

Equality Impact Assessment



East Budleigh with Bicton Neighbourhood Plan

August 2016

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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East Budleigh with Bicton Neighbourhood Plan Equality Impact Assessment

1 Introduction to Equality Impact Assessment

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) places a duty on all the public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between persons who have a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not.

'Protected characteristics' are defined in the Act as age, disability, race, maternity and pregnancy, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

Equality impact assessment (EqIA) is the systematic analysis of a policy or policies in order to identify the potential for an adverse impact on a particular group or community, in particular those with a protected characteristic. It is a method of assessing and recording the likely differential or adverse impact of a policy on people from different groups so that, if a policy results in unfairness or discrimination, then changes to lessen or eliminate the impact can be considered.

This document presents the results of the EqIA of the East Budleigh with Bicton Neighbourhood Plan (EBB NP) to ensure the East Budleigh with Bicton Parish Council is satisfying its statutory duties in this regard.

1.1 Aims of the Equality Analysis

The purpose of the Act is to increase participation and inclusion, to change the culture of public decision-making and to nurture a more proactive approach to the promotion of equality and fairness at the heart of public policy. The aim in conducting the Equality Analysis is the promotion of fairness and equality of opportunity and thus it is the outcomes that are of primary concern.

The sections below consider the Objectives and Policies of the EBB NP and then assess the impact on groups with protected characteristics of the Objectives, Policies and Community Actions within the Plan.

1.2 Methodology

An assessment has been made on whether the EBBNP has a positive, negative or neutral impact on each of the protected characteristics (insofar as data are available). If an impact is negative this is given a high, medium or low assessment according to the following criteria.

- High impact...a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.
- Medium impact...some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, evidence is poor.
- Low impact...almost no relevancy to the process e.g. in an area which is legislation-led.

A brief overview of relevant data is given in Section 2. The Objectives and Policies in the EBB WP are summarised in Section 3 and an assessment of the impact on groups with protected characteristics is provided in Section 4.

2. Baseline Data

Data for East Budleigh and Bicton are available for the following protected characteristics: age, disability, race, religious belief and sex. Data are not available for the following protected characteristics: pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

The data source is the 2011 Census:-

Gender

In 2011 there were 922 people living in East Budleigh and Bicton. 47.2% of these were male and 52.8% were female. Comparable figures for the UK were 49.3% male and 50.7% female.

Age Profile

East Budleigh and Bicton had a significantly greater number of people aged 65 and over and a significantly smaller number of young persons aged 0-15, compared to the national average (in brackets below):-

- Aged 0-15...12.4% (18.9%)
- Aged 15-65...52.9% (64.8%)
- Aged 65 and over...34.7% (16.4%)

Disability

East Budleigh and Bicton had a slightly lower proportion of people whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot (7.8%) compared to the national average (8.3%) but a higher proportion of people whose day-to-day activities are limited a little (11.5%) compared to the national average (9.3%).

Ethnic Origin

The profile of ethnic origin for East Budleigh and Bicton was as follows (national figures shown in brackets):-

British white...97.3% (80.0%)
 Other white...2.1% (5.7%)
 Non-white...0.6% (14.3%)

These figures show that East Budleigh and Bicton have a very low non-white population compared to the national average.

Religion

Religious belief in East Budleigh and Bicton is weighted towards Christianity as shown below. National statistics are shown in brackets.

Christian...69.7% (59.4%)
 Buddhist...0.5% (0.45%)
 Muslim...0.1% (5.0%)
 Jewish...0.1% (0.5%)
 Other...0.4% (2.3%)

The non-Christian religions comprise 1.1% of the population compared to a total of 8.3% nationally. 21.5% of people in East Budleigh and Bicton declared no religion and 7.3% did not state their religion.

Maternity

3.0% of the population of East Budleigh and Bicton was aged 0-4 years, compared with 6.25% nationally. This suggests that the proportion of people with young families is smaller than average and that pregnancy and maternity rates are also lower than the national average.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment

Sexual orientation and gender reassignment are generally invisible characteristics for which little reliable data exist at local level.

Summary

In summary East Budleigh and Bicton has:-

- a) A significantly higher proportion of old people than the national average.
- b) A lower proportion of people with young families than the national average.
- c) A much lower proportion of non-white persons than the national average.
- d) A much lower proportion of people who practice religions other than Christianity than nationally.

