

# Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (EDCI) screening



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being or has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

<b>Directorate:</b> Communities, Housing and Environment	<b>Service area:</b> Climate, Energy and Green Spaces
<b>Lead person:</b> Emma Trickett	<b>Contact number:</b> 0113 3788158

**1. Title:** Proposed Funding Bid for 'Wild Aire' project at St Aidan's and Fairburn Ings Nature Reserves

Is this a:

**Strategy / Policy**

**Service / Function**

**Other**

**If other, please specify:** Proposed funding bid for improvements to 2 nature reserves managed by the RSPB in East Leeds.

## 2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

St Aidan's and Fairburn Ings nature reserves are leased by the Council to national charity, the RSPB.

This document outlines the screening of a proposed funding bid, led by the RSPB, for a project at St Aidan's and Fairburn Ings for the purposes of improving the visitor offer, engaging more diverse communities, making the sites better for wildlife and helping St Aidan's become financially sustainable.

If the funding bid is successful, there will be a comprehensive community engagement process (as part of the 18 month 'Development' stage) before works are undertaken on the ground ('Delivery' stage) to ensure they are suitable, but works proposed are as follows:

- a) A development of a new accessible Welcome Building and café at St Aidan's to replace the temporary visitor centre, toilet and staff facilities there and generate an income to help cover the costs of running the site.
- b) A major programme of engaging local communities and under-represented audiences with the nature and history of St Aidan's supported by a community space for events and workshops in the Welcome Building.
- c) An increased range of employment, volunteering, traineeship and skills development opportunities based at the sites.
- d) The proposed building at St Aidan's will also provide a permanent base for *Experience Community*, a charity which specialises in helping people with disabilities access nature.
- e) A small play area at St Aidan's.
- f) Wildlife viewing structures to offer shelter at various locations across St Aidan's so visitors can enjoy it in all weathers.
- g) Refurbishment of the wildlife viewing structures at Fairburn Ings to make them more resilient to the increasingly regular flooding events there.
- h) Natural habitat enhancements to make the sites even better for wildlife.
- i) A car park extension at St Aidan's because the existing one is already too small for the number of visitors the site receives which causes problems for visitors and impacts on local highways and residential streets. The car park extension will allow for EV chargers and disabled parking at the site.
- j) A condition survey and management plan for the 'Oddball' dragline mining machine heritage feature (which is based on St Aidan's but is not within the RSPB's lease).
- k) A management plan for Newton Abbey, the Scheduled Ancient Monument at Fairburn Ings.

Between them, the sites currently host around 120,000 visits a year, through the project the RSPB hope to significantly increase the number of visits to 250,000 plus.

### 3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies and policies, service and functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater or lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Also those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being.

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?		x

Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		X
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		X
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		X
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment</li> <li>• Advancing equality of opportunity</li> <li>• Fostering good relations</li> </ul>	X	

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

#### 4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?** (**think about** the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

The proposed project focuses quite extensively on EDCI at the nature reserves and it is clear that this is a priority for the RSPB in relation to this scheme.

As set out in the main report, the RSPB have undertaken considerable consultation about the sites in recent years and gained a good understanding of the thoughts and opinions of local residents with regards them.

They have also identified the fact that ethnically diverse people and people with disabilities are less likely to visit nature reserves and, with a view to addressing this, have engaged local organisations in the project to improve access to the sites for those groups.

- **Key findings**

(**think about** any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

The proposed project has a strong emphasis on engaging communities and improving access.

The reserves already have reasonably good access in terms of connection to bus, walking and cycling routes, car parking facilities, toilets, signage, well-maintained accessible footpaths and cycle routes on site, mobility scooter hire, staff to welcome visitors and provide information, and there is also an events programme including regular Community Wellbeing Walks and Bird Watching for Beginners.

In addition, the proposed project aims to make further improvements to access at the sites.

The RSPB has two primary partners for the bid to help them increase the diversity of the people experiencing and getting involved at St Aidan's.

- a) [Experience Community](#) – a charity focussing on helping people with disabilities access the countryside.
- b) [Sheffield Environmental Movement](#) - a charity who are national experts in their field at engaging ethnically diverse people and refugees with nature. (Note: their role in this project isn't Sheffield focused – it is about drawing on their skills to deliver for the people of the Aire valley).

They intend to work with these organisations to undertake an extensive programme of community engagement at the sites particularly for disadvantaged groups and those that currently visit less often.

The RSPB are aiming for St Aidan's to become a 'centre of excellence' for providing access to the countryside for people with disabilities and to share the learning that comes out of the project with regards this element nationally.

A major facet of the project will be exploring the barriers to accessing nature for marginalised communities, which is known to be a major problem nationally. National experts in engaging ethnically diverse people and refugees with nature will guide the site team, and there will be an active recruitment process to ensure that those from disadvantaged communities have opportunities for employment, volunteering, training and development.

Another key element of the proposed project is to construct a new, accessible Welcome Centre and café at St Aidan's with a base for Experience Community, a community area for meetings and events, and toilets including a Changing Places facility.

They are also proposing to extend the car park which will allow more disabled parking bays.

In addition, they are looking to install new 'Viewing Structures' which will allow people to use the site and enjoy wildlife in more challenging weather conditions – making the sites accessible more often.

- **Actions**

**(think about** how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

The report suggests Executive Board supports the bid to the NHLF for the project which has a strong focus on improving access at the sites.

If successful, there will be an initial 18-month long 'Development' phase to the project, during which the RSPB will engage further with communities through a 'co-creation'

process to ensure the project delivers the facilities people need to help them safely access and enjoy the sites for years to come.

A key output of the project will be disseminating learning so that other sites and organisations both locally and nationally can better understand the barriers various audiences face in accessing nature and what possible solutions might be.

**5. If you are *not* already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you *will need to carry out an impact assessment*.**

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:

Date to complete your impact assessment

Lead person for your impact assessment  
(Include name and job title)

### 6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date
Polly Cook	Chief Officer, Climate, Energy and Green Spaces	25/6/24
<b>Date screening completed</b>		24/6/24

### 7. Publishing

Though **all** key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council **only** publishes those related to **Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions or a Significant Operational Decision**.

A copy of this equality screening should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:

- Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council.
- The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions.
- A copy of all other equality screenings that are not to be published should be sent to [equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk) for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached screening was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to <b>Governance Services</b>	Date sent: 25/6/24
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate <b>Directorate</b>	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to <a href="mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk">equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk</a>	Date sent: