into the demographic profile of park users is needed; followed by appropriate action to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.

(Complete the Action Plan at the end of this document)

Monitoring and Review

This EQIA forms part of the public consultation regarding the Strategy which closes 11th Sept 2017. It will be reviewed by the Service and the Cabinet Committee (Oct and Nov 2017) in the light of consultation responses.

Sign Off

I have noted the content of the equality impact assessment and agree the actions to mitigate the adverse impact(s) that have been identified.

Senior Officer

Signed: Stephanie Holt

Name: Stephanie Holt

Job Title: Head of Countryside, Leisure and Sport

Date: 10/07/17

DMT Member

Signed:

Name:

Job Title:

Date

Please forward a final signed electronic copy to the Equality Team by emailing

diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk

The original signed hard copy and electronic copy should be kept with your team for audit purposes.

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications
All	A lack of consultation and user voice	A full public consultation into the Country Parks Strategy 2017-2021	A better understanding of the needs of individuals and groups representing the protected characteristics	Tim Woodhouse, Country Parks Manager	Summer 2017	Yes – the cost of the public consultation (printed materials, survey design and analysis etc)
All	A lack of accurate equality and diversity data	We will conduct more accurate research into the demographic profile of our park users by capturing data through visitor surveys and at the time of purchasing formal products such as season tickets. We will take appropriate action where possible to encourage increased or alternative usage from under-represented groups.	A better understanding of park users and the identification of under-represented groups	Tim Woodhouse, Country Parks Manager	By March 2018	Yes – the cost (yet to be determined) the research and any appropriate actions to encourage more usage from under-represented groups

