

Equality Impact Assessment

Name of Policy: Parks, Open Spaces and Outdoor Sports Development

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:	Terry Finney
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Names and Roles of people carrying out the EIA

Terry Finney: Greenspace Technical Manager

Dave Cockerton: Parks & Playing Fields Manager

Ben Frearson: Parks & Playing Fields Manager

Steve Embleton: Outdoor Sports Development Officer

Dave Calvert: Greenspace Technical Adviser

Edwin O'Connell: Green Spaces Policy Officer

Fiona Critchley: Arboricultural Consultant

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 other departments and agencies.

It fits in with the Council's wider aims by reducing crime and disorder, through diversionary activities, improving environmental quality, promoting inclusion and community cohesion, increasing health, providing value for money and improving health and safety.

What is the rationale behind the policy and its delivery?

The policy objectives, which underpin this service, are outlined in the Vision for Waltham Forest 2012, The Waltham Forest UDP, Local Cultural Vision, Community Strategy, Sports and Physical Activity Strategy 2006/12, Play Strategy, Crime, Disorder and Drugs Audit and Strategy 2005/08, Local Biodiversity Action Plan. They are brought together in the Greenspace Strategy as follows:

- To consult with those who use or have an interest in the borough's parks and involve them in the management and development of Waltham Forest's parks and open spaces.
- To provide parks services and facilities that meet the needs of Waltham Forest's diverse local communities
- To work towards increasing access to parks and open spaces in areas of the borough where there is an identified deficiency in open space
- To strive toward providing a safe, clean and healthy environment in parks and open spaces
- To help meet Agenda 21 and sustainability objectives in the delivery of Green Space services
- To invest in the future of Waltham Forest's green spaces in order to ensure that high quality services are provided
- To ensure the Green Space service is incorporated into wider strategic programmes (e.g. regeneration, health, sustainability, lifelong learning and community safety)

Is the policy aimed at a particular client group?

The main stakeholders in relation to this policy are local residents and visitors to the borough, but certain parts of the service cater for particular clients e.g. children.

How is the policy/service delivered

There are no eligibility criteria.

The service is not statutory.

The service is generally free (funded through the Council Tax) but there are charges for certain services such as sports pitch and open spaces hire.

Section 2 - Broad Needs Analysis of the Service Area

Some training of staff in equality and cultural awareness has taken place and more is planned.

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

- Ethnic origin: There is significant demand for sports facilities from certain ethnic groups e.g. cricket from Asian and Caribbean communities, and for open spaces for community events e.g. the Mela
- Gender: Women are often concerned about personal safety and as principal carers the quality of play facilities for children
- Age: The elderly are often concerned with personal safety, children with the quality of play facilities
- Sexuality: no specific needs have been identified
- Faith: Parks and open spaces can be used by faith groups for events
- Disability: Accessibility of parks, open spaces and sports facilities is of particular concern to people with disabilities

The service is promoted through posters, leaflets, post cards, banners, bus backs and Adshels, Waltham Forest Direct, information boards in parks, the Waltham Forest and Your London

websites.

Traditionally excluded communities are targeted for use of entertainment areas in parks e.g. Langthorne Amphitheatre

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

The KMC Consultancy Survey was last carried out in 2005. The GreenStat Survey system started in 2006 and will continue in future years, but there is insufficient data at present to form conclusions. Extensive consultation regarding the Lloyd Park project took place in 2006.

Equalities monitoring of Friends groups is planned to take place shortly.

Section 3 - Data collection and analysis

For the three years of the KMC Survey, of those who answered the questions:

	KMC %	Borough %		KMC %	Borough %
Gender			Disability		
Male	36.52	48.66	Yes	10.3	16.54
Female	63.48	51.34	No	89.7	83.46
Ethnicity			Age		
White British	67.11	55.74	0 - 16	0.65	21.4
White Irish	3	2.34	17 - 24	3.01	12.38
Any other white background	7.59	6.41	25 - 59	69.07	50.82
Black African	2.81	5.78	60 - 74	17.8	9.8
Black Caribbean	6.41	8.15	75 - 84	7.46	4
Other Black	0.52	1.49	Over 85	2.01	1.6
White & Asian	0.52	0.72			
White & Black African	0.41	0.55			
White & Black Caribbean	0.44	1.38			
Other dual	0.63	0.9			
Bangladeshi	0.74	0.99			
Indian	2.37	3.51			
Pakistani	4.67	7.92			
Other Asian	1.41	2.33			
Chinese	0.48	0.66			
Other ethnic background	0.89	1.13			

Of the 73 staff in the Green Spaces Service, 90% are Male, 10% Female, 81% are White, 5% are Black British, 4% are Irish, 3% Caribbean, 1% African and 4% did not declare.

Although all groups are represented among service users, there is some difference between the KMC survey results and the borough profile, especially on ethnicity.

No information is currently available on sexuality or faith.

Section 4 - Consultation

The KMC Survey was last carried out in 2005. The GreenStat Survey system started in 2006 and will continue in future years. Extensive consultation regarding the Lloyd Park project took place in 2006, including a pilot of the new CAGE Space initiative "SpaceShaper". Consultations have also taken place on improvements to Henry Reynolds Gardens, Vestry Road, Thomas Gamuel. Non-users have been surveyed as well as users through the postal survey and GreenStat.

The KMC Survey was available in community languages.

The Lloyd Park proposals and Vestry Road improvements have been changed based on consultation.

Section 5 - Assessment

The service is universally available to all members of society, but there is differential take up of the service. Women are over-represented as service users, but this is considered positive. The service also targets children in a positive way. White people are over-represented as service users at the expense of other ethnic groups. This is of concern and action needs to be taken to address this. There is some under-representation of disabled people. Further work needs to be done on access audits where they have not yet been undertaken.

Although monitoring has not yet been undertaken, anecdotal information suggests Friends Groups are unrepresentative. Once monitoring information is available Friends Groups may need support to ensure a more representative membership.

Sports charges are a barrier to take-up but there is a differential pricing structure with concessions for young people. Target sports favoured by different communities should be promoted. Although facilities for events do exist, work could be done to provide more.

Further staff training and improved recruitment practices are needed to promote a more representative workforce.

Parks and open spaces provide an environment where different communities can come together, meet and network either informally, through organised events such as the Green Fayre, Mela and Afro Caribbean Carnival, or through sporting events.

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 GreenStat System and consultation on specific projects. A postal survey will be used every three years, as well as exit surveys at particular parks and open spaces. Composition of Friends Groups and the workforce will also be monitored, as will complaints and enquiries on SAP CRM. 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. It is also recommended that benchmarking takes place with other authorities on the results of the GreenStat survey to identify best practice, and internal benchmarking with other services that have a more representative workforce.

Section 9 - Publish the Results

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