

Equality Analysis

Birmingham City Council Analysis Report

EA Name	BCR Canal Works
Directorate	Economy
Service Area	Transportation Services Access & Development
Type	New/Proposed Function
EA Summary	To support the Full Business Case and Cabinet Report to improve the canal towpaths within the Birmingham Cycle Revolution project.
Reference Number	EA000859
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Introduction

The report records the information that has been submitted for this equality analysis in the following format.

Overall Purpose

This section identifies the purpose of the Policy and which types of individual it affects. It also identifies which equality strands are affected by either a positive or negative differential impact.

Relevant Protected Characteristics

For each of the identified relevant protected characteristics there are three sections which will have been completed.

- Impact
- Consultation
- Additional Work

If the assessment has raised any issues to be addressed there will also be an action planning section.

The following pages record the answers to the assessment questions with optional comments included by the assessor to clarify or explain any of the answers given or relevant issues.

1 Activity Type

The activity has been identified as a New/Proposed Function.

2 Overall Purpose

2.1 What the Activity is for

What is the purpose of this Function and expected outcomes?	<p>The Birmingham Cycle Revolution (BCR) is a project which seeks to increase cycling levels across Birmingham over a 20 year period. The purpose of this Equality Analysis (EA) is to assess the towpath refurbishment works and access improvements along the canal corridors which form part of the BCR project. This Equality Analysis (EA) complements previous EAs which have been undertaken as part of the BCR programme of works assessing previous canal towpath works, green route (off road paths) and development of other phases of the BCR project. (See EA references: EA000033, EA000034 & EA000583).</p> <p>The expected outcomes from this project will encourage more people to cycle more often and help more people to be able to use and access the cycle network across Birmingham including the canal towpaths.</p> <p>The proposals will support the City Councils policy objectives outlined in the Council Business Plan and Budget 2015+, the Leaders Policy Statement 2015, and Birmingham 2026 Our Vision for the Future, in particular for a prosperous city that is better connected, smart and sustainable and a fair city tackling inequality and deprivation by improving transport links to employment, training opportunities and local services.</p> <p>The BCR project and the canal towpath and access improvement measures will support the aspirations of the emerging Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) and the Birmingham Connected White Paper. The works support the recommendations of the Transport, Connectivity & Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Committee (TCS O&S) report, Changing Gear, Transforming Urban Movement Through Walking & Cycling in Birmingham. The proposals will also support priorities from the Birmingham Climate Change Action Plan 2010+ particularly reducing the environmental impact of the city's mobility needs through Low Carbon Transport.</p>
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For each strategy, please decide whether it is going to be significantly aided by the Function.

Public Service Excellence	No
A Fair City	Yes
A Prosperous City	Yes
A Democratic City	No

2.2 Individuals affected by the policy

Will the policy have an impact on service users/stakeholders?	Yes
<u>Comment</u> Positive benefits for cycling stakeholders. No negative impact.	
Will the policy have an impact on employees?	No
Will the policy have an impact on wider community?	Yes

Comment

Positive benefits for wider community. No negative impact.

2.3 Analysis on Initial Assessment

The wider Birmingham Cycle Revolution (BCR) project is aimed at encouraging cycling by providing on road and off road route infrastructure particularly through disadvantaged areas. (Off road route provision also includes along canal towpaths and linking them to the wider BCR cycle route network). These are beneficial to less experienced cyclists, including younger, older and female cyclists who currently make up a disproportionately low number of all cyclists.

This initial Equality Assessment is focussed on the improvements to the canals and supports the Cabinet Report. Consultation through the BeHeard City Council consultation web portal has been undertaken and issues raised like understanding the needs of disabled users and addressing potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists have been considered.

No protected characteristic group would be impacted negatively from the scheme. However, the protected characteristic groups listed below have been identified as benefiting positively from this element of the scheme.

Disability:

This element of the BCR project will provide improved canal towpaths and accesses which will particularly benefit disabled/people with mobility difficulties including wheelchair users and people using adapted bicycles.

