

# Green Infrastructure Strategy 2021

# Greener Places

Equality Impact Assessment




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# 1. Introduction

 Our Green Infrastructure Strategy has been prepared by South Gloucestershire council, our partners and residents. It sets out a shared vision, priorities, commitments and action to transform the role, creation and management of 'greener places', now and into the future across our area.

The strategy presents why we need to and how we will optimise the contribution of green infrastructure to restore nature, support adaptation and resilience to the changing climate, improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in our communities and contribute to a green recovery from Covid 19. How we work with our partners, communities and residents is at the heart of delivering this vision.

## 1.1 Vision and purpose

Our Green Infrastructure Strategy aims to bring together the council and our partners' ambitions, obligations, priorities and commitments for new and existing green infrastructure in South Gloucestershire to deliver our shared vision for:

**'greener places where people and nature thrive'**

This includes:

-  Our policies and approach to planning and design of green infrastructure within new development, as set out in our planning policies
-  The approach the council will take to managing all things green we have responsibility for
-  How we will contribute to and support implementation of regional strategic priorities and plans including the Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy
-  How we will work together across the council, with our partners and local communities to 'lead, enable and inspire' an integrated approach and 'step change' to achieve shared goals for a restored natural environment, adaptation and resilience to the changing climate, and greener, healthier places across our area

The strategy highlights the '**green thread**' linking our work managing green spaces and planning for new green infrastructure in South Gloucestershire, to regional, national and global commitments to protect the environment. This includes the South Gloucestershire Council Plan and other council strategies, through to regional West of England plans, UK legislation, and globally the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) and the [UN Paris Agreement](#).

This ‘green thread’ supports and informs our work on the ground, by highlighting how the actions and work of the council, our partners and residents contribute to wider shared goals for the environment and contributes to the bigger picture.

## 1.2 Our outcomes

Our outcomes for green infrastructure in South Gloucestershire have been shaped by our engagement work and align with the priorities and outcomes of the West of England [Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy 2020 \(JGIS\)](#) and South Gloucestershire [Council Plan 2020 - 2024](#)

Applying this approach our outcomes for green infrastructure to achieve our vision are:

- protected and restored nature
- greater resilience to the changing climate
- sustainable water management
- improved health and wellbeing for all
- sustainable places
- valued healthy landscapes
- sustainable and local food production
- a green and resilient economy
- stronger working together

For each of these outcomes we have identified commitments which set out what we aim to achieve, the actions we will take and by when.

## 1.3 Reducing the inequality gap

Parks, nature reserves and other public open spaces provide highly valued green spaces for people and nature, right at the heart of our communities. Green spaces support healthier lifestyles, boost our wellbeing and help to reduce inequalities. We want to design and manage these spaces so they are attractive, safe and welcoming for everyone, by improving accessibility, reducing litter and maintaining facilities. We want everyone to be able to access local, high quality green spaces within our communities and to feel welcome, inspired and empowered to get involved.



Aligned with the South Gloucestershire [Council Plan 2020 - 2024](#) overarching priority to reduce the inequality gap, the Greener Places Strategy recognises that delivering excellence and work to address inequalities is intrinsically linked to the successful achievement of our vision. As such, through engagement with equalities groups, residents and our partners we have co-identified key issues, priorities and opportunities, from which an action plan has been created. Implementation of this plan, a continued review of progress, and responding to new priorities and opportunities will ensure our work delivers optimum and continuing progress to reduce inequalities and the realisation of the Greener Places Strategy vision.

**This Equality Impact Assessment and Plan (EqIA) will be reviewed regularly as a live working document and action plan to:**

- track progress on our agreed outcomes
- respond to stakeholder feedback, new and/or changing issues, priorities and opportunities
- respond to changes in legislation or policy requirements
- inform implementation of the Greener Places Strategy and Action Plan.