3 Objectives and Policies of the East Budleigh and Bicton Neighbourhood Plan (EBB NP)

The EBB NP will provide a framework of Objectives and Policies for the development of the Parish until 2031. The Objectives and Policies will be complemented by Community Actions.

3.1 Objectives of the EBB NP

The EBB NP contains thirteen Objectives:-

1. Improve opportunities and infrastructure for new and existing small business enterprises to thrive.
2. Protect high grade agricultural land in order to increase sustainability of food supplies.

3. Enhance and protect community facilities to address identified needs of the community.
4. Promote and support education and training in the Parish.
5. Promote and support the pastoral and spiritual needs and wellbeing of the community.
6. Enhance and protect recreational facilities and tourist assets within the Parish.
7. Improve transport links and address traffic, parking and pedestrian movement issues.
8. Protect and enhance the AONB designated landscape, rural identity, biodiversity and wildlife habitats of the Parish.
9. Protect and enhance the green spaces of value to the community.
10. Protect and enhance the historic fabric and environment, including the Conservation area and its setting.
11. Ensure that new development is of the highest design and build quality and does not harm the character and appearance of the Parish and the landscape.
12. Identify measures to improve water quality and reduce the risk of river, coastal and surface water flooding in East Budleigh and immediate surrounding areas and ensure proper controls are applied to any development to eliminate flood risk and improve
13. Ensure any new development meets the identified needs of the local community.

Objectives 2, 8, 10 and 12 impinge no differently upon persons with a protected characteristic than anyone else in the Parish; each Objective seeks to achieve environmental benefits for all members of the community.

Objectives 1, 3-7, 9, 11, 13, 14 have supporting Policies and Community Actions which might affect persons with protected characteristics differently than they might affect the general population. In each case these Objectives and the associated Policies and/or Community Actions aim to create a situation which would benefit persons with protected characteristics by:-

- (i) enhancing the prospects for local employment,
- (ii) up-grading transport links (thus reducing the need for cars) and improving road safety,
- (iii) providing smaller dwellings and affordable homes for people wishing to down-size and for young families wishing to live in the Parish,
- (iv) optimising local facilities to ensure a healthy life-style for the older population as well as a healthy and stimulating environment for young children.

4. Impact of Objectives and Policies in the EBB NP on Groups with Protected Characteristics

Without exception, where Objectives and Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan do have an impact on groups with protected characteristics, it is a positive impact and not a negative one as discussed below.

4.1 Age

The Neighbourhood Plan has three key objectives with regard to the age profile of the Parish.

First it aims to enhance and support the leisure facilities for young and old. This will include protection of green spaces of value to the community (**Objective 9, Policies N2 and N4**) as well as the protection and enhancement of the network of public rights of way (**Policy G1 and Community Action 18**) together with recreational facilities in the community (**Policy L1**). As part of this aspiration, the Plan will lend support for the Community Shop (**Community Action 4**) which provides fresh local produce *inter alia* and the three Halls in the Parish which provide the venues for the wide range of leisure activities (**Community Action 5**).

Secondly, as part of **Objective 7** the Parish Council will work with providers to secure a public transport service that will enable older residents more easily to access local towns and the city of Exeter (**Community Action 24**). In order to reduce travel to medical facilities outside the Parish, the Parish Council will explore whether a weekly surgery can be provided in East Budleigh Village Hall (**Community action 3**). The Parish Council will also pursue proposals for road safety and traffic management which are particularly important for school children and the elderly (**Policy G2** and **Community Action 22**).

Thirdly, the Neighbourhood Plan will seek to provide strong encouragement to attract young families into the Parish by supporting the local pre-schools and the primary school (**Objective 4, Policy C1** and **Community Actions 7-11**) and also by the provision of small dwellings and affordable housing (**Objective 13** and **Policies D3 and D4**). Specifically, at least 66% of new dwellings outside the East Budleigh Built-up Area Boundary should be affordable (**Policy D2**).

4.2 Disability

The needs of persons who are disabled or who have limited mobility are recognised in:-

Objective 1 which seeks to improve opportunities and infrastructure for new and existing small enterprises. Specifically, **Policy P2** involves the development of new communications infrastructure including access to super-fast fibre optic broadband and mobile technologies to serve the Parish. This will be of particular benefit to persons having restrictions on their mobility by improving possibilities for developing home-based businesses (**Policy P1**) and giving better access to on-line goods and services.