Where new or improved canal towpath access locations are proposed, wheelchair accessible towpath ramps will be considered for implementation where reasonably practical. However, with any access proposal there will be a need to strike a balance taking into account land availability to physically construct a wheelchair accessible ramp, if there is any adverse impact on a heritage structure, if there is a need to reduce the navigation of the canal, and the economic value/cost of construction and future maintenance. These factors will influence the design options which sometimes might result in it not being practically possible to construct a wheelchair accessible ramp at each proposed canal location. The Birmingham Cycling and Walking map (along with other publications and signage) will help aid users to plan their journeys as the Birmingham cycling and walking map shows where there are step free accesses to the canal towpaths.

In addition, the review of access control barriers will improve canal towpath access for wheelchair users and non-standard bikes (including those used by disabled riders). The review of barriers includes an assessment of each site to determine whether barriers can be fully opened. Opening the barriers will make it easier for people with mobility difficulties to access the towpath network without having to negotiate barriers and/or use a radar key gate.

The improvements will benefit other canal users, including boat crews, anglers, joggers and people walking for health. This will support the Canal and River Trust's aim to improve access for all to Birmingham's Canal Network.

As cyclists and pedestrians use the towpaths together, the Canal and River Trust (CRT) are expanding their 'Share The Space, Drop Your Pace' campaign which has been piloted on busy sections of canal in London. BCC has taken advice from CRT on the types of material and layout that have been used successfully elsewhere on the canal network. As a result we are proposing a material with a slightly textured finish which will discourage higher cycling speeds and generate some tyre noise to warn pedestrians of approaching cyclists, as well as giving cyclists more grip in poor weather.

Age:

The project will provide improved off-road/canal towpath routes which will aid less confident and/or less experienced cyclists of all abilities and ages. In addition, the project will make the canal network more accessible to both younger and older visitors by improving access locations.

Gender:

The project will provide improved off-road routes which will particularly benefit female cyclists who may be less confident and/or less experienced, and currently make up a disproportionately low number of all cyclists.

Race:

The canal routes go through relatively disadvantaged areas and so the project will encourage cycling amongst communities which are ethnically mixed and/or socially deprived and which may have a low cycle usage at the moment.

3.1 Age

3.1.1 Age - Differential Impact

Age	Relevant
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3.1.2 Age - Impact

Describe how the Function meets the needs of Individuals of different ages?	The project will provide improved off-road routes which will aid less confident and/or less experienced cyclists of all abilities and ages. The project will make the canal network more accessible to both younger and older visitors by improving access locations.
Do you have evidence to support the assessment?	Yes
Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?	Statistical evidence from the census (and previous TravelWise surveys) are less likely to cycle, which tends to be younger and older people. Comments have also been received from previous consultations on schemes for cyclists and pedestrians where the lack of facilities have been identified as preventing younger and older people from cycling.
Have you received any other feedback about the Function in meeting the needs of Individuals of different ages?	Yes
Please record the nature of such feedback.	Consultation with Stakeholder Forums during the development of the BCR bids in 2014 and via the BeHeard consultation during September 2015.
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Not applicable
Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals of different ages which needs highlighting?	No

3.1.3 Age - Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals of different ages on the impact of the Function?	No
If not, why not?	There are no plans to consult relevant individuals
Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Function on Individuals of different ages?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	<p>The City Council has consulted local Councillors via email. Stakeholders (including cycle groups) have been consulted via email and the Be Heard consultation web portal.</p> <p>In addition, The Canal and Rivers Trust have consulted their key stakeholders through their forums.</p>

Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals of different ages which needs highlighting?	No
<u>Comment</u> NB: The Canal and Rivers Trust will be implementing the canal towpath improvements, and they are able to do this under their permitted development rights. They consult key stakeholders and inform the public of the works via their website and installing advanced notices on the canal towpath network	