**Review of this Equalities Impact Assessment will be in response to changes in requirements or needs from stakeholders, national legislation or council policy.**





## 2. Research, engagement and consultation

### 2.1 Research and evidence

#### 2.1.1 Local context

- **Health inequalities** – going into 2020 South Gloucestershire had levels of health and quality of life above the national average. However, the differences between the most and least deprived residents has increased in seventeen out of twenty-five health indicators over recent years. We need to optimise the contribution and role of the natural environment to reduce health and other inequalities: [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) and [SG Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy \(JHWS\) 2017 – 2021](#)
- **Population density and areas of multiple deprivation** [Id-2019-Full-South-Glos-Report.pdf](#) shows that inequalities are not evenly spread across South Gloucestershire, and impacts vary between different parts of the local authority. The mapping shows areas (lower super output areas), each of which includes 650 households or 1500 residents, reflecting the wide variation in population density across the county, which has direct considerations for Green Infrastructure.
- **Air Quality Management Areas** – In South Gloucestershire we have two [Air Quality Management Areas](#), in Staple Hill, and Kingswood. Both are in Priority Neighbourhoods which also have the highest levels of deprivation in terms of income, employment, education and skills, health and disability and crime. [English Indices of Deprivation 2019 South Gloucestershire Priority Neighbourhood Analysis \(southglos.gov.uk\)](#)
- **Flood risk** – The South Gloucestershire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy highlights the significant areas which are subject to flood risk, particularly in response to the changing climate. It is well evidenced that communities and individuals who already experience inequalities are more likely to be adversely impacted by flood risk and other effects of the changing climate. Research by Public Health England demonstrates the significant burden of mental health problems associated with flooding and the need for preventative interventions including optimising the role of green infrastructure. [The English National Study of Flooding and Health – Summary of the evidence generated to date \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)



- **The climate and nature emergency** – Locally and nationally the changing climate and nature crisis presents significant risks for deepening of inequalities as evidenced by the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC Report 2019](#). The IPCC report highlights that people already subject to socio-economic and environmental pressures will be disproportionately impacted unless effective action is taken against risks including flooding, drought and food supply. Effectively designed, embedded and well maintained green infrastructure can play a key role in provision of ‘natural solutions’ to mitigate impacts, support adaptation and resilience for people and nature.
- **The Covid 19 pandemic** – has highlighted and widened the impact of inequalities of access to high quality green space. People without access to private or shared gardens or not living close to public open spaces have been particularly disadvantaged. This evidence demonstrates the importance of investment in green spaces as part of our green recovery plans, to reduce inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in our communities: [BMJ July 2020 Covid 19 highlighting inequalities in access to high quality green spaces](#)

### 2.1.2 Access to high quality green space

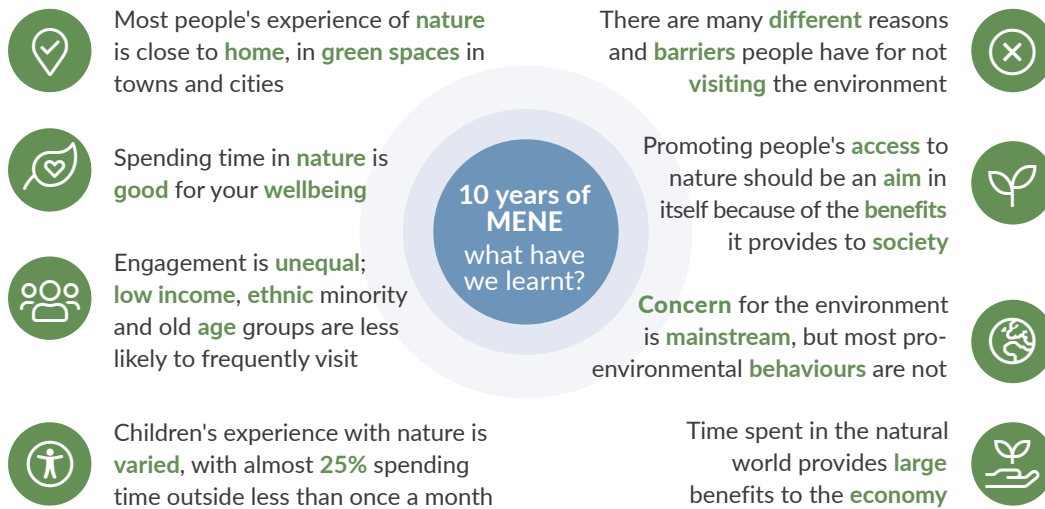
Access to well connected, thriving green infrastructure, such as natural environments and easily accessible, high quality public open spaces, is well evidenced as a key wider determinant of health and wellbeing and plays a key role in reducing health and other inequalities. Evidence includes:

