

DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

SECTION 75 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY SCREENING ANALYSIS FORM

The purpose of this form is to help you to consider whether a new policy (either internal or external) or legislation will require a full equality impact assessment (EQIA). Those policies identified as having significant implications for equality of opportunity must be subject to full EQIA.

The form will provide a record of the factors taken into account if a policy is screened out, or excluded for EQIA. It will provide a basis for quarterly consultation on the outcome of the screening exercise, and will be referenced in the biannual review of progress made to the Minister and in the Annual Report to the Equality Commission.

Further advice on completion of this form and the screening process including relevant contact information can be accessed via the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Intranet site.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

When considering the impact of this policy you should also consider if there would be any Human Rights implications. Guidance is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/human-rights-and-public-authorities>

Should this be appropriate you will need to complete a Human Rights Impact Assessment. A template is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/human-rights-impact-assessment-proforma>

Don't forget to Rural Proof.

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

Capital Grants for Greenways Programme and Council Support for Greenway Development – Blue / Green Infrastructure Fund

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

This is an existing policy - Strategic Plan for Greenways: Exercise, Explore, Enjoy – published in November 2016

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The Programme will provide part funding to Councils for the building of greenways in line with draft PfG Indicator 25 (increase the percentage of all journeys undertaken by walking, cycling and public transport) and the proposals set out in 'Exercise – Explore – Enjoy – a Strategic Plan for Greenways'. See attached link <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/infrastructure/exercise-explore-enjoy-a-strategic-plan-for-greenways-november-2016-final.pdf>.

**Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?
If so, explain how.**

All Section 75 Categories would be expected to benefit. The aim of the programme is to assist Councils to support the development of greenways – traffic-free routes which make it safer and easier for everyone to walk or cycle.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

Department for Infrastructure (DfI) / Active Travel Branch.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The DfI Active Travel Branch owns and implements the grant programme (from the Minister's Blue / Green Infrastructure Fund) but the actual greenways will be built by local Councils, who will take on the responsibility for ongoing operations and maintenance.

Background

[Author please provide information that will allow readers an understanding of what the policy is, and why it is required].

Greenways are traffic free routes, which are generally built away from the public road (where DfI is the statutory undertaker). Being 'off road' routes, construction of greenways has traditionally been taken forward by local councils – the Comber Greenway being an exception (for historical reasons). *'Exercise– Explore– Enjoy: a Strategic Plan for Greenways'* provides an overall framework to assist in the development of greenways across Northern Ireland. This framework has been designed to assist Councils in developing their own local plans and so contribute to the construction of the regional network.

Around one third of all journeys made across Northern Ireland are less than two miles in distance and the proportion is higher in our towns and cities. A further one third are less than five miles – distances that could easily be walked or cycled. In addition 50% of primary school children live within 1 mile of their school, yet 67% of children are driven to school. However, the main barrier to walking and cycling remains safety. The last Bike Life survey reported that 80% of Belfast residents said they would cycle more if there was traffic-free cycle routes available.

To increase the level of active travel in Northern Ireland it is necessary to target resources at improving infrastructure to enable people to walk and cycle safely. By paying particular attention to the needs of people who walk and cycle, sustainable travel behaviour can be encouraged and developed in such a way that will have long term, or life time, benefits. Greenways, in particular, being off-road traffic-free routes, have a key role in encouraging walking and cycling because perceptions about the speed and volume of motor traffic have a direct impact on the willingness of individuals to walk and cycle.

Previously, the Department targeted grant assistance to Councils through the *'Small Grants for Greenways'* programme. This scheme enabled Councils to take forward nineteen feasibility studies and ten detailed designs. A Capital Grants

scheme was to follow the Small Grants Scheme but with the collapse of the NI Assembly in January 2017 this was delayed until 2020. A screening form was completed and published in 2018 but a new screening form is required as the policy is now extended to include providing support for Greenway Development, alongside capital investments.

Capital grant funding was also provided in 2020/21 and 2021/22 for several greenway schemes.

Through Assembly Questions and correspondence / discussion with Councils, it has become increasingly evident that there is a particular need to provide assistance to Councils to support them in the development of ideas into viable schemes. Experience in other jurisdictions (e.g. in the development of the Caledonia Way in Scotland) has shown the benefits of using a dedicated resource to develop plans, consult with communities and co-ordinate programmes within an overall framework. While the 'Small Grants' programme provided an impetus to explore greenway possibilities, it requires a more visible resource to move them forward in a committed energetic way. The past five years has shown that Councils require external assistance because under the 'Small Grants' programme, Councils engaged external bodies to assist them in developing the feasibility studies. This period of time has also demonstrated the lack of committed resource within the Department and a lack of expertise. Taking these issues into account it is concluded that a dedicated resource for Councils is required to drive forward the implementation of the regional greenway network set out in 'Exercise – Explore – Enjoy'. In the absence of funding from the Department this co-ordinating role would not be delivered.

