

# Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(Version 4)

<b>Item name</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>Title of service or policy</b>	Somer Valley Links - Bear Flat
<b>Name of directorate and service</b>	Sustainable Communities – Place Shaping
<b>Name and role of officers completing the EIA</b>	Krzysztof Fedorczyk – Senior Engineer, Strategic Transport Projects
<b>Date of assessment</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2026

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 different groups within the community. The main aim is to identify any discriminatory or negative consequences for a particular group or sector of the community, and also to identify areas where equality can be better promoted. Equality impact Assessments (EIAs) 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 (EIA) or Equality Analysis. **Not all sections will be relevant – so leave blank 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.

## 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"> <li>● How the service/policy is delivered and by whom</li> <li>● If responsibility for its implementation is shared with other departments or organisations</li> <li>● Intended outcomes</li> </ul>	<p>Somer Valley Links (SVL) is a project within the Department for Transport’s (DfT) City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Programme<sup>1</sup> which aims to deliver transformational change through investments in public and sustainable transport infrastructure, and is targeted at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● driving growth and productivity</li> <li>● decarbonising transport</li> <li>● levelling up services and areas</li> </ul> <p>SVL aims to improve travel between Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Bath via the A367, Bristol via the A37, and the A362 link road between</p>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/city-region-sustainable-transport-settlements-developing-proposals/city-region-sustainable-transport-settlements-guidance-for-mayoral-combined-authorities>

them, through better bus infrastructure and enabling more walking, wheeling and cycling.

Implementation is the responsibility of the Council, with funding received from the Department for Transport through West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA). The council must seek approval from WECA before implementation can be commenced and funding released.

This EQIA concerns the Bear Flat proposals, which include:

- Consolidation of southbound bus stops – removal of bus stop north of Shakespeare Avenue allowing more room for pedestrians and reducing confusion for bus users, and bus stop shelter upgrade south of Shakespeare Avenue including real time information
- Widening of Bloomfield Road bus gate from 3m to 3.2m to support bus movements, resurfacing and relocation of buildout
- Side road entry treatment on Shakespeare Avenue, Bloomfield Avenue, Bruton Avenue and Hayes Place to support pedestrian priority and safer crossing movements
- Inclusion of two loading bays on northbound (opposite Shakespeare Avenue) and southbound (between Bruton Avenue and Hayes Place) sides, whilst retaining northbound and southbound traffic lanes
- Narrowing the crossing and widening footways between Shakespeare Avenue and Hayes Place on both sides of the road; to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians; improve placemaking and character of the local area and encourage lower speeds; allow more vehicle green time at traffic lights to support quicker, more reliable bus journeys whilst retaining a safe crossing duration for pedestrians; support walking and wheeling with wider footways

- Upgraded bus shelter north of Bloomfield Avenue, retaining real time information, and travel hub elements including e-scooter and e-bike parking bays and wayfinding totems
- Bus stop layby to accommodate two buses north of the pedestrian crossing

The anticipated outcomes as a result of the proposals include:

- Increase the efficiency and reliability of public transport on the A37/A362 and A367 corridors.
- Improve the quality of public transport services and stops/interchanges on the A37/A362 and A367 corridors.
- Enable continuous, safe, and legible active-travel journeys along the corridor, end to end, for those living and working along the A37/A362 and A367 corridors.
- Improve access by active-travel modes to public transport along the A37/A362 and A367 corridors.
- Reduce severance for cyclists, walkers, wheelchair users, and other active-travel modes.
- Increase opportunities for physical activity for residents of the study area.
- Improve safety and security, particularly for vulnerable users on the A37/A362 and A367 corridors.
- Protect and enhance the natural environment on the A37/A362 and A367 corridors and reduce carbon emissions from transport.

More information and updates can be found on the Somer Valley Links website - <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/somer-valley-links>

<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"> <li>● Is it a new service/policy or review of an existing one?</li> <li>● Is it a national requirement?).</li> <li>● How much room for review is there?</li> </ul>	<p>SVL aims to improve journeys on the A367, A37 and A362 with new bus, walking, cycling and wheeling facilities.</p> <p>Bear Flat proposals focus on the area between and including the A367 junction with Bloomfield Road and Hayes Place, and providing a local, multimodal transport interchange.</p> <p>Previous business cases have been approved by both B&amp;NES and the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority.</p> <p>The interventions included have been through multiple review panels, including with Active Travel England and West of England Mayoral Combined Authority officers. Any comments have or will be fully resolved.</p> <p>The designs can take account of any suggested improvements identified through this EqIA and subsequent EqIA reviews.</p>
<p>1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?</p>	<p>The SVL Phase 1A proposals link to our Climate Emergency Action Plan<sup>2</sup>, Journey to Net Zero<sup>3</sup>, Active Travel Masterplan<sup>4</sup>, as well as our Corporate Strategy<sup>5</sup> and its policies to lead the UK in climate and nature action; building a sustainable future for Bath and North East Somerset; net zero, nature positive by 2030; and to listen to and work with residents to act on their concerns; in addition to its 3 core ambitions of preparing for the future, delivering for local residents, focusing on prevention, and 9 priorities which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The right homes in the right places</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/read-our-climate-strategy-and-action-plan>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/journey-net-zero-final-report>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/active-travel-masterplan>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/corporate-strategy-2023-2027>

