

Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(Version 4)

Item name	Details
Title of service or policy	District Tree and Woodland Strategy for Bath and North East Somerset.
Name of directorate and service	Place Shaping.
Name and role of officers completing the EqlA	Laurence Richards – Tree and Woodland Strategy and Delivery Manager.
Date of assessment	16.12.2025

Equality Impact Assessment (or 'Equality Analysis') is a process of systematically analysing a new or existing policy or service to identify what impact or likely impact it will have on people and different groups within our community. The main aim is to identify any adverse impacts (i.e. discriminatory or negative consequences for a particular group or sector of the community, and to identify areas where equality can be better promoted). Equality impact Assessments (EqIAs) can be carried out in relation to services provided to customers and residents as well as employment policies/strategies that relate to staffing matters.

This toolkit has been developed to use as a framework when carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) or Equality Analysis. **Not all sections will be relevant – so mark N/A any that are not applicable.** It is intended that this is used as a working document throughout the process, and a final version will be published on the Council's website following relevant service lead approval.

1.1 Identify the aims of the policy or service and how it is implemented

Key questions	Answers / notes
<p>1.1 Briefly describe purpose of the service/policy e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the service/policy is delivered and by whom • If responsibility for its implementation is shared with other departments or organisations • Intended outcomes 	<p>We have a target to increase tree canopy cover by 650 hectares by 2030.</p> <p>The Tree and Woodland Strategy (TAWs) is looking at the district of Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) and considers how we work in partnership to achieve this goal while maximising benefit for tackling the climate and ecological emergencies and improving people's lives – balancing the multiple objectives of flood mitigation, water quality, carbon sequestration, food production, nature recovery and public access.</p> <p>The strategy will develop a vision for the tree and woodlands of B&NES, a set of principles or themes around how we address our core policies with tree and woodlands and an action plan for how we deliver the strategy.</p> <p>The Place Shaping service is leading on this piece of work, working with colleagues in the council and in partnership with external partners, such as the Forestry Commission, Natural England, Avon Needs Trees and The Forest of Avon.</p>

	<p>The TAWS will be implemented by council officers and members, as well as delivery partners, and community organisations.</p> <p>The intended outcome of the TAWS is an action plan that can move the district of B&NES towards the TAWS vision.</p>
<p>1.2 Provide brief details of the scope of the policy or service being reviewed, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is it a new service/policy or review of an existing one? ● Is it a national requirement?). ● How much room for review is there? 	<p>The B&NES district TAWS is an update to the B&NES Tree and Woodland Delivery Plan 2022 and an addition to the Bath & North East Somerset Council Tree and Woodland Strategy 2024 – 2030, which sets out a strategy for council owned land rather than the district.</p> <p>The England Trees Action Plan published by Defra in 2021 sets out the central role England's trees should play in providing a cost-effective solution to both the climate and nature recovery agendas by absorbing carbon and providing vital habitat for wildlife. Strategically therefore trees should be at the heart of a local authority's response to both these challenges as well as other wider land use strategies.</p> <p>The TAWS approach is consistent with The Tree Councils <i>Tree and Woodland Strategy Toolkit</i> which was produced in partnership with DEFRA and the Forestry Commission.</p> <p>The TAWS will be reviewed every five years to ensure delivery is achieving targets and standards.</p>
<p>1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?</p>	<p>The Council declared a Climate Emergency in March 2019, and an Ecological Emergency in 2020. The TAWS will directly deliver against our existing Ecological Emergency Action Plan.</p> <p>The TAWS directly links with the council's Corporate Strategy overriding purpose, to improve people's lives and the two core policies – tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergencies.</p> <p>By increasing tree and woodland canopy cover and improving tree and woodland management across the district, we can directly address the climate</p>

	<p>and ecological emergencies by sequestering carbon and increasing woodland habitat range and quality.</p> <p>Other key policy documents linking and supporting the TAWS are the council's Greener Places Plan, Economic Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Climate and Nature Strategy (pending publication) and Local Plan.</p>
--	--