3.1.4 **Age - Additional Work**

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how.	It will enable users of differing ages (and protected characteristics groups) to share the canal towpath network together.
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Function has a role in preventing Individuals of different ages being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their age?	No
Do you think that the Function could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	Yes

3.2 Disability

3.2.1 Disability - Differential Impact

Disability	Relevant
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3.2.2 Disability - Impact

<p>Describe how the Function meets the needs of Individuals with a disability?</p>	<p>The project will provide improved off-road/canal towpath routes and accesses which will benefit disabled and less mobile cyclists and pedestrians, including wheelchair users.</p> <p>Where new or improved canal towpath access locations are proposed, wheelchair accessible towpath ramps will be considered for implementation where reasonably practical. However, with any access proposal there will be a need to strike a balance taking into account land availability to physically construct a wheelchair accessible ramp, if there is any adverse impact on a heritage structure, if there is a need to reduce the navigation of the canal, and the economic value/cost of construction and future maintenance. These factors will influence the design options which sometimes might result in it not being practically possible to construct a wheelchair accessible ramp at each proposed canal location. The Birmingham Cycling and Walking map (along with other publications and signage) will help aid users to plan their journeys as the Birmingham cycling and walking map shows where there are step free accesses to the canal towpaths.</p> <p>The review of access control barriers for people with wheelchairs and non-standard bikes (including those used by disabled riders) will seek to open up the barriers to improve access to the canal towpath network for users. The review of access barriers is an issue that has been raised through the consultation process as they are seen as an inconvenience for users.</p> <p>As cyclists and pedestrians use the towpaths together, the Canal and River Trust (CRT) are expanding their 'Share The Space, Drop Your Pace' campaign which has been piloted on busy sections of canal in London. BCC has taken advice from CRT on the types of material and layout that have been used successfully elsewhere on the canal network, and are proposing a material with a slightly textured finish which will discourage higher cycling speeds and generate some tyre noise to warn pedestrians of approaching cyclists.</p>
<p>Do you have evidence to support the assessment?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?</p>	<p>Previous schemes implemented by the Canal and Rivers Trust in other areas of the country.</p>

Have you received any other feedback about the Function in meeting the needs of Individuals with a disability?	Yes
Please record the nature of such feedback.	<p>During the last BCR canal towpath EA/development work in May 2015, a representative for the Guide Dogs for the Blind highlighted a general concern over conflict of their users with cyclists. Individuals with a hearing and/or visual impairment might feel that more cyclists on the towpath will reduce their confidence in using the towpaths.</p> <p>It should be noted that the towpaths are already shared by many different users, but to help mitigate against this The Canal and Rivers Trust will seek to adopt the 'slow your pace, share the space' campaign to ensure that cyclists are considerate to all other users. However, unfortunately it is impractical for the canal towpaths to be widened to accommodate segregated shared use.</p> <p>The Canal and Rivers Trust would be responsible for monitoring any complaints received regarding any shared use issues.</p>
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Yes
Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals with a disability which needs highlighting?	No

3.2.3 Disability - Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals with a disability on the impact of the Function?	No
If not, why not?	There are no plans to consult relevant individuals
Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Function on Individuals with a disability?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Stakeholder consultation has been undertaken with groups representing people with disabilities via email including: Access Committee, RNIB and the Guide Dog Association.
Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals with a disability which needs highlighting?	No

Comment

Individuals with a hearing and/or visual impairment might feel that more cyclists on the towpath will reduce their confidence in using the towpaths. The Canal and Rivers Trust are seeking to adopt the Share the space, drop your pace campaign to ensure that cyclists are considerate towards all other users on the towpath.

It should be noted that cyclists and other users all currently use the towpaths, and conflict between users is very limited and is not seen as a problem. However, this will be kept under review and monitored by the Canal and Rivers Trust.