- More travel choices
- Clean, safe and vibrant neighbourhoods
- Support for vulnerable adults and children
- Delivering for our children and young people
- Healthy lives and places
- Good jobs
- Skills to thrive
- Cultural life

The proposals support the emerging Movement Strategy for Bath 6, Creating Sustainable Communities strategy<sup>7</sup>, and ongoing Local Plan<sup>8</sup> work to facilitate housing delivery and economic growth. SVL also supports the Somer Valley as one of five growth zones identified in the West of England Growth Strategy<sup>9</sup>, and the project aligns with the delivery of the West of England Transport Vision<sup>10</sup>. There may arise conflicts with existing and future policies as projects and policies develop. We will aim to resolve these tensions for each intervention proposed separately, with the relevant officer teams at the earliest opportunity, and look to use our corporate strategy and adopted doughnut economics model to find a way forward.

## 2. Consideration of available data, research and information

Key questions	Data, research and information that you can refer to
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<sup>6</sup> <https://newsroom.bathnes.gov.uk/news/have-your-say-baths-decade-long-transport-strategy>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/creating-sustainable-communities-programme>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/local-plan>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/about-us/our-strategy/west-of-england-growth-plan/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/about-us/our-strategy/transport-vision/>

<p><b>2.1</b> What equalities training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community?</p>	<p>All officers involved have received mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training. All staff are all familiar with relevant national guidance and standards.</p>
<p><b>2.2</b> What is the equalities profile of service users?</p>	<p>The scheme covers the residential area of Bear Flat, but recognises the importance of the A367 as the key corridor south of the city from the Somer Valley. Therefore, there is a wide range of equality profiles to consider including local demographics of the Widcombe and Lyncombe ward, and all B&amp;NES residents, as well as of those travelling into and through B&amp;NES including visitors and commuters.</p> <p>Widcombe and Lyncombe<sup>11</sup> has a mixed population with a strong presence of young adults (especially 20–24 years old) and working-age residents, alongside a significant older population (65+), indicating varied accessibility needs. Around 80% of households have access to a car, but 19.9% have no car, meaning a notable minority rely on walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport. Travel patterns show high levels of home working (58.4%), lower car commuting (20%), and above-average walking, with many trips being short distance (often under 5km), highlighting reliance on local services and safe active travel routes*. The ward has lower-than-average disability levels (13.3%), but still includes a meaningful group with mobility limitations needing accessible infrastructure. It is predominantly White British (81%) but slightly more diverse than the B&amp;NES average, with higher proportions of other White, mixed and minority ethnic groups. Overall, the profile suggests sensitivity to changes affecting walkability, public transport, local access, and road safety, particularly for older people, disabled residents and households without a car.</p> <p>*These figures are based on Census 2021 data and should be interpreted with caution, as travel behaviour and working patterns were likely influenced by COVID-19 restrictions,</p>

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<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrjoiMzRhZjJjN2EtNDY2NS00ZWY0LThkZjltMmVjNTM5ZmlyNzQwliwidCI6ImM1NjJjMGNiLWQ5MjUtNGRmZC04ZDk5LWM5NDE2ZWlwM2ViOSJ9>

	<p>particularly the high level of home working. However, car ownership is a long-term trend and the need to support the 1 in 5 residents without access to a car remains a key consideration.</p>
<p><b>2.3</b> Are there any recent customer satisfaction surveys to refer to? What were the results? Are there any gaps? Or differences in experience/outcomes?</p>	<p>The Voicebox survey is a resident survey aimed at obtaining residents' views on a range of topics to help shape and improve local services. In 2024, the survey attracted 1072 responses, of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 56% identified as female and 44% identified as male</li> <li>• In terms of age: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 11% were 18-34 years old;</li> <li>○ 12% were 35-44 years old;</li> <li>○ 16% were 45-54 years old;</li> <li>○ 21% were 55-64 years old;</li> <li>○ 22% were 65-74 years old;</li> <li>○ 15% were 75-84 years old;</li> <li>○ 3% were 85 years old or over</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The survey results reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 63% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement 'I am willing to walk more often instead of travelling by car'.</li> <li>• 59% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed with the statement "I am willing to use public transport more often instead of travelling by car".</li> <li>• 30% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement 'I am willing to cycle more often instead of travelling by car'.</li> <li>• The third most chosen to the question of 'Which of the things, if any, do you think needs the most improving' was public transport (363 responses)</li> <li>• In response to 'Which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live', the top five most chosen options included access to green nature and spaces (502 responses) and public transport (338 responses).</li> </ul>

