

Equality Impact Assessment

Name of Policy: Allotments Service

Directorate:	Environmental Services Green Space Service Low Hall Depot Argall Avenue London E10 7AS
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Head of Service:	Nick Burton
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Lead Officer:	Ken Johnson
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Names and Roles of people carrying out the EIA

Terry Finney: Greenspace Technical Manager

Edwin O'Connell: Green Spaces Policy Officer

Ken Johnson: Allotments Officer

Section 1 - Introduction

Identify the aims of the Policy

To provide a safe, attractive and well-maintained environment, for active and passive leisure, for all the community.

The policy is mostly provided by Environmental Services, supported by the Walthamstow and Chingford Charities and Alms Houses.

It fits in with the Council's wider aims by promoting inclusion and community cohesion, increasing healthy activity and sustainable living.

The council is responsible for the provision of approximately 1200 allotment plots.

What is the rationale behind the policy and its delivery?

The Policy objectives which underpin this service, are outlined in various acts of parliament in particular the Allotment Acts 1922, 1925 and 1950 and the Local Government Act 1992 which resulted in LBWF becoming an allotment authority.

To ensure the provision of allotments, in a safe place for allotment holders and provide areas for people to grow food who do not have gardens.

Is the policy aimed at a particular client group?

The main stakeholders in relation to this policy are allotment holders, local residents and residents of surrounding boroughs.

How is the policy/service delivered

There are no eligibility criteria, subject to agreement of the terms and conditions of a tenancy agreement

The service is statutory.

The service is subject to charges.

Section 2 - Broad Needs Analysis of the Service Area

Staff are trained in equality and cultural awareness on induction day.

Many issues have been identified with an equalities impact, the main ones of which follow:

- Ethnic origin: There is significant demand from ethnic groups for allotments opposed to local indigenous population
- Gender: The provision of allotments is equality neutral as both male and female enjoy equal rights
- Age: This service provides opportunities for all ages but is taken up by older people
- Sexuality: no specific needs have been identified
- Faith: no specific needs have been identified
- Disability: Accessibility of allotments sites, provision of raised beds, provision of site toilets

The service is promoted through information boards outside allotments, local papers, Waltham Forest Direct, the Waltham Forest website and borough wide competitions.

Traditionally excluded communities are encouraged to take up allotment plots as a past time. Allotment holders within the borough are very diverse and take up of the allotments is spread throughout communities through word of mouth to people who maybe marginalised.

There have been no complaints from the public that involve equality issues.

All plot holders were sent out an Allotments Equalities Monitoring form with their 2006/07 renewal notices. 301 plot holders responded out of a total of 1'500 plot holders, a response rate of 20%.

Section 3 - Data collection and analysis

For the survey, of those who answered the questions:

	Responses	Survey	Census
Ethnicity			
British	187	60%	56%
Irish	15	5%	2%
Any other white background	8	3%	6%
Albanian	1	*	*
Greek/Greek Cypriot	11	4%	*
Kosovan	0	0%	0%
Turkish/Turkish Cypriot	12	4%	1%
Other	8	3%	*
African	2	1%	6%
Ghanaian	1	*	*
Kenyan	0	0%	0%
Nigerian	1	*	1%

Somali	0	*	1%
South African	0	*	1%
Caribbean	44	14%	8%
Any other Black	4	1%	*
White and Asian	0	*	1%
White and Black African	0	*	1%
White and Black Caribbean	5	2%	1%
Any other dual or multiple heritage	2	1%	*
Bangladeshi	1	*	1%
Indian	1	*	4%
Pakistani	4	1%	8%
Gypsy/Roma	1	*	*
Traveller	0	0%	*
Chinese	1	*	1%
Any other ethnic background	0	0%	*
Mauritian	2	1%	*
Sri Lankan	0	0%	1%
Other	1	*	*
Didn't answer	1	*	*
Disability			
Do you consider yourself to have a disability - No	243	78%	96%
If yes, hearing disability	12	4%	4%
If yes, physical disability	26	8%	
If yes, learning disability	0	0%	
If yes, visual disability	2	1%	
Yes other	4	1%	
Didn't Answer	25	8%	*
Mental Health			
Do you have a mental health issue – yes	12	4%	*
Do you have a mental health issue – no	260	83%	*
Gender			
Female	128	41%	51%
Male	165	53%	49%
Transgender	0	0%	*
Didn't Answer	20	6%	*
Age			
0-20	0	0%	28%
21-30	3	1%	18%
31-40	32	10%	18%
41-50	56	18%	12%
51-60	52	17%	9%
61-70	82	26%	7%
71-80	37	12%	5%
81-90	8	3%	3%
Didn't Answer	43	14%	*

Section 4 - Consultation

All plot holders were sent out an Allotments Equalities Monitoring form with their 2006/07 renewal notices. 301 plot holders responded out of a total of 1'500 plot holders, a response rate

of 20%. This will become an on-going exercise.

Section 5 - Assessment

The survey results indicate that among allotment holders, there is a slight over representation of British people and the proportion of Irish, Caribbean, Greek, Turkish and Cypriot is higher than the Waltham Forest population generally. Asian people tend to be under-represented.

People with disabilities are well represented amongst our allotment holders.

The survey results indicated an over representation of men as 41% were female and 53% were Male although 6% didn't answer.

Amongst allotment holders, the survey showed any under-representation of younger people (under 40) and an over representation of people over the age of 51, particularly in the 61-80 age group.

The allotments service has further undertaken a range of measure to encourage and promote diversity amongst its allotment holders. Six schools, on six allotment sites have been encouraged to take on their own school allotments sites. Accessible plots or raised beds have been created at Higham Hill Common (6 plots) and Suffield Hatch (8 plots). A disabled allotment holders group has been formed at the Oliver Road site. Waltham Forest allotments have been promoted across a wider area through the London Allotment Officers Forum in order to attract people from a wide range of backgrounds, particularly from the inner London boroughs. Wheelchair accessible toilets have been installed at the Higham Hill Common and Auckland Road sites with Higham Hill Common also receiving disabled access gates.

Tenancy Agreement charges is a barrier to take-up but there is a differential pricing structure with concessions for older people.

Allotment sites provide an environment where different communities can come together, meet and network either informally, through organised allotment associations or user groups.

Section 6 - Adverse Impact

There is no disproportionate or adverse impact caused by this policy, however there is a need for the service to be sensitive to the needs of the community to ensure that the service user profile becomes more representative of the community as a whole.

Section 7 - Monitoring and Review of policy

Equalities performance will be monitored through the survey issued to all allotment holders. Performance will then be reviewed annually, each autumn, and an action plan will be developed for the following financial year.

Section 8 - Conclusions and Recommendations

The service complies with equalities legislation but ongoing service provision needs to be reviewed on a regular basis to promote a more representative service user profile and workforce.

Section 9 - Publish the Results

The results of the EIA and the results of consultations will be published on the Council's website.

