

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (January 2021)

Section 1: Your details

EIA lead Officer: James Roberts – Engagement and Modernisation Officer

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Head of Section: Mike Cockburn – AD Climate Change and Environment

Chief Officer: Jason Gooding – Director of Neighbourhoods

Directorate: Neighbourhoods

Date: 12.10.23

Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?

Biodiversity & Net Gain Strategy

The Biodiversity & Net Gain Strategy has been developed as a proactive response to the growing environmental challenges, emphasising the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity within Wirral and our neighbouring regions. The strategy outlines a set of priorities and objectives aimed at protecting and enhancing biodiversity, ensuring its long-term survival, and fostering wider environmental benefits. It encourages the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders, including local communities, businesses, and wildlife organisations, in achieving the outlined objectives.

Section 2a: Will this EIA be submitted to a Committee meeting?

Yes / No

If 'yes' please state which meeting and what date

**Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee – 23rd
October 2023.**

Hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on the Council's website

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)

- Services**
- The workforce**
- Communities**
- Other** (please state eg: Partners, Private Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector)
Partners, Voluntary and Community Sector

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 4:

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any protected groups (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals. We encourage services to consider the impact on those who serve and who have served in the armed forces and their families, in accordance with the Armed Forces Covenant

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

| Which group(s) of people could be affected | Potential positive or negative impact | Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact | Lead person | Timescale | Resource implications |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|-----------|-----------------------|
| Age and Disability | Positive, neutral | The strategy will emphasise the creation and enhancement of green spaces and habitats which can be beneficial for all ages and abilities in terms of recreational and health impacts. Ensuring that project and scheme design are considerate of all abilities and, where required, evidencing good design and access will ensure equity for all. Any community led schemes or those including volunteers should be sufficiently risk assessed and designed to ensure good accessibility and safety for all ages and abilities. | Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Coordinator, Parks and Countryside | '23-'28 | Officer time |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | Positive, neutral | Any actions arising from the strategy will have consideration for facilities and safe, accessible paths and access in green spaces in line with best practice and guidance. | BNG Coordinator, Parks and Countryside | '23-'28 | Officer time |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---|--|---------|--------------|
| Race, Religion or Belief | Positive, neutral | The strategy requires community involvement and in turn could support community cohesion to drive action for biodiversity. This can promote unity among diverse groups of communities and individuals, bringing people together for the same aim. Spaces created or enhanced for biodiversity can also respect and consider cultural and religious significance of certain species or habitats and ensure inclusion of thought, ideas and involvement when designing such spaces. | BNG Coordinator, Parks and Countryside | '23-'28 | Officer time |
| Gender Reassignment, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Marriage and Civil Partnership | Neutral | Whilst the strategy does not directly impact these protected groups, any actions arising from the strategy will ensure that all community and stakeholder engagement activities are inclusive and non-discriminatory. | BNG Coordinator, Parks and Countryside | '23-'28 | Officer time |
| General Positive Impacts | Positive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Cohesion: The strategy involves residents, volunteers, and community groups, which supports unity and shared responsibility among various demographic groups. • Health and Well-being: The enhancement of local biodiversity and provision of ecosystem services support human well-being across all demographic groups. • Educational Opportunities: Biodiversity projects can serve as educational and engagement tools for various community groups, promoting environmental stewardship. | BNG Coordinator, Parks and Countryside | '23-'28 | Officer time |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------|---|--|---------|--------------|
| Potential Negative Impacts | Negative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility and Inclusivity: Ensuring that all initiatives and spaces are accessible and usable by all community members, considering physical abilities, age, and other factors. • Representation in Decision-Making: Ensuring that the voices of all protected groups are considered in the planning and implementation of the strategy. | BNG Coordinator, Parks and Countryside | '23-'28 | Officer time |
|----------------------------|----------|---|--|---------|--------------|

Section 4a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?

The actions will be monitored in line with the Biodiversity & Net Gain strategy which is managed by the Biodiversity & Net Gain Working Group. They will also be embedded into the development of any projects and actions arising from the strategy.

Section 4b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

n/a

Section 5: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?

Internal consultation and committee oversight/Senior Leadership Team feedback.

Section 6: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?

Yes / No – (please delete as appropriate)

If 'yes' please continue to section 7.

If 'no' please state your reason(s) why:

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 7: How will consultation take place and by when?

The Council undertook a public consultation on Biodiversity and BNG from June 26, 2023, to July 24, 2023. The consultation aimed to gather public opinions on the biodiversity in Wirral, focusing on understanding the awareness, importance, and key themes of biodiversity. It also sought to identify the threats and challenges to biodiversity in Wirral and gather views on the proposed key priorities for Wirral's Biodiversity and Net Gain Strategy. The consultation was conducted online through the 'Have your say' portal, where respondents

could engage with an online questionnaire, an ideas board, and a map tool. The key outcomes include:

- A total of 116 people engaged with the consultation, with 111 completing the questionnaire.
- A significant majority (89.2%) of respondents were aware or very aware of biodiversity, and 92.7% considered biodiversity to be important or very important for Wirral and its communities.
- The most agreed-upon biodiversity themes were supporting natural ecosystems (87.4%), conserving biodiversity for future generations (85.6%), and creating wildlife corridors (84.7%).
- The greatest perceived threats to biodiversity in Wirral were development (80.2%), habitat loss (71.2%), and land management practices (62.2%).
- The priority that respondents agreed with the most was "Harness the wealth of local knowledge and expertise to identify opportunities and solutions to local biodiversity issues."

Section 8: Have you remembered to:

- a) **Select appropriate directorate hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published** (section 2a)
- b) **Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts?** (section 4)
- c) **Send this EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer?**
- d) **Review section 4 once consultation has taken place and sent your updated EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**