<p><b>2.4</b> What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?</p>	<p>Public consultation was undertaken in Spring 2025, supported by five in-person drop-in events in Radstock, Pensford, Bath, Peasedown St John and Temple Cloud. Stakeholder groups on the B&amp;NES database were notified in advance, and respondents were invited to optionally provide equalities information, with 46% doing so. Some groups/organisations contacted and informed about the consultation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deaf/Vision Plus</li> <li>• Bath Access Group</li> <li>• Bath Churches Together</li> <li>• Living Streets</li> <li>• Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans)</li> <li>• Bath Interfaith</li> <li>• Age UK</li> <li>• Youth Forum</li> <li>• Space LGBT Youth Group</li> <li>• RNIB</li> <li>• Youth Connect</li> <li>• Off the Record (B&amp;NES)</li> <li>• Bath Mind</li> <li>• Black South West Group</li> <li>• Bath Polish Association</li> <li>• Access Bath</li> <li>• Action on Hearing Loss</li> </ul> <p>While equality monitoring information was collected and reviewed, the consultation did not identify robust differential impacts by protected characteristic due to partial completion of monitoring questions and small subgroup sample sizes. It should be noted that for age, respondents were skewed towards older age groups (approximately 76% of those who completed equalities monitoring questions were aged 45+, versus approximately 44% aged</p>
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45+ B&NES-wide<sup>12</sup>). Equalities considerations were integrated into the consultation through inclusive engagement methods, optional equality monitoring, accessible materials, and analysis of feedback from participants including disabled people and older residents. Equalities considerations were integrated into the consultation through inclusive engagement methods, optional equality monitoring, accessible materials, and analysis of feedback from participants including disabled people and older residents. The full consultation report can be found [here](#).

Out of the consultation responses, 261 related to the Wellsway/Bear Flat corridor. Specific Bear Flat proposals (mobility hub and street changes) generated 123 detailed written responses. There was support for public realm improvements, better bus stops, and enhanced pedestrian crossings, but significant concerns were raised regarding traffic congestion, road safety, parking loss, and access to homes and businesses. Traffic impacts, increased congestion and delays, were flagged by respondents as concerns, particularly affecting school travel and deliveries, while safety concerns focused on pedestrian crossings and the risks to children.

Consultation feedback directly shaped scheme design through, for example, inclusion of enhanced lighting and real-time information at bus stops and travel hubs, improved crossing provision, and - combined with engagement with local businesses and bus operators using the route - the inclusion of loading bays, bus laybys and widening of the Bloomfield Road bus gate. The project team also committed to minimising parking loss and retaining all disabled bays. National accessibility guidance has been applied throughout to ensure compliant gradients, widths and surfacing. Accessibility considerations have continued to be reviewed during detailed design.

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<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrjoiMzRhZjJjN2EtNDY2NS00ZWY0LThkZjltMmVjNTM5ZmlyNzQwliwidCI6ImM1NjJjMGNILWQ5MjUtNGRmZC04ZDk5LWM5NDE2ZWlwM2ViOSJ9>

	Further feedback will be captured through statutory Traffic Regulation Order processes, with accessible formats available on request.
<b>2.5</b> If you are planning to undertake any consultation in the future regarding this service or policy, how will you include equalities considerations within this?	<p>Future consultation will consist of Traffic Regulation Orders which will follow the statutory procedure. This will require obtaining the views of the Emergency Services, The Freight Transport Association, The Road Haulage Association, Local Councillors and local public transport operators. Local interest groups such as residents, traders, equality groups and community groups who are likely to be affected by the proposals are also to be consulted where appropriate.</p> <p>Consultation material will be available in alternative formats upon request and a telephone contact number will be provided.</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 equalities groups

<b>Key questions</b>	<b>Examples of what the service has done to promote equality</b>	<b>Examples of actual or potential negative or adverse impact and what steps have been or could be taken to address this</b>
<b>3.1 Issues relating to all groups</b> and protected characteristics	<p>The project aims to benefit everyone by offering better travel options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● For people without cars, especially those on lower incomes, we aim to provide cheaper and more reliable ways to get around using public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Some people may feel they have less access or independence.</li> <li>● Access for emergency services, taxis, and to residents’ properties will be maintained.</li> </ul>