- [Improving access to greenspace: 2020 review \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Public Health England \(PHE\) 2014 Local action on health inequalities: Improving access to green spaces](#)





- The [Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment \(MENE\) survey 2009-2019](#) provided a comprehensive assessment over ten years of how people across the UK use, enjoy and are motivated to protect the natural environment. Key findings of the survey include:



Significantly, the MENE survey found that 25% of children spend very limited time outside in a natural environment which is a particular area of concern.

A summary of South Gloucestershire utilisation of open space through the MENE survey available at [Public Health Profiles – PHE](#) and indicates relatively high levels of use of green space in South Gloucestershire compared to other local authority areas across the South West.

- Access to private or shared green space** – In 2020 the Office for National Statistics (ONS) identified that 1 in 8 households in the UK have no garden, with people from ethnic minority communities more likely to have no garden than people from white British households. Looking at local data, around 1 in 10 households do not have access to outdoor space, with those in rural areas least likely to have access to private outdoor space, although they are closer to other green space.
  - [One in eight British households has no garden – Office for National Statistics 2020 \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

Friends of the Earth further investigated households' access to either private green space, nearby public green space or open access land, highlighting the importance of access to land people have a right to use, not just pass through (such as countryside footpaths)

- [England's Green Space Gap, full report](#) | [Policy and insight \(friendsoftheearth.uk\)](#)



- **Distance to public green space**

The Place Alliance '[Home Comforts Report 2020](#)' highlights that proximity to parks or green space is a strong indicator of how satisfied people are with their neighbourhood during the Covid 19 lockdown and concludes **'The aspiration should be for everyone to live within five minutes' walk of a significant green space or park, and never more than 10 minutes'**. The report found that this was particularly important for households without access to private or shared gardens and residents of social housing and recommends more ambitious standards for access to green space to be a key principle for the planning and design of all new communities.

These findings align with the South Gloucestershire Council Viewpoint June 2020 survey and Autumn 2020 Greener Places engagement survey findings and the [BMJ July 2020 Covid 19 highlighting inequalities in access to high quality green spaces](#).

Research by [Friends of the Earth – access to green space 2020](#) identifies that 42% of people from England's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities live in neighbourhoods most deprived of access to green space (less than 9m<sup>2</sup> squared per person). This lack of access to green space further deepens health and quality of life inequalities.

The West of England Nature Partnership (WENP) has mapped green space across the West of England and areas within 300m (approximately five minutes walk) of local green space, considering that access is not always direct due to entrance locations and other barriers [Access to Green Space in the West of England](#). Mapping distance to green spaces alongside mapping of other quality of life information, helps us to identify places with both high levels of need and poor access to green spaces to help focus our work to reduce inequalities.

- **Distance to growing space**

In addition to access to green space for recreation and amenity, distance to growing space has a key role to play in improving health, reducing inequalities and supporting a sustainable lifestyle, particularly for people who do not have access to private or shared gardens. This includes allotments, community orchards and food growing projects. See Section 6: Our Green Spaces Asset Management Plan for steps the council is taking to increase access to growing space for land we are responsible for.



## Inclusion priorities – it is not just about distance to green space

The Covid 19 pandemic has highlighted the impacts of inequalities of access to high quality green space, particularly for people without access to private or shared gardens or those living distant from public open spaces who have been significantly disadvantaged. For many people in our communities, in addition to spatial distance to green space, there are a wide range of other factors which determine local green space accessibility and proximity, particularly for people with protected characteristics.

### **Interpretation, information, education, and awareness**

Information to improve access to green space includes:

- Helping people find out where green spaces are, by providing information about public transport routes, cycling and walking routes and practical information such as opening times, maps, access and facilities.
- Information and images need to be culturally and socially relevant so that everyone in our communities feel welcome.
- Information needs to be clear, easy to understand, readily available in a range of formats to meet different sensory needs and languages.
- When people arrive at green spaces, information signs and visitor interpretation to highlight the heritage, wildlife interest and other features of the site help people feel welcomed and confident to enjoy, value and make best use of these spaces.

