

Title of Policy/Strategy/service, being assessed:	Investing in Green Places South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy
Name of Directorate and service:	Environment – Spatial Planning & Natural Environment
Name and role of officers completing this assessment:	Gemma Yardley – Senior Planning Officer – Spatial Planning Tony Harris – Senior Landscape Officer Mike Garrity – Team Leader – Spatial Planning
Contact Telephone Number of lead officer:	01305 224602
Date assessment completed:	January 2011
1. Is this a new policy/strategy/service or a review of an existing one?	
New strategy.	
2. What are the aims and objectives of the policy/strategy/service that is being assessed?	
<p>The Vision for the strategy is:</p> <p>South East Dorset is a place with high-quality, distinctive and accessible parks, corridors, habitats and spaces for people and wildlife. Green Infrastructure will complement the unique coast and harbours setting of the area and enhance internationally important wetlands and heaths as well as local wildlife sites while actively supporting the development of sustainable communities.</p> <p>The South East Dorset Green Infrastructure partners have the following overarching objectives in terms of delivering the strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in partnership to deliver multi-functional green infrastructure ; • To improve health and well-being, reduce inequality and encourage community participation; • To strengthen the competitive advantages of South East Dorset's economy; • To prepare for climate change through mitigation and adaptation; • To conserve and enhance the unique natural environment and to maximise the positive contribution of economic and housing growth; • To create and manage sustainable places informed by local people and local character. 	
3. What needs or priorities is the policy/strategy/service designed to meet?	
<p>The strategy is a high level overarching document to guide the infrastructure needs of a growing number of households. It recognises the importance of South East Dorset's unique environment to its economy.</p> <p>Green infrastructure is critical to the aim of creating sustainable communities and meeting the challenges of climate change. It harnesses the natural environment, offers ways to secure solutions for a range of economic, social and environmental issues and make optimal use of space through its multi-functions.</p>	

4. Who and/or what has been involved with implementing the policy, strategy, or service?

The strategy has been developed by officers from the County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council, Borough of Poole, Purbeck District Council, the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Forestry Commission.

Council members have been involved through workshop events and the Dorset and South Wiltshire Joint Planning and Transportation Liaison Committee.

Wider stakeholders from the following groups have been involved in workshop events to help steer the direction of the strategy: Agency & Public Land managers, Building Industry & Chamber of Commerce, Agriculture & Forestry, Environment Groups, Councils & Large Civic Associations, Natural Area and Recreation Users.

The Councils and partner organisations were supported by CAFE Space Enabling. This is a mentoring and knowledge transfer programme to support and challenge urban green space and public space and strategies. The Councils and partners have also jointly funded and appointed Dorset Environmental Records Centre to collate data on existing assets and Land Use Consultants to carry out the data analysis work.

5. In relation to the policy/strategy/service what do you think are the main issues, positive and/or negative relating to the different equality strands?

The strategy is an overarching strategy that will guide delivery strategies and projects. It will need to guide individual strategies and projects to meet equality strands. The strategy lists a number of standards. It is suggested that equality is added to make this aspect more explicit. The consultation exercise should also offer options to meet the needs of equality strands.

Disability

The 2001 Census asked residents to state if they had a long term illness or disability which limited their daily activities. At the time 19% of DCC Dorset's population answered yes, just above the national average of 18%. The figure was highest in Christchurch (22%). The figures for Bournemouth UA and Poole UA are 20% and 19%.

A more recent indicator of prevalence of disability is shown by the level of people claiming the two disability-related state benefits. 8% of the Dorset population are entitled to either Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance, above the national figure of 5.4%.

Dorset County Council and Dorset NHS support around 1,200 people with a learning disability.

It is estimated that there are about 53,000 people in Dorset with a mental health problem at any one time. The mental health of Dorset's older population is of particular concern – 6,673 people were diagnosed with dementia in 2005 and this is expected to rise to 9,624 by 2021.

The benefits to both physical and mental health of visiting the countryside and green spaces have been researched by Natural England (see below).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION 2008. Health, place and nature – How outdoor environments influence health and well-being: a knowledge base.

KAPLAN, R. & KAPLAN, S. 1989. *The experience of nature: A psychological perspective*, Cambridge Univ Pr.

ULRICH, R., SIMONS, R., LOSITO, B., FIORITO, E., MILES, M. & ZELSON, M. 1991. Stress recovery during exposure to natural and urban environments¹. *Journal of environmental psychology*, 11, 201-230.

ULRICH, R. 1984. View through a window may influence recovery from surgery. *Science*, 224, 420.