	<p>transport, walking, wheeling, or cycling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For those who want or need to stay active, we aim to provide benefits from safer and easier walking and cycling routes.</li> <li>• These improvements aim to make it easier for everyone to reach jobs, schools, healthcare, and social events.</li> </ul> <p>All pedestrian, cycle and bus infrastructure included in this proposal will be designed to UK standards and guidance to ensure they have the correct widths and facilities to ensure they are accessible to all potential users as far as possible.</p> <p>This includes not only new facilities but also upgrading of existing crossings and bus stops to ensure they are accessible, with consideration given to all users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All changes will follow the latest design rules and involve local consultation.</li> <li>• Small sections of parking bays along side streets may be lost to allow for safer side road crossings for pedestrians, however we are committed to minimising the amount of parking lost as a result of the scheme and no disabled parking spaces will be lost.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.2 Sex</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men.</p>	<p>National Travel Survey data highlights that women in the UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take an average of 56 local bus journeys per year, which is 30%</li> </ul>	<p>It is essential that public transport, and walking, wheeling and cycling routes are environments where women feel confident. When concerns about harassment or personal safety persist, women may understandably avoid these travel options, leading to unequal access and limiting their freedom to move</p>

	<p>higher than men at 43 trips per year<sup>13</sup>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men are three times more likely to cycle compared to women</li> <li>• Women are more likely to make multi-stop trips (trip-chaining) with multiple purposes with different modes of travel<sup>14</sup>.</li> <li>• A lack of time, travelling with children, the need to take multiple non-direct journeys, personal safety concerns (such as walking in the dark) and road safety concerns are some of the biggest barriers faced by women<sup>15</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>Active Travel England have announced plans to publish guidance on delivering safer streets for women and girls following YouGov polling finding 9 out of 10 women feel unsafe walking at night and 1 in 3 young women are put off walking locally due to personal safety fears<sup>16</sup>.</p> <p>Updated bus stops, shelters and travel hub elements of the scheme will include</p>	<p>through their communities. Creating safe and inclusive public spaces is therefore fundamental to achieving a society where women and girls can live free from fear and participate fully in everyday life.</p> <p>The project aims to create a safe environment throughout the A37, A367 and A362, for example by ensuring lighting at bus shelters is provided and of a suitable standard.</p>
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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/nts03-modal-comparisons>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/media/2878/2878.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/media/2878/2878.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nationwide-plans-announced-to-design-safer-streets-as-9-in-10-women-report-feeling-unsafe-walking-at-night>

	<p>the installation of real time information and lighting at these locations. Pedestrian areas and bus infrastructure have been designed with consideration of minimising enclosed spaces where possible and in well-overlooked locations. This should help women feel more safe and comfortable waiting, especially at night. SVL recognises that women are not a homogenous group. The project aims to make it easier for all people to combine different types of trips (like going to work, then shopping), feel safer, and have more chances to travel around BANES using walking, cycling, or public transport.</p>	
<p><b>3.3 Pregnancy and maternity</b></p>	<p>In March 2022, employed women living with dependent children spent more time on unpaid childcare (an average of 84 minutes per day) and household work (an average of 169 minutes per day) than employed men living with dependent children (55 and 106 minutes per day, respectively).<sup>17</sup></p> <p>Research has found that commuting to work; can be a major cause of stress and anxiety for pregnant individuals; can exacerbate physical symptoms e.g. nausea and fatigue; pregnant individuals</p>	<p>See section 3.2 - Sex, for impacts on pregnant women.</p> <p>Inclusion of seating rest points on route, benches with arms to assist feeding of babies and standing up, lighting and real time information have been included in designs, and consideration has been given throughout the project to maintain enough space on pavements for prams and buggies, for example. Safety issues will need to be considered at implementation stages.</p>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/familiesandthelabourmarketengland/2021>

	<p>often had to adjust their commute or travel during off peak times.<sup>18</sup></p> <p>SVL supports adding features like seating to help pregnant people and parents with babies. It also aims to make travel easier for families with young children by creating safer, more accessible spaces for pushchairs and offering convenient travel options. Design of the route is to be accessible to prams/buggies being on level ground, gentle gradients and no barriers, as identified above.</p> <p>The proposed crossings aim to make it easier to cross the road in all locations they are implemented.</p>	
<p><b>3.4 Gender reassignment</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people</p>	<p>2021 research found that 37% of respondents had faced physical or verbal attacks on public transport in the prior five years, more often than not, tied to their gender or sexuality<sup>19</sup>.</p> <p>SVL aims to improve safety and perceived safety through safer waiting areas (well lit, glass bus shelters, CCTV,</p>	<p>SVL seeks to detail the necessary improvements for creating sustainable, well-connected, and healthier communities. It envisions a future where walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport are the natural choices for safe and convenient mobility.</p>