Policy B2 subsection 1) under General Design Principles, proposals for residential development should respect the criterion that the development should have easy access for all members of the community

Community Action 3 wherein the Parish Council will seek to set up a surgery in East Budleigh Village Hall to assist patients with

limited mobility and in **Community Action 4** wherein the Plan supports the Community Shop which provides a variety of goods for persons unable easily to travel outside the Parish.

Community Action 12 which lends support for Mill Water School, a special needs school within the Parish which provides education for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties.

Objective 7 and Community Action 22 concerning improvements in road safety and traffic management by supporting the provision of appropriate signs to encourage traffic to slow down with benefit to pedestrians of limited mobility.

4.3 Pregnancy and Maternity

Key issues for women who are pregnant or who have young children are a) access to appropriate housing, b) flexible employment and c) access to facilities including recreational facilities, developmental play and health. The Neighbourhood Plan has policies to help to meet or improve all of these criteria.

Policies D2 requires all new development outside of the East Budleigh Built-up Area Boundary to have at least 66% affordable dwellings. This will assist young families to get a home of their own.

Policy P2 seeks to improve the provision of high speed broadband and mobile technologies which will be of particular benefit to young mothers by providing a means of flexible working from home and on-line access to goods and services.

Protecting and enhancing community and recreational facilities are key elements in **Objectives 3 and 6** respectively. Specifically, **Policy C1** aims to protect and enhance community facilities while **Policy L1** sets out to protect and enhance recreational facilities such as the playing fields in East Budleigh and the children's play area adjacent to East Budleigh Village Hall.

Objective 7 and proposals in **Community Action 22** seek to improve the safe delivery of pupils to the Little Otters pre-school and Drakes Primary School on foot, by bicycle or by car by

addressing parking issues and improving road safety through better management of traffic speed in East Budleigh village.

4.4 Race

Non-white ethnic groups are a small proportion of the population in East Budleigh and Bicton; in 2011 only 0.6% of the population was non-white and, within this group there were several groups of different ethnic origins. Non-white ethnic groups can experience difficulties around discrimination, language, health and well being, deprivation and culture. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that discrimination is absent or at least minimised. All the recreational and leisure facilities in the Parish are available for every person irrespective of race or creed. Moreover **Objective 11** will ensure that new development is of the highest design and built quality leading to proper security of property and **Policy B2 sub-section m)** provides for safe environments that minimise opportunities for crime, including hate crime.

4.5 Sex

The East Budleigh and Bicton Neighbourhood Plan does not contain any Objective or Policy that is selective for a particular gender. It has been written to provide equal opportunities to both sexes in respect of the development of the Parish as well as access and use of its facilities. Neither sex is disadvantaged by any of the Objectives or Policies in the Plan; on the contrary both sexes will benefit equally from the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.6 Religion, Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment

Objective 5 seeks to promote and support the pastoral and spiritual needs and wellbeing of the Parish with a particular emphasis on the social and pastoral inclusion of all persons with the activities of All Saints Church (**Community Action 13**) and Salem Chapel (**Community Action 14**)

Key issues for the minority religious groups are discrimination relating to employment, housing, the provision of services and their portrayal in the media.

Key issues for gays, lesbians, bisexual persons and gender re-assignment people are personal relationships, homo- and trans-phobia, discrimination and hate crime.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not and cannot address directly the social attitudes that are involved in these problems. However it does seek to provide an environment in the Parish which all social groups can enjoy and to provide facilities that are open to all-comers.

5. **Conclusions**

The East Budleigh with Bicton Neighbourhood Plan provides a strategy for the development of the Parish and a range of Objectives, Policies and Community Actions which will result in positive benefits for those many parts of the community with protected characteristics, namely older people, young children, disabled people and those persons with limited mobility.

The EBB NP does not address the needs of a) racial or minority religious groups or b) gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender people or c) a particular gender, male or female. However the Plan does make equal provision for affordable and small housing and also seeks to provide additional social, community and leisure facilities which will benefit these groups equally. It also endeavours to provide a safe environment where people with protected characteristics will be less liable to discrimination.

Overall this Equality Impact Assessment concludes that none of the Objectives and Policies within the East Budleigh and Bicton Neighbourhood Plan will have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. On the contrary many of the Objectives, Policies and Actions will have a positive impact, as described above.