3.2.4 Disability - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how.	By aiding access to the canal towpath will raise the profile of disability with other canal towpath users.
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Function has a role in preventing Individuals with a disability being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their disability?	No
Do you think that the Function could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	Yes
Do you think that the Function will take account of disabilities even if it means treating Individuals with a disability more favourably?	Yes
Do you think that the Function could assist Individuals with a disability to participate more?	Yes
Do you think that the Function could assist in promoting positive attitudes to Individuals with a disability?	Yes

3.3 Gender

3.3.1 Gender - Differential Impact

Gender	Relevant
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3.3.2 Gender - Impact

Describe how the Function meets the needs of Men and women?	The project will provide improved off-road routes which will particularly benefit female cyclists who may be less confident and/or less experienced, and currently make up a disproportionately low number of all cyclists. It should be noted that the project does not seek to provide any additional lighting other than what is in place at the moment (which is mostly just in the city centre around Gas Street etc). Both male and female cyclists might feel vulnerable cycling along the canal towpaths at night. As a result, in most cases there will be a lit on-road alternative to the canal towpath under the highways part of the BCR programme (which will be a separate FBC).
Do you have evidence to support the assessment?	Yes
Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?	The original BCR Grant bid documents from 2013 & 2014 and the travel to work output data from the census 2011.
Have you received any other feedback about the Function in meeting the needs of Men and women?	Yes
Please record the nature of such feedback.	Cycle Forum discussions on encouraging more women to cycle - which take place quarterly and at monthly stakeholder meetings.
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Yes
Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Men and women which needs highlighting?	No

3.3.3 Gender - Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Men and women on the impact of the Function?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	At the quarterly Cycle Forums, monthly stakeholder meetings and through the BeHeard consultation portal - where both genders are encouraged to respond.
Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Function on Men and women?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	At the quarterly Cycle Forums and through key stakeholders consultations (including with local ward councillors)

Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Men and women which needs highlighting?	No
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3.3.4 **Gender - Additional Work**

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Function has a role in preventing Men and women being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their gender?	No

3.4 Race

3.4.1 Race - Differential Impact

Race	Relevant
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3.4.2 Race - Impact

Describe how the Function meets the needs of Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds?	The canal routes go through relatively disadvantaged areas and so the project will encourage cycling amongst communities which are ethnically mixed and/or socially deprived and which may have a low cycle usage at the moment.
Do you have evidence to support the assessment?	Yes
Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?	The original BCR Grant bid documents in 2013 and 2014 and through analysis of census information which informed the original bids.
Have you received any other feedback about the Function in meeting the needs of Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds?	No
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Not applicable
Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds which needs highlighting?	No

3.4.3 Race - Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds on the impact of the Function?	No
If not, why not?	There are no plans to consult relevant individuals
Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Function on Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	At the Cycle Forum event which informed the development of the original Cycle City Ambition Grant bid. The event was widely promoted to all members of the community.
Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds which needs highlighting?	No

3.4.4 Race - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
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Please explain how.	It will help different communities to access the canal towpaths and help ensure that all different races share this facility together. In addition, post monitoring (including post 2021 census information) will be used to identify if more people from these communities are choosing to cycle.
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Function has a role in preventing Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their ethnicity?	No
Do you think that the Function could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	Yes

3.5 Concluding Statement on Full Assessment

The BCR programme for Birmingham seeks to promote sustainable travel options by increasing the attractiveness of cycling, which will contribute towards: improving health and the environment, reducing car dependency and improving connectivity for households without a car. Many of the measures will also benefit pedestrians, public transport users and road safety.

The canal towpath and access improvement element of the programme which this EA supports highlights that overall the proposed improvements to the canal corridors do not make any negative impacts on any of the protected characteristic groups. The City Council will monitor the implementation of the canal towpaths and accesses and review the usage. The improvements will also benefit ambient disabled users. If any issues affecting any protected characteristic group appears the Equality Assessment will be reviewed and new mitigation measures considered and actioned upon if required.

4 Review Date

31/03/18

5 Action Plan

There are no relevant issues, so no action plans are currently required.