<sup>18</sup> Sarah E. O'Toole, Nicola Christie, Pregnancy and commuting on public transport, Journal of Transport & Health, Volume 24, 2022, 101308, ISSN 2214-1405, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2021.101308>. (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214140521003388>)

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.systra.com/uk/expert\\_insights/queer-mobility-improving-public-transport-inclusivity/#:~:text=Public%20transport%20truly%20can%20lead,a%20journey%20worth%20taking%20together](https://www.systra.com/uk/expert_insights/queer-mobility-improving-public-transport-inclusivity/#:~:text=Public%20transport%20truly%20can%20lead,a%20journey%20worth%20taking%20together)

	<p>overlooked locations and more), allowing everyone to feel safer in taking public transport regardless of their gender identity.</p> <p>A study in the UK found that 34.4% of trans adults had attempted suicide at least once and almost 14% of trans adults had attempted suicide more than twice<sup>20</sup>.</p> <p>By creating safer active travel routes, transgender people can feel safer in walking, wheeling and cycling. Active travel also contributes towards physical activity, proven to be associated with benefits to mental health. Physical activity can reduce the risk of depression, improve psychological wellbeing. Moreover, active modes are the least stressful and can be very helpful in terms of stress management<sup>21</sup>.</p>	<p>Ensuring personal safety in public spaces, particularly for individuals in the trans community who may often be targets of hate crimes, will be critical during the implementation stages.</p>
<p><b>3.5 Disability</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration both physical, sensory and mental impairments and mental health)</p>	<p>Spring 2025 consultation revealed that of the 46% of respondents who chose to disclose equality information, 24% stated they have a physical or mental health</p>	<p>Multiple actions throughout public consultation were taken to ensure clear communication, accessible venues, and provision of information in different formats.</p>

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/trans\\_country\\_report\\_-\\_engenderedpenalties.pdf](https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/trans_country_report_-_engenderedpenalties.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/media/4464/4464.pdf>

	<p>condition or illness lasting, or expected to last, 12 months or more<sup>22</sup>.</p> <p>SVL aims to make travel easier and safer for everyone, including people who don't drive. It will still keep important routes open for vehicles and parking for Blue Badge holders.</p> <p>For disabled people who don't drive, good public transport can help them live full and social lives by making it easier to get to work, shops, and leisure activities. By designing bus stops and walking, wheeling, cycling infrastructure that meet different needs, SVL intends to create a more welcoming and practical environment that supports both physical access and overall well-being.</p> <p>The scheme has been designed to national guidance and standards. The proposed zebra crossings and Toucan crossings, as well as new and widened footways aim to improve access for disabled residents and those attending the educational establishments, such as wheelchair users and those who are blind or have sight loss.</p>	<p>Inclusion of seating rest points on route, benches with arms to assist sitting and standing up, lighting for visually impaired users, wayfinding and real time information have been included in designs, and consideration has been given throughout the project to maintain enough space on pavements for prams and buggies, for example. Safety issues will need to be considered at implementation stages.</p>
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<sup>22</sup> [https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Somer\\_Valley\\_Links\\_Consultation\\_Report.pdf](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Somer_Valley_Links_Consultation_Report.pdf)

	<p>No disabled parking spaces will be lost as a result of the scheme. Disabled residents who may be impacted as a result of the loss of parking can apply for a disabled parking bay near their home here: <a href="https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-advisory-disabled-parking-bay-near-your-home">https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-advisory-disabled-parking-bay-near-your-home</a>.</p> <p>Residents with disabilities and of a certain age can apply for a free bus pass - or “Diamond Travel Card” - here: <a href="https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/applying-free-bus-pass-diamond-travelcard">https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/applying-free-bus-pass-diamond-travelcard</a></p>	
<p><b>3.6 Age</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children can struggle to keep up with signal timings and misjudge vehicle speeds <sup>2324</sup></li> </ul> <p>Older people in rural areas don’t have sufficient access to public transport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just 20% of those aged 70-74 living in rural areas use public transport weekly, compared to 38% of those who live in an urban setting.</li> <li>• 18% of those over 65 living in rural areas don’t use public transport</li> </ul>	<p>Need to encourage children and young to use the route - School Travel Plan Officer work with educational establishments to promote walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.</p> <p>Walking and cycling paths will follow national safety standards to make them safe and easy for people of all ages and abilities. Crossings have been located in convenient locations where people are likely to cross (e.g., between bus stops).</p>