### **Accessibility**

We want all residents to be able to enjoy access to green spaces local to them. We know that not all our spaces are accessible for people with specific access needs, and we want to find ways to improve accessibility to local green spaces for everyone. This includes people who describe themselves as having learning, sensory or physical disabilities, a mental health condition or long standing illness.

Where access to local green space is not possible, we apply the '[social model of disability](#)' and view accessibility as the problem not the disability and work with residents and groups including the [South Gloucestershire Disability Equality Network and Disability Action Group](#) to improve the accessibility of green spaces.



### **Cultural inclusivity**

The Black Environment Network, locally Black2Nature and other groups representing people of colour, faith and cultural groups highlight that there are specific cultural and religious considerations for engagement and certain faith groups in public open spaces as well as other facilities and services. Through working together, we are identifying how we can create and manage green spaces which are more welcoming to everyone in our communities.

Research by [Friends of the Earth – access to green space 2020](#) identifies that 42% of people from England's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities live in the most green space deprived neighbourhoods which have less than 9m squared per person. To reduce inequalities action is needed in terms of improving both spatial and cultural access to green space.

### **Multi-generational spaces**

We have an ageing population in South Gloucestershire for whom keeping active, socially connected, and mobile is vital. Older people tell us they value green spaces which have well maintained paths, seating, and access to other facilities, particularly toilets. Green spaces with social facilities such as cafes, tennis and bowling are also highly valued by many older people as well as access to nature. We also need to ensure we cater for the needs of children, young people and families with appropriate facilities in our communities to meet their needs including for play and engagement with nature.

### **Well maintained, clean, welcoming, and safe spaces**

Providing and maintaining key infrastructure including benches, ramps, sight lines and routes are important to optimise access to and enjoyment of green spaces for a wide range of people. This also includes maintaining green spaces so they are clean and clear of litter as South Gloucestershire Council Plan commitment 12.

The [Queerantime study](#) and Women & Equalities Parliamentary Committee calls for evidence on the impact of Covid 19. <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/3868/pdf/> highlights the challenges people with protected characteristics report about feeling safe outside of the home and the role of local high quality well designed and managed green infrastructure to make green spaces and communities feel more welcoming and safer for everyone.



## 2.2 Council Budget Consultation Survey 2021

Our 2020/21 Council Budget survey asked for people's levels of satisfaction with 'parks and open spaces' and the following table shows the last eight years of data received in response to this question:

### Parks and open spaces

Respondents	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Total (all respondents)</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>79%</b>
Female	59%	60%	66%	60%	68%	78%	82%
Male	60%	54%	58%	53%	67%	80%	77%
16-34						85%	
35-44						83%	
Under 45	69%	67%	79%	70%	82%		75%
46 to 65	57%	55%	62%	56%	61%	76%	76%
Over 65	56%	41%	56%	54%	63%	80%	84%
Disabled	51%	34%	51%	41%	59%	71%	73%
Non disabled	61%	59%	64%	60%	70%	80%	80%
White British	60%	58%	62%	57%	69%	80%	81%
BAME	66%	60%	58%	58%	56%	66%	64%
Bisexual					80%	71%	78%
Gay man					86%	91%	78%
Gay woman/ lesbian					80%	100%	78%
Other					52%	81%	78%
Heterosexual					69%	80%	79%
Identify as Trans – Yes					80%	50%	100%
Identify as Trans – No					69%	80%	80%
Buddhist					67%	100%	100%
Christian					69%	80%	82%
Hindu					88%	75%	100%
Jewish					33%	75%	0%
Muslim					33%	20%	33%
Sikh					0%	–	–
Any other religion					59%	75%	65%
No religion					69%	80%	79%

Where the proportion of people with this characteristic is 10% or more **above** the proportion of all respondents.

Where the proportion of people with this characteristic is 10% or more **below** the proportion of all respondents.

From analysis of these findings, satisfaction levels for parks and open spaces have increased overall for people with protected characteristics over the last 8 years from 59% to 79%.