Faber-Taylor, A., Kuo, F.E., Sullivan, W.C., 2001. Coping with ADD. The surprising connection to green play settings. *Environ. Behav.* 33, 54–77
TZOULAS, K., KORPELA, K., VENN, S., YLI-PELKONEN, V., KAZMIERCZAK, A., NIEMELA, J. & JAMES, P. 2007. Promoting ecosystem and human health in urban areas using Green Infrastructure: A literature review. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 81, 167-178.

National and regional research by the South West Protected Landscapes Forum suggests that the barriers that deter disabled people from visiting the countryside include physical barriers such as stiles and path surface, lack of information to plan a visit and lack of confidence. Involving disabled people in the design of new spaces and improving existing spaces will help to increase access and enjoyability.

Race/Ethnicity

The 2001 Census provides the most detailed and reliable information on ethnicity. DCC is less ethnically diverse than England. In 2001 3.2% of DCC Dorset population classed themselves as not being 'White British' (ie. from a black and minority ethnic group), lower than the proportion for England (13%). The figures for Bournemouth UA and Poole UA are 7.5% and 4% respectively.

Green spaces can offer places to meet and socialise. It can offer the opportunity to enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of places.

Research from the Black Environment Network and the Mosaic project in National Parks, suggest that the key issues relating to race and ethnicity relate to confidence in visiting the countryside and feeling welcomed by rural communities. It also suggests that perceptions of what is considered a fine landscape can vary according to race and ethnicity as it can do for other equality groups. Involving equality groups in defining and celebrating what makes the local townscape and landscape special to them could bring richness and depth to how we define special places. Gypsies and Travellers, of which there is a significant population in Dorset are likely to have their own special perspectives on the landscape around them.

Gender (including Transgender)

2009 Mid Year Estimates show that females outnumber males in the county as a whole. For DCC Dorset there are 106 females for every 100 males, compared to a national figure of 103 females per 100 males. In Christchurch there are 110 females per 100 males.

There are currently no official sources of equality information on transgender status.

Crime and fear of crime may be an issue particularly for the female gender. The strategy includes a project for a GI and Design Toolkit but it should be specific that the design of green spaces will take account of principles to 'design out crime'.

Sexual Orientation

This is currently difficult to measure. The 2001 Census asked a question about the relationship between adults living in the same household. In DCC Dorset 58% of all people aged over 16 were married, compared to the national figure of 51%. This excludes people who are 'cohabiting', a position which has increased in recent years. The survey also recorded returns from 0.13% of all DCC respondents that said they lived as same sex couples, lower than the national average of 0.19%. These figures cannot be regarded as comprehensive but provide a relative indication of instances of residents who regard themselves as living as a same sex couple. Since the Civil Partnership Act came into force and until 2008 there have been 218 civil partnerships in DCC Dorset.

No issues identified.

Faith/Religion/belief

The 2001 Census provides the best source of information on religious affiliation. In DCC Dorset 78% of respondents stated that they followed a Christian religion compared to a figure of 71% for England. The

figures for Bournemouth UA and Poole UA are 71% and 74% respectively. In DCC Dorset a further 21% either refused to give an answer or expressed no religious belief. The figure for both Bournemouth UA and Poole UA was 26%. Less than 1% of DCC Dorset residents expressed an affiliation to a non-Christian religion (compared to a figure of 5.7% for England). Bournemouth UA was 3% and Poole UA was 1%. Of these in DCC Dorset, Buddhists formed the largest proportion (23.3%), followed by Muslims (21.4%) and Jews (14.5%).

No issues identified.

Age

2009 Mid Year Estimates show that older people (men aged 65+ and women 60+) make up a higher proportion of DCC Dorset's population (29.4%) than nationally (19.5%). Christchurch has the highest figure at 34.1%. The figures for Bournemouth UA and Poole UA are 22.1% and 24.4% respectively. This relative over representation of older people is reflected in the lower proportion of children in the county (17.1%) compared to nationally (18.7%). The figures for Bournemouth UA and Poole UA are 15.6% and 17.4% respectively.

The benefits to both physical and mental health of visiting the countryside and green spaces have been researched by Natural England (see below). The barriers that deter disabled people from visiting the countryside may also be relevant for older people and young families. These include physical barriers such as stiles and path surface, lack of information to plan a visit and lack of confidence. Involving older people and young families in the design of new spaces and improving existing spaces will help to increase access and enjoyability.

Other factors of disadvantage to consider eg: socio-economic, rurality

Indicators of deprivation are generally low in South East Dorset. Few areas fall within the most deprived 10% in England. The exceptions are areas of Bournemouth that fall within the most deprived 10% in England in terms of the index of multiple deprivation and the specific health and disability index. Poole also has pockets of deprivation in terms of the health and disability index.