<sup>24</sup> <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/study-claims-children-cannot-judge-speeds-above-20mph-1334/>

	<p>because none is available, compared to 2% of those living in urban areas<sup>25</sup></p> <p>Public transport is not meeting the needs of many older people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most frequent reasons for not using public transport among those 65 and over are that it's not convenient and does not go where you want.<sup>26</sup></li> </ul> <p>Encouraging older people to engage in active travel such as cycling or walking could have health benefits and reduce isolation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 8% of men over 65 and 3% of women over 65 ever cycle.</li> <li>• This is low compared to rates of older people cycling in other European countries due to gaps in investment in the UK compared to European countries<sup>27</sup>.</li> </ul>	
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<sup>25</sup> Older people in rural areas don't have sufficient access to public transport. Just 20% of those aged 70-74 living in rural areas use public transport weekly, compared to 38% of those who live in an urban setting. • 18% of those over 65 living in rural areas don't use public transport because none is available, compared to 2% of those living in urban areas

<sup>26</sup> [https://www.ageuk.org.uk/siteassets/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb\\_june15\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_transport\\_in\\_an\\_ageing\\_society.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/siteassets/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_june15_the_future_of_transport_in_an_ageing_society.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> <https://betterbike.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Making-Cycling-Irresistible-Lessons-from-Europe-Pucher-2008.pdf>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.45 million of those 65 and over in England find it difficult to travel to hospital, whilst 630,000 of those 65 and over find it difficult or very difficult to travel to their GP.</li> <li>• It is the eldest elderly who find it the hardest - less than half of people over 80 find it easy to travel to a hospital<sup>28</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>SVL aims to improve active travel and public transport links to key destinations along the A37, A367 and A362 corridors such as schools and local GP surgeries, as well as provide more options to access services and destinations in Bath and Bristol.</p> <p>SVL intends for older individuals to benefit from improved, more accessible active travel infrastructure including pavements, and better public transport waiting areas with lighting, seating etc.</p> <p>Children can benefit from interventions that create a safer travel environment such as narrowed crossings, road safety and traffic calming interventions.</p>	
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<sup>28</sup> [https://www.ageuk.org.uk/siteassets/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb\\_june15\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_transport\\_in\\_an\\_ageing\\_society.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/siteassets/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_june15_the_future_of_transport_in_an_ageing_society.pdf)

	<p>Interventions have been designed to be accessible to all ages. SVL aims to reduce severance by traffic, providing safer route between residential areas, local amenities, schools and other educational establishments to improve travel choices for all ages.</p> <p>School children can benefit from all schemes and increase opportunities for independent travel.</p> <p>The proposed narrowed puffin crossing aims to reduce the crossing time for pedestrians, and widened footways and side road entry treatments aim to improve safety.</p> <p>Residents with disabilities and of a certain age can apply for a free bus pass - or “Diamond Travel Card” - here: <a href="https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/applying-free-bus-pass-diamond-travelcard">https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/applying-free-bus-pass-diamond-travelcard</a></p>	
<p><b>3.7 Race</b> – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups</p>	<p>In the UK, in the 5 years to March 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White people made the highest percentage of trips by car or van out of all ethnic groups (63%)</li> <li>• Black people made the lowest percentage of trips by car or van (40%)</li> <li>• 19% of trips by black people are made by local bus journeys – the</li> </ul>	<p>SVL seeks to detail the necessary improvements for creating sustainable, well-connected, and healthier communities. It envisions a future where walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport are the natural choices for safe and convenient mobility.</p>

	<p>highest percentage out of all ethnic groups for this type of transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White children had the longest trip to school (2.5 miles on average), and Asian children had the shortest (2.0 miles on average)</li> <li>• White and Asian children were more likely to travel to school by car, while black children were more likely to travel by bus<sup>29</sup>.</li> <li>• Avon and Somerset Police data across a 3 month period in 2025 shows over half of total hate crimes recorded were race based hate crimes.</li> </ul> <p>By supporting safe and improved active travel routes and infrastructure, and more reliable, safer public transport services as alternatives to the car, SVL aims to provide better travel options for not only the white British group, but all ethnic groups.</p>	<p>Ensuring personal safety in public spaces, particularly for non-white-British individuals who may often be targets of hate crimes, will be critical during the implementation stages</p>
<p><b>3.8 Sexual orientation</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021 research found that 37% of respondents had faced physical or verbal attacks on public transport in the prior five years, more often</li> </ul>	<p>SVL seeks to detail the necessary improvements for creating sustainable, well-connected, and healthier communities. It envisions a future where walking, wheeling, cycling and public</p>