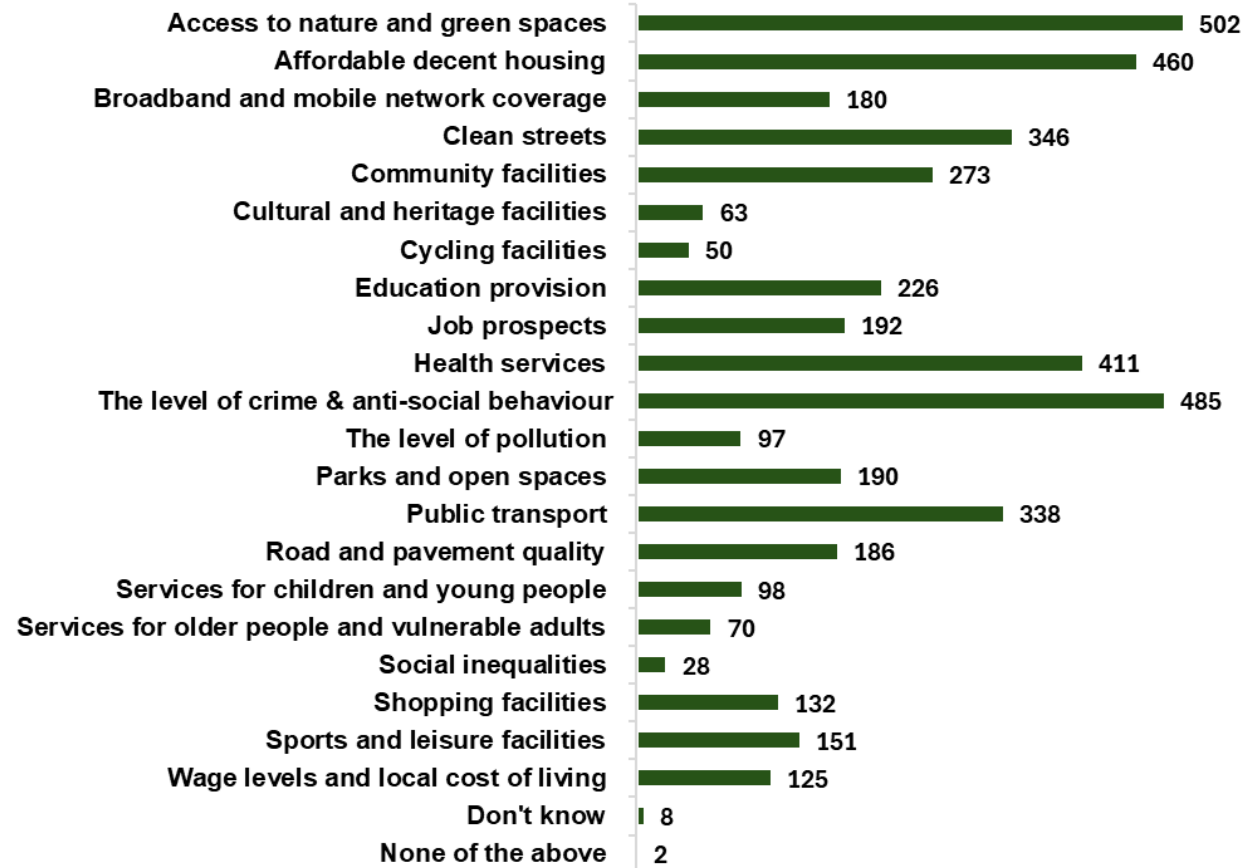
2. Consideration of available data, research and information

Key questions	Data, research and information that you can refer to
2.1 What equality focussed training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community?	All B&NES officers receive mandatory Equality and Inclusion Training.
2.2 What is the equality profile of service users?	As this is a strategy for the district of B&NES, the equalities profile is for the district as a whole. Details regarding the profile of the district's population can be found in the Strategic Evidence Base report, at https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence

2.3 Are there any recent customer satisfaction surveys to refer to? What were the results? Are there any gaps? Or differences in experience/outcomes?