Highest satisfaction levels were reported by Hindu and Buddhist faith groups, people who identify as trans and people aged over 65. However, people of Muslim faith; people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and disabled people report lower satisfaction levels with green spaces compared to the rest of our population.

These findings have highlighted the need for further engagement with these groups to understand key issues and identify solutions and is an important area of focus in our Action Plan.

## 2.3 Action on hate crime

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) [define a hate incident](#) as “any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone’s prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.” This can be incidents where hate is present in someone’s behaviour or actions, but no crime is committed.

Hate crime is not limited to violence, but is any form of negative perception which may be expressed as hatred towards an individual or community based on:

- disability
- race or ethnicity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- transgender identity

Hate crime can involve rhetorical and physical manifestations of hatred directed toward individuals and/or their property, toward community institutions and religious facilities. [Avon and Somerset Police](#) state that hate crimes can include:

- cyberbullying
- offensive letters or text messages (hate mail) or phone calls
- offensive leaflets and posters
- physical attacks such as assaults
- sexual harassment
- threats of an attack
- vandalism, criminal damage, graffiti or arson
- verbal abuse or abusive gestures





South Gloucestershire council has a zero tolerance of hate crime and is dedicated to challenging, combating and eradicating hate crime and hate incidents.

To achieve this, we work in partnership with a diverse range of organisations across the area, all of whom have a zero tolerance approach to hate-motivated behaviour. Working together, with these joint aims, ensures that respect for diversity and community cohesion is promoted, and supports the right to enjoy a life free of crime.

All reported incidents of hate crime on or linked to our public open spaces are immediately reported to the police, appropriate authorities, and council services. This includes prompt removal of hate crime graffiti, responding to hate crime vandalism and threats or attacks in any form towards individuals or groups on public open spaces.

Our senior managers and members are committed to doing all we can as a council to counter hate crime in whatever guise in South Gloucestershire. The leaders of the three political groups have issued a joint statement to reinforce their shared view.

**“We want to make it clear that hate crime has no place in South Gloucestershire or anywhere else in our country. Hate crimes are an attack on our values as a local council and on our community.**

**“We are committed to working with our partners to eradicate hate crime in South Gloucestershire and would urge members of the public to help us in doing this by reporting any crime they experience or see.”**

Visit [www.southglos.gov.uk/community-and-living/community-safety/hate-crime/reporting-hate-crime/](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/community-and-living/community-safety/hate-crime/reporting-hate-crime/) and our directory and guidance: [Responding to Hate Crime](#) for more information.



## 2.4 Our Greener Places Strategy engagement findings

The [South Gloucestershire Equality Plan 2019-2022](#) sets out how the council and our partners work together to positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations including **‘the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it’** (page 11). The Equality Act 2010 (section 149) sets out the public sector equality duty which encompasses the nine ‘protected characteristics’.

Engagement with residents and our partners has played a key role in shaping early development of the Greener Places Strategy and Action Plan, and the Greener Places Equality Impact Assessment and Action Plan (EqIA). This includes work to co-identify issues and solutions to improve access to, management of, and broaden engagement in public open spaces and the wider environment, and to influence design considerations for green infrastructure within new communities. Identifying ways to widen and increase engagement through communication is a key part of this work. This approach of co-production and review of progress, priorities and actions will continue as the Greener Places Strategy is implemented.

To prepare the Greener Places Strategy we have undertaken general and targeted engagement throughout 2020/21. Below are some of the key groups we have worked with to inform this EqIA, the strategy and action plan, reflecting our commitment to involve everyone in our communities, particularly those with protected characteristics:

- Viewpoint survey (included specific green space questions) – 871 responses
- Greener Places public engagement survey – 510 responses
- South Gloucestershire Equality Forum
- South Gloucestershire Race Equality Network and Black2Nature
- SGC BME staff network
- [South Gloucestershire Disability Equality Network](#)
- Sensory Impairment stakeholders group
- [The Diversity Trust](#)
- Town and Parish Council Forum
- The South Gloucestershire Friends Forum
- South Gloucestershire Young Ambassadors
- Other stakeholders and representatives from equality and diversity groups and the voluntary sector



Findings from the South Gloucestershire Council Resident Viewpoint survey 2020, Greener Places Engagement Survey 2020, and StreetCare 2019 Satisfaction Survey show that public open spaces, the natural environment, and our heritage are highly valued by residents in South Gloucestershire. In particular, surveys and engagement carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 have highlighted how both use and value of green spaces increased. However, for some particularly people with disabilities and people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, there are barriers which we need to understand and respond to.