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/culture-and-community/transport/travel/latest/>

	<p>than not, tied to their gender or sexuality<sup>30</sup>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Another study found that half of LGBTIQ+ people had experienced depression, and three in five had experienced anxiety<sup>31</sup>.</li> <li>• Official data underscores this trend, as Home Office figures show hate crimes based on sexual orientation in England and Wales rose from 15,835 to 22,839 between the years 2019 to 2024<sup>32</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>SVL aims to improve safety and perceived safety through safer waiting areas (e.g., well lit, glass bus shelters), allowing for all users to feel safer in taking public transport regardless of their sexual orientation.</p>	<p>transport are the natural choices for safe and convenient mobility.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that consideration will need to be paid to abuse and hate crime towards the LGBTQ+ community, and safety issues will need to be considered at implementation stages.</p>
<p><b>3.9 Marriage and civil partnership – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?</b></p>	<p>Across B&amp;NES, over 70,000 people are married, and over 30,000 own 2 or more cars or vans<sup>33</sup>. Cars can be expensive to buy, run and maintain (see Section 3.11).</p>	<p>No known negative impacts identified. This proposal seeks to detail the necessary improvements for creating</p>

<sup>30</sup> [https://www.systra.com/uk/expert\\_insights/queer-mobility-improving-public-transport-inclusivity/#:~:text=Public%20transport%20truly%20can%20lead,a%20journey%20worth%20taking%20together](https://www.systra.com/uk/expert_insights/queer-mobility-improving-public-transport-inclusivity/#:~:text=Public%20transport%20truly%20can%20lead,a%20journey%20worth%20taking%20together)

<sup>31</sup> Stonewall LGBT in Britain – Health Report

<sup>32</sup> [https://www.systra.com/uk/expert\\_insights/queer-mobility-improving-public-transport-inclusivity/#:~:text=Public%20transport%20truly%20can%20lead,a%20journey%20worth%20taking%20together](https://www.systra.com/uk/expert_insights/queer-mobility-improving-public-transport-inclusivity/#:~:text=Public%20transport%20truly%20can%20lead,a%20journey%20worth%20taking%20together)

<sup>33</sup> <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrjoiMzRhZjJjN2EtNDY2NS00ZWY0LThkZjltMmVjNTM5ZmlyNzQwliwidCI6ImM1NjJjMGNILWQ5MjUtNGRmZC04ZDk5LWM5NDE2ZWlwM2ViOSJ9>

	By providing more travel choices, SVL aims to reduce or remove the financial burden of car ownership, offering benefits for households where two adults may both drive to work.	sustainable, well-connected, and healthier communities.  It envisions a future where walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport are the natural choices for safe and convenient mobility.
<b>3.10 Religion/belief</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on people of different religious/faith groups and also upon those with no religion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Home Office statistics show that between March 2023 – March 2024, there were 10,484 hate crimes recorded by the police as linked to religion in England and Wales – a 25% increase compared to the prior 12-month period<sup>34</sup>.</li> <li>Avon and Somerset Police data across a 3 month period in 2025 shows just over 6% of total hate crimes recorded were religion/belief hate crimes.</li> </ul> <p>SVL aims to improve transport and accessibility across the whole of its study area, to all key locations including places of worship such as Beechen Cliff Methodist Church.</p>	SVL seeks to detail the necessary improvements for creating sustainable, well-connected, and healthier communities. It envisions a future where walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport are the natural choices for safe and convenient mobility. Side road entry treatments across Bruton Avenue and nearby side roads will help improve accessibility to places of worship.  It is acknowledged that consideration will need to be paid to religious/racial abuse and hate crime, and safety issues will need to be considered at implementation stages.
<b>3.11 Socio-economically disadvantaged*</b> – identify the impact on people who are disadvantaged due to factors like family background,	SVL aims to help reduce the need to own a car by offering better and cheaper travel options.	SVL recognises that the cost of owning a motor vehicle can be a barrier to some people. Active travel and public transport can provide cheaper, safe, reliable

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2024/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2024>

<p>educational attainment, neighbourhood, employment status can influence life chances <b>(this is not a legal requirement, but is a local priority).</b></p>	<p>A recent Transport for the North (UK) study found the costs of car use and ownership to society tower over the costs of other modes contributing around £50bn worth of cost to the North in 2023, and the benefits of other modes outperform car use benefits significantly. This is expected to increase to £60bn by 2050<sup>35</sup>.</p> <p>The WECA transport vision, as set out in the Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4)<sup>36</sup>, is to ‘Connect people and places for a vibrant, inclusive and carbon neutral West of England’.</p> <p>This includes access to services and opportunities for residents in rural, remote and deprived areas is improved. Active travel is the most cost-effective form of travel so this scheme aims to help to reduce the cost of travel, which can be particularly beneficial for economically disadvantaged people.</p>	<p>alternatives to car travel. Promotion of route to local communities, such as promotion through schools, for example, can help communicate improvements.</p>
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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.transportfornorth.com/wp-content/uploads/TfN-Travel-Choice-Project-Summary-1.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/transport/joint-local-transport-plan/>