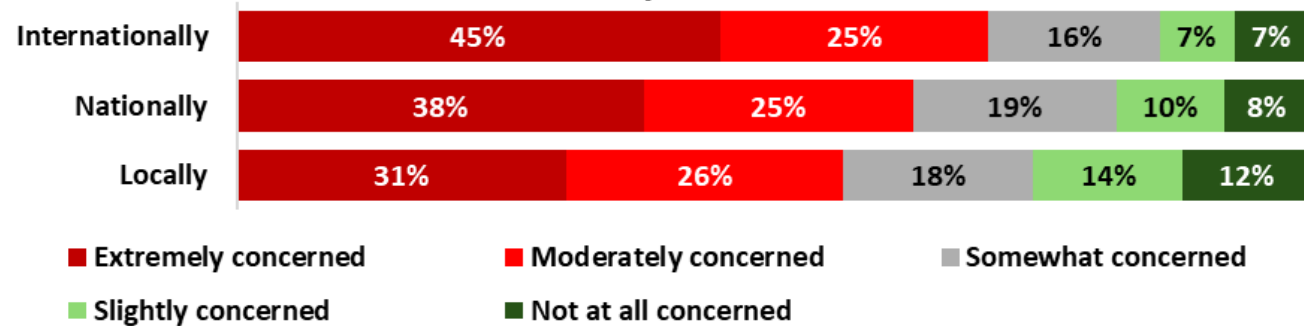
In the Voicebox 33 survey, May 2025, "Access to Nature and Green Spaces" was voted by residents as the most important thing in making somewhere a good place to live.

Q5b. Which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?



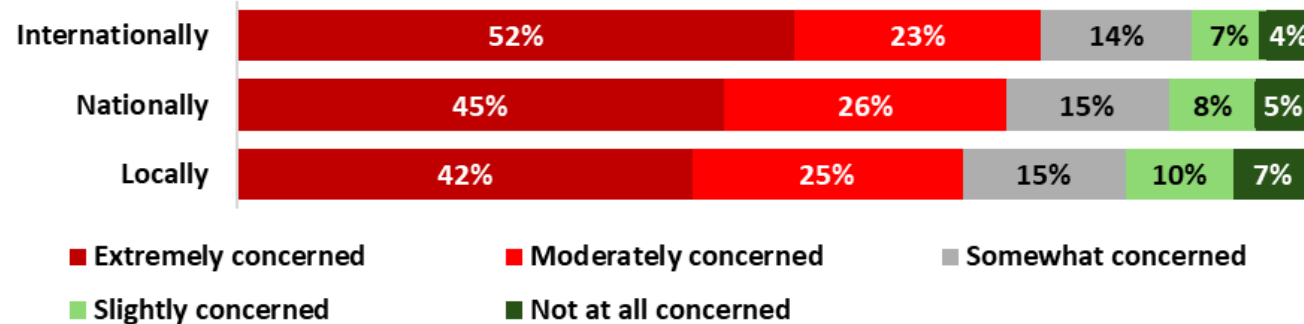
While 57% of respondents were either extremely or moderately concerned about climate change and its impacts locally.

Q31. How concerned are you by climate change and its impacts



And 67% of respondents were either extremely or moderately concerned about nature loss and its impacts locally.

Q32. How concerned are you by nature loss (ecological emergency) and its impacts?



2.4 What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?	No consultation has yet been undertaken.
2.5 If you are planning to undertake any consultation in the future regarding this service or policy, how will you include equality considerations within this?	<p>We are disseminating a survey to the farming community as part of the TAWS work. Given that 70% of B&NES is farmland, working with this community is going to be a key aspect in delivering our tree canopy cover targets. The survey will be going live in January 2026 and will allow us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. give the farming community the opportunity to feed into the district tree and woodland strategy. b. gather information for the strategy. c. create a list of farmers interested in being involved in trees of farms working groups. d. create a list of people who are interested in tree, woodland and agroforestry planting. e. create a list of people interested in learning more about woodland management and or being part of a regional management regime. <p>Partners are disseminating the survey to the farming community to give as many as possible a chance to feed into this work. These partners include but are not limited to, the Soil Association, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, National Farmers Union and the CLA.</p>