What is envisaged is overall programme management which would entail closer working with Councils in order to drive forward and implement the following:

- the development of a Project Management Framework;
- working with Councils to scope progress to date and their commitment to furthering greenway development;
- supporting Councils to develop greenway proposals;
- assessment and prioritisation of Council proposals;
- recommendations for next steps; and,
- development of a phased programme of delivery with an outline of associated spend and reporting timeframes.

In addition, there is a need for the provision of technical advice. Providing this on a co-ordinated basis would enhance the capacity of Councils to develop and deliver greenways and improve the likelihood of delivering a more coherent and consistent greenway network (as envisaged in 'Exercise – Explore – Enjoy').

Technical advice would provide information on the process, skills and considerations required to deliver a greenway from inception to completion and also help with the development of an action plan. It would include technical advice in respect of the following:

- route planning, access and linkages;
- consultation, participation, agreements;
- design, quality standards, value for money;
- legibility – signage, user experience;
- research, monitoring and evaluation;
- maintenance, management and volunteering; and
- sharing of best practice and innovations from across Europe.

Accordingly, the Department is proposing to fund an external organisation to provide a co-ordinating role for the overall greenway programme. The organisation will work closely with all Councils to review the current state of greenway development and provide a report on the way forward, including providing Councils with technical advice, advice on stakeholder consultation and general support in the delivery of greenway schemes.

By providing this dedicated resource, the Department can progress delivery against the greenway proposals set out in '*Exercise – Explore – Enjoy: a Strategic Plan for Greenways*', with a more strategic and co-ordinated approach, raising the priority of greenway schemes within Councils and other stakeholders.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

If yes, are they (please delete as appropriate)

Financial X

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please delete as appropriate)

service users

other public sector organisations

voluntary/community/trade unions

other, please specify _____

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?

1. Programme for Government draft Outcomes Framework
2. Economic Strategy
3. Regional Transportation Strategy
4. Northern Ireland Changing Gear : A Bicycle Strategy
5. A New Approach to Regional Transportation
6. DfI Business Plan 2016/17
7. Exercise – Explore – Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways
8. A Fitter Future for All

Support for the development of greenways would deliver against the following priorities from **New Decade, New Approach**:

- The Executive will tackle climate change head on with a strategy to address the immediate and longer term impacts of climate change.
- The Executive will introduce legislation and targets for reducing carbon emissions in line with the Paris Climate Change Accord.

It would also deliver against the following outcomes from the **Programme for Government (PfG) Draft Outcomes Framework**:

- **Our children and young people have the best start in life** especially the Key Priority Area *Capability and Resilience*
- **We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment** especially the Key Priority Areas *Natural Environment, Active and Sustainable Transport*
- **We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect** especially the Key Priority Area *Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity*
- **We all enjoy long, healthy active lives** especially the Key Priority Areas *Mental Health and Wellbeing, Older People, Physical Health and Wellbeing*

- **People want to live, work and visit here** especially the Key Priority Area *Sports, Arts and Culture*

It would deliver against the **Regional Transport Strategy** <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/regional-development-strategy-2035> vision by making a significant contribution to ‘*safe and extensive walking and cycling networks, used regularly for travel to work, shops, education centres and leisure*’.

The building of greenways supports all three pillars of **Northern Ireland Changing Gear: A Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland** <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/drd/a-bicycle-strategy-for-northern-ireland.pdf> and delivers against multiple priorities in **Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation – A New Framework** <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dard/tackling-rural-poverty-and-social-isolation-2016-new-framework.pdf> :

- It would help address **Access Poverty** by:
 - Improving urban-rural linkages
 - Improving access to key services
- It would help address **Financial Poverty** by:
 - Reducing household expenditure – making active travel a viable option
 - Helping alleviate the effects of financial poverty – providing safe walking and cycling which is for everyone to use.
- It would help address **Social Isolation** by:
 - Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing – providing opportunities for engaging in physical activity and for enjoying the natural world, both proven to have major benefits for wellbeing
 - Increasing opportunities for social engagement – creating a focus for community events and activities, and encouraging environmental stewardship

Providing support to groups at risk of social isolation – creating assets for older people, people with disabilities and younger people, and encouraging engagement across groups.

- who owns them?

Owned by the Councils, NI Executive, DfI, DoH

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Religious belief evidence / information:

Access to the programme will be open to all Councils who wish to develop a Greenway in their area, and there is no evidence to indicate differential impacts on this Section 75 category. The Department has had numerous Assembly Questions, general correspondence regarding Councils getting Departmental support for greenways.

Political Opinion evidence / information:

As above.

Racial Group evidence / information:

As above.

Age evidence / information:

There is a clear correlation between age and disability. The last Census in 2011 showed 7% of the population aged below 35 had a long term health problem or disability that limited their day to day activities a little or a lot. This rises to 35% when we look at the population aged between 55 and 64 and is 71% for those aged 75 and over.

Marital Status evidence / information:

There is no evidence of a higher or lower uptake among this Section 75 group.

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

There is no evidence of a higher or lower uptake among this Section 75 group.

Men & Women generally evidence / information:

There is no evidence of a higher or lower uptake among this Section 75 group.

Disability evidence / information:

The 2011 Census showed 7% of the population aged below 35 had a long term health problem or disability that limited their day to day activities a little or a lot.