	<p>This scheme is provided in accordance with the vision and objectives of the JTLP4, by enabling low-carbon transport within and to/from Bath along with improvements to user health and wellbeing and transport equality through the provision of accessible infrastructure for all.</p>	
<p><b>3.12 Rural communities*</b> identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities</p>	<p>The Bear Flat proposal is located in the urban area of Bath, therefore will not directly affect rural communities.</p> <p>However, SVL recognises that rural areas often don't have many transport options. It aims to improve key walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport routes while still keeping key roads open for vehicles that need to pass through .</p> <p>As many of the interventions of the Somer Valley Links scheme are based in rural locations, we aim to provide better active travel opportunities for residents as well as better public transport facilities such as real time information and better lighting to improve safety in these areas.</p> <p>Travel hubs which are being delivered in Bear Flat and rural locations are following UK guidance to ensure deliverables are suitable for these locations.</p>	<p>No known negative impacts identified.</p>

<p><b>3.13 Armed Forces Community **</b> serving members; reservists; veterans and their families, including the bereaved. Public services are required by law to pay due regard to the Armed Forces Community when developing policy, procedures and making decisions, particularly in the areas of public housing, education and healthcare (to remove disadvantage and consider special provision).</p>	<p>In accordance with the Armed Forces Covenant, those who served the country and their families should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services, with special consideration for those who have given the most such as the injured and the bereaved<sup>37</sup>.</p> <p>The most recent census data shows 3.6% or 5,858 people in B&amp;NES are Armed Forces Veterans<sup>38</sup>.</p> <p>SVL aims to improve travel choices, specifically walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for all users.</p>	<p>No known negative impacts identified.</p>
<p><b>3.14 Care Experienced ***</b> This working definition is currently under review and therefore subject to change:</p> <p>In B&amp;NES, you are 'care-experienced' if you spent any time in your childhood in Local Authority care, living away from your parent(s) for example, you were adopted, lived in residential, foster care, kinship care, or a special guardianship arrangement.</p>	<p>Care-experienced individuals often lack family support, social networks and guidance to help them access key services such as healthcare, education and employment. They can also have a lack of trust in systems and institutions as a result of their experiences in the care system, resulting in hesitancy and difficulty in seeking out key services or activities they need or want to participate</p>	<p>SVL recognises that the cost of owning a motor vehicle can be a barrier to some people. Active travel and public transport can provide cheaper, safe, reliable alternatives to car travel. Promotion of route to local communities, such as promotion through schools, for example, can help communicate improvements.</p>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/about-the-covenant/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/armedforcescommunity/bulletins/ukarmedforcesveteransenglandandwales/census2021#uk-armed-forces-veterans-england-and-wales-data>

	<p>in.</p> <p>By improving public transport and providing safer, more direct walking/wheeling/cycling routes, Somer Valley Links can increase access to education, work and healthcare without requiring car ownership or family assistance, thereby reducing structural and financial barriers to travel.</p> <p>Better lit, well signposted and safer active travel routes and public transport infrastructure can increase confidence and autonomy for those who may not have support in navigating transport systems. We will be including totems at our travel hubs with relevant travel information and locations of nearby amenities.</p> <p>Furthermore, the project also supports those which require a car and the aim of the project is to reduce future congestion expected from housing and economic growth throughout the Somer Valley, Bath and Bristol.</p>	<p>Care leavers are entitled to claim free bus travel here - <a href="https://www.westfares.co.uk/register">https://www.westfares.co.uk/register</a></p>
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\*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 the refore 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
Lack of disaggregated data for some protected characteristics in transport usage and consultation feedback	Aim to improve data collection methods to capture usage by age, disability, ethnicity, etc.	Work with officers and keep up to date on new data/survey tools; look for staff training opportunities; analyse new data for trends.	Krzysztof Fedorczyk	Ongoing
Need for ongoing review to identify emerging issues and address through design	Establish regular EqIA reviews	Review this EqIA; create further intervention specific EqIA's; publish updates; amend designs as required	Krzysztof Fedorczyk	Ongoing

## 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 Equalities Team ([equality@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:equality@bathnes.gov.uk)), who will publish it on the Council's website. Keep a copy for your own records.

**Signed off by:**  
**Date:**