The Marmot Review identifies reducing health inequalities as a matter of fairness and social justice. In England, people currently die prematurely each year as a result of health inequalities. There is a social gradient in health – the lower a person's social position, the worse his or her health. Health inequalities result from social inequalities. Action on health inequalities requires action across all the social determinants of health. Giving children the best start in life is a key objective.

The total area of Dorset including Bournemouth and Poole is 265,273 hectares. Only 16,712 hectares (6.3%) are considered urban.

The strategy recognises the potential for green infrastructure to contribute to active travel networks – walking and cycling routes. This presents a potentially opportunity for those without access to a car for free travel to employment and other key destinations. Some green infrastructure is less accessible to those without access to the car. The strategy identifies that specific projects will need to consider alternative access to more remote sites.

The research relating to the benefits to both physical and mental health of visiting the countryside and green spaces is also relevant here as many sites have free access. One of the objectives of the strategy is to reduce inequality. Specific reference could be made to health inequality.

<p>6. Are there any aspects of the policy//strategy/service (not already identified under Section 5) that result in quantifiable or different quality outcomes for different groups (higher or lower uptake/failure to access/receive a poorer or inferior service/evidence that different groups have different needs)?</p>
<p>No. The strategy seeks to meet the needs of different groups but the strategy should be more explicit.</p>
<p>7. What further data/consultation do you need carry out if any? Please include the actions in the attached improvement plan.</p>
<p>It would be useful to have specific data / survey information for South East Dorset. Involving the 6 equality groups in consultation would help to improve the strategy.</p>
<p>8. In what way(s) might this service/strategy/policy have an adverse impact on the grounds of race/ethnicity, gender, disability, age, religion/Faith/belief, sexual orientation, or rurality? Please give your reasons/evidence for this, use your answers from box 5 - 7 [Note: "Adverse impact" means that the policy/strategy/service is disadvantageous to one or more groups of people.]</p>
<p>None.</p>
<p>9. If you have identified that the service or policy is having, or might be having, an adverse impact, is it justifiable or legitimate? Please give your reasons for this.</p>
<p>N/A</p>
<p>10. If you have concluded that the adverse impact or the discrimination <u>is justifiable or legitimate</u>, you will need to explain your actions and reasons. This is because the county council has a statutory duty to promote good relations between people of different groups. You will need to think what action could be taken to mitigate the adverse impact on people. Please include the actions in the attached improvement plan.</p>
<p>N/A</p>
<p>11. If you have concluded that the adverse impact or the discrimination <u>is illegal</u>, you must take action to remedy this immediately. Please outline the action you will be taking and include it in your improvement plan.</p>
<p>N/A</p>

Improvement Plan

Date on which the improvement plan will be reviewed:		April 2011			
Officer responsible for review of the improvement plan:		Gemma Yardley			
A) Issue Identified and B) resulting equality target	Action Required	Please state: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> what plan the target will be incorporated into, e.g. directorate plan, service plan or team plan Timescale 	Officer responsible	How will this target be monitored?	Budget Implications Please notify the relevant service accountant
<p>Issue: the strategy is not explicit about delivery strategies and projects meeting the 6 different equality strands.</p> <p>Target: Add explicit reference to the strategy in terms of meeting the 6 different equality strands.</p>	Amend the strategy. It is suggested that equality is added to the standards section to make this aspect more explicit.	Investing in Green Places – South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011	GY	By Spatial Planning Team	Staff time
<p>Issue: The consultation exercise for the draft strategy should also offer options to meet the needs of the different equality strands.</p> <p>Target: Review consultation guidelines.</p>	Review consultation exercise to ensure it is accessible to the 6 different equality groups.	Spatial Planning Team Plan 2011	MG	By Spatial Planning Team	Staff time Possible translation costs.
Issue: Involving the 6 different equality groups in the design of new spaces and improving existing	Amend the strategy. To make explicit reference to including the 6 different equality groups in the design of spaces eg. through the	Investing in Green Places – South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011	GY	By Spatial Planning Team	Staff time

Improvement Plan

A) Issue Identified and B) resulting equality target	Action Required	Please state: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what plan the target will be incorporated into, e.g. directorate plan, service plan or team plan • Timescale 	Officer responsible	How will this target be monitored?	Budget Implications Please notify the relevant service accountant
spaces will help to increase access and enjoyability. Target: Add reference in strategy to involvement of different equality groups to design of spaces.	GI & Design Toolkit.				
Issue: It would be useful to have specific data / survey information for South East Dorset. Target: Collect data specific to South East Dorset.		Investing in Green Places – South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy Action Plan 2012	MG	By Spatial Planning Team	Staff time

These actions/targets will need to be SMART and built into the service planning framework.