This rises to 35% for those aged between 55 and 64 and 71% for those aged 75 and over.

'Exercise – Explore – Enjoy: a Strategic Plan for Greenways' provides an agreed framework within which local authorities may draw up their greenway projects. Guidance on engineering standards is included in the Plan for the construction of the greenways which may make it easier for those with a disability including wheelchair users, and older people to access and use the greenways this includes width of path to minimise conflicts between different types of users.

Dependants evidence / information:

There is no evidence of a higher or lower uptake among this Section 75 group.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Religious belief

There are no specific needs identified for this group.

The development of greenway infrastructure will support the New Decade New Approach, and draft Programme for Government outcomes for health. It be an important step towards increasing levels of physical activity in Northern Ireland by providing safer and attractive walking/cycling facilities for all citizens.

Political Opinion

As for religious belief above.

Racial Group

As for religious belief above.

Age

As for religious belief above. As the prevalence of disability increases with age see also disability below.

Marital status

As for religious belief above.

Sexual orientation

As for religious belief above.

Men and Women Generally

As for religious belief above.

Disability

The construction of Greenways must conform to the engineering standards set out in the '*Exercise – Explore – Enjoy: a Strategic Plan for Greenways*' which takes into account the access needs of this group. Guidance on engineering standards is included for the construction of the greenways which may make it

easier for those with a disability, including wheelchair users, access and use the greenways.

Specifically the guidance on the engineering standards recommends an appropriate width of path to minimise conflicts between different types of users.

Dependants

As for religious belief above.

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are

complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;

- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None (delete as appropriate)

Greenways have the potential to have a positive impact on all Section 75 Groups. The proposals will establish a Capital Grants Programme to support Councils in the development of greenway projects. No potential differential impact on this group has been identified.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None (delete as appropriate)
As above.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None (delete as appropriate)
As above.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None (delete as appropriate)
As above. See also disability.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None (delete as appropriate)
As for religious belief above.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None (delete as appropriate)
As for religious belief above.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None (delete as appropriate)
As for religious belief above.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? None (delete as appropriate)

Positive – The proposals will establish a Greenways Development Programme to support Councils by providing expert advice and guidance on bringing greenways to an advanced stage of delivery The policy will provide guidance on engineering standards for the construction of Greenways in Northern Ireland which may make it easier for those with a disability, including wheelchair users, to access and use Greenways safely.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**:(insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None (delete as appropriate)

No differential impact on this group

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? Yes/No

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

No. There is no opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity within this group. The proposals will establish a Capital Grants Programme and a further support programme to help Councils develop greenway projects by providing access to services of experts/specialists.

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details:
If No, provide reasons:As for religious belief above

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:
If No, provide reasons:As for religious belief above

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:
If No, provide reasons:As for religious belief above

Age - If Yes, provide details:
If No, provide reasons:As for religious belief above

Marital Status - If Yes, provide details: If No, provide reasons:As for religious belief above

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide details:
If No, provide reasons:As for religious belief above

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details:
If No, provide reasons: As for religious belief above

Disability - If Yes, provide details:
If No, provide reasons: As for religious belief above

Dependants - If Yes, provide details:
If No, provide reasons: As for religious belief above

3. **To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?**

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None

There is no impact on good relations between any of these groups as the funding will be provided to a qualified Organisation that will contact all Councils RE development of greenway projects - the contract was awarded to Sustrans who meet the criteria for delivery.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None
There is no impact on good relations between any of these groups.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? None

There is no impact on good relations between any of these groups.

4. **Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?**

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief – If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: No. The proposals will establish a Capital Grants Programme and a greenways development programme to provide Councils with access to experts/specialists in the development of greenway projects.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details: See above
If No, provide reasons

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details: See above
If No, provide reasons

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?
(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

No.

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

NA.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

The sole purpose of the proposal is to establish a capital grants programme and appoint an external organisation to provide support to Councils in the construction of Greenways.

Providing a Greenways infrastructure has the potential to have a positive impact on all due to increasing the opportunities for all to cycle /walk as a form of exercise therefore improving physical/ mental wellbeing. As a result an EQIA is not required.

The scheme includes guidance on engineering standards which should ensure the Greenways are built to an appropriate specification taking into consideration accessibility and safety of all users.

As part of the statutory process the screening form will be circulated to Section 75 bodies. Any issues identified during this process relating to any Section 75 group will be fully considered.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

No mitigation or alternative policy is required.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A.

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been '**screened in**' for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion [Author pick 1 2 or 3 if a full EQIA is to take place]

Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Social need **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Effect on people's daily lives **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Relevance to a public authority's functions **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details.

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Eileen Cowan

Position/Job Title: DP

Date: 3 November 2021

Approved by: Andrew Grieve

Position/Job Title: G7

Date: 3rd November 2021

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

For Equality Team Completion:

Date Received: 3 November 2021

Amendments Requested: Yes

Date Returned to Business Area: 6 January 2022

Date Final Version Received / Confirmed: 3 February 2022

Date Published on DfI's Section 75 webpage: 15 February 2022