3. Assessment of impact: 'Equality analysis'

Based upon any data you have considered, or the results of consultation or research, use the spaces below to demonstrate you have analysed how the service or policy:

- Meets any particular needs of equalities groups or could help promote equality in some way.
- Could have a negative or adverse impact for any of the equality groups

Key questions	Examples of what the service has done to promote equality	Examples of actual or potential negative or adverse
---------------	---	---

		impact and what steps have been or could be taken to address this
3.1 Issues relating to all groups and protected characteristics	<p>Trees deliver multiple benefit for people, from health and wellbeing benefits to clean air and water, reduced flood risk, shading, cooling and adaptation to climate change. But trees are not distributed equitably throughout our urban centres. This is why we are investigating the use of The Tree Equity Score mapping - a free tool that combines information from a variety of sources to create a single measure from 0-100, the lower the score the greater the need for intervention – as a way of prioritising action in urban areas. The metrics that Tree Equity Score use are tree canopy, income, health, employment, age, heat and air pollution.</p> <p>The evidence shows that ethnic minorities and people from deprived backgrounds have significantly less access to nature. We will promote and enable access for all and have an awareness of different cultures, mindful of differences and shared needs and wants.</p> <p>The TAWS will assess the distribution of publicly accessible woodlands in the landscape across B&NES and identify, promote and seek to provide opportunities for accessible woodland for all.</p> <p>The TAWS will seek to gather data on the provision of accessibility needs for disabled people in publicly accessible woodland on third party land. Propose accessibility and quality assessments to be carried out by the landowners of these woodlands.</p>	No negative or adverse impacts identified to date.

*There is no requirement within the public sector duty of the Equality Act to consider groups who may be disadvantaged due to socio economic status, or because of living in a rural area. However, these are significant issues within B&NES and have therefore been included here.

** The Equality Act does not cover armed forces community. However, the Armed Forces Bill (which came in on 22 Nov 2022) introduces a requirement to pay 'due regard' to make sure the Armed Forces Community are not disadvantaged when accessing public services.

***The Equality Act does not cover care experienced people. B&NES adopted this group as a protected characteristic in March 2024 alongside over 80 other Local Authorities. Although we have data for care leavers and children/young people who are currently in the care of B&NES we do not have wider data on disadvantage experienced through being in care.

4. Bath and North East Somerset Council Equality Impact Assessment Improvement Plan

Please list actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment/analysis. These actions should be based upon the analysis of data and engagement, any gaps in the data you have identified, and any steps you will be taking to address any negative impacts or remove barriers. The actions need to be built into your service planning framework. Actions/targets should be measurable, achievable, realistic and time framed.

Issues identified	Actions required	Progress milestones	Officer responsible	By when
Inequitable distribution of trees and therefore tree benefits in urban areas.	Identify protocols by which to map, understand and address these inequalities.	Protocol developed and included in the TAWS.	Tree and Woodland Strategy and Delivery Manager.	Summer 2026.
Inequitable use of rural green spaces.	Address this issue as part of social strategy workshop.	Outcomes from the workshop to be included in the TAWS.	Tree and Woodland Strategy and Delivery Manager.	Summer 2026.

Inequitable distribution of publicly accessible woodland on third party land across the district.	Map the publicly accessible woodlands on third party land and opportunity areas for new woodland creation.	Include the output from the mapping exercise in the TAWS.	Tree and Woodland Strategy and Delivery Manager.	Summer 2026.
Potential barriers within publicly accessible woodlands for those with disabilities.	Research the provision of wheelchair access in publicly accessible woodlands in B&NES.	Include output of research in the TAWS.	Tree and Woodland Strategy and Delivery Manager.	Summer 2026.

5. Sign off and publishing

Once you have completed this form, it needs to be ‘approved’ by your Divisional Director or their nominated officer. Following this sign off, send a copy to the Equality Team (equality@bathnes.gov.uk), who will publish it on the Council’s website. Keep a copy for your own records.

Signed off by: Jackie Clayton, Head of Place Shaping (Divisional Director or nominated senior officer)
Date: 5 January 2026