

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – August 2005

**Service Area** - Arts Development, Legal services, Environmental Health services, Human Resources. etc.

Housing & Planning

**Detailed activity** – Development of the Pound Arts Centre, marketing industrial starter units, food hygiene courses, recruitment. etc.

Housing & Planning - Gypsies and travellers needs survey

**Lead Officer** – A.N.Other

Janet O'Brien, Housing Team Leader and Lachlan Robertson, Spatial Planning TL

**Provide a broad description of the detailed activity and explain what the main aims of the activity are**

1 What are the aims of the activity?

To identify the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers across Wiltshire but particularly in North Wiltshire. In addition, to develop planning and housing policies to respond to those needs.

2 Which sections of the community will this activity have an impact on?  
eg. general population, young people, older people, people with disabilities, ethnic minority groups:

Primarily gypsies and travellers. More comprehensive information about the needs of this community will enable better planning to meet those needs.

3 How and where will information be disseminated about:

a) The need for the activity? eg Community Strategy, Improving North Wiltshire, People's voice

A county-wide group has been set up, led by North Wiltshire, to take this study forward. It is intended that representatives of gypsies and travellers as well as the local authorities in Wiltshire will be involved in preparing for this study. Existing focus groups of representatives of this community will be invited to get involved and kept up to date with progress through their regular meetings.

b) Collecting views of particular groups and/or the public? eg People's voice, groups representing ethnic minority groups, organisations such as Age Concern Wiltshire, budget consultation

Views will be collected through focus groups and through face to face interviews.

c) Details of the activity? (If already existing or if being amended)

It is proposed that details of how the assessment will be carried out and when will be shared with the local gypsy and traveller community through their regular focus group meetings.

4 Has any research or consultation been carried out into the need for the activity AND the ability of various community groups to access it?

This will be the first comprehensive assessment of gypsy and traveller accommodation needs carried out in Wiltshire. It is a requirement of local authorities to carry out this assessment – Housing Act 2004.

5 Has any evidence of access or compliance difficulties emerged as a result of previous monitoring?

It is evident that this community often acts outside the planning system leading to the necessity for enforcement action. Access to services by this community is also limited. It is hoped a better understanding of needs and how to make services more accessible will be a positive impact of this study.

6 Does the activity have the potential to lead to:

a) direct or indirect discrimination

Yes

No

How?

It is intended that this assessment will help local authorities have a better understanding of the needs of this community to ensure there is no discrimination.

b) an adverse affect or other negative impact upon any community group?

Yes

How?

It is intended that gypsies and travellers will be treated fairly and have equal access to services alongside other groups within the community.

No

c) a disproportionately positive impact on one community group over another?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	How?
No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The assessment will be purely focused on the needs of gypsies and travellers. However, this is to ensure the needs of this minority group are adequately assessed to ensure local authorities are better able to plan to meet their needs.

- 7 If there is likely to be direct or indirect discrimination, or a disproportionately positive impact on any particular group, can this be justified? Please state how (eg statutory, results from monitoring, other evidence etc)
- 8 If (in 7) it cannot be justified, please state what measures, and/or reasonable adjustments (eg the DDA), will be put into place to address the in-equality
- 9 Is there an opportunity to promote equality of opportunity and good community relations through the activity?

It is intended that the assessment will enable better access to services by this community to ensure they are given the same opportunities as other groups within the community. It is also hoped that, by gaining a better understanding of the gypsy and traveller communities, prejudices will be lessened to enable better community relations.

- 10 Will there be a requirement for equality/diversity training to equip staff to deliver the activity?

Yes. It is likely that specialist training will be required to assess the needs of the gypsy and traveller community.

- 11 Does the information available about this activity need to be revised?  
(eg literature, website, internal documents, etc)

A website and discussion forum has been set up to publicise the proposals for this assessment. It is likely to influence both housing and planning policies and could lead to a revision of those policies and their associated literature.

- 12 Please explain what forms of consultation you will be using or have used to inform the answers you have given above?

To date consultation has been limited ie. With other local authorities and the Race Equality Council. It is intended that future meetings to progress this work will include representatives of the gypsy and traveller community alongside professionals in housing, planning, environmental health and possibly health, education and social welfare.  
In the future the assessment will involve both communication with focus groups and face to face interviews.

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