#### 2.4.1 Viewpoint Survey, June 2020 – green spaces

Additional questions were added to the council Viewpoint Survey 2020 to identify any changes in use, perceived value and barriers to using green space by residents before and during the Covid 19 pandemic. Key findings included:

48% of respondents said they **used** green spaces more and 60% reported they also **valued** green spaces more since the outbreak of Covid-19, particularly because of the benefits for their health and wellbeing. Virtually no one reported they value green spaces less (1%).

96% of respondents whose housing does not have access to an outdoor space reported they were more likely to use green spaces, compared to 45% of respondents who have access to outdoor space. This is a critical issue that we are following up to improve access to local green space in communities where people need it most.

28% of respondents reported using green spaces less since the Covid-19 pandemic including people who have been shielding and people who have avoided using green spaces due to higher numbers of people using them during the pandemic. We have listened to this important feedback and have been carrying out work to help make our green spaces safe for everyone during the pandemic according to the latest requirements and advice including:

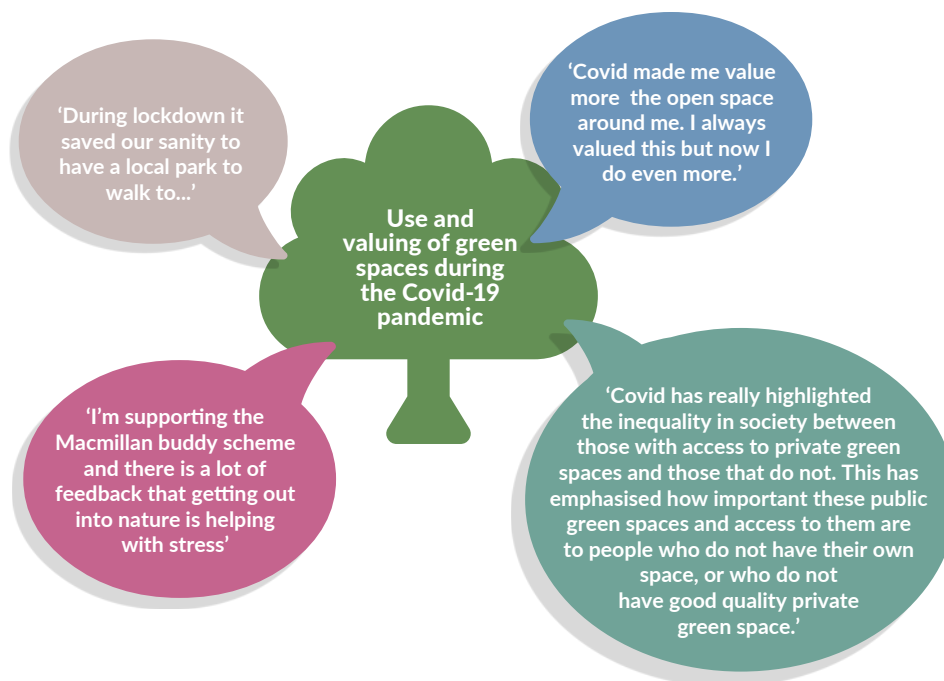
- Working closely with neighbouring local authorities and services, such as the police, to make sure our approach, information and work is consistent across the region, particularly for communities on our borders. This work has had a wider positive impact as we are now collaborating more closely across the region about a range of green space management issues.
- With increasing numbers of people using green spaces for daily exercise on our busiest sites, we have increased our inspections to optimise the safety of all visitors.
- Strengthening our communications through the council Covid-19 Response Team and StreetCare communications to stay connected with residents as well as sharing information in notices on green spaces and through partner networks.



### 2.4.2 Greener Places Engagement Survey – Autumn 2020

Building on the Viewpoint Survey findings, an engagement survey was held autumn 2020 to help us further understand how people use and value green spaces and how we can make them more welcoming and accessible for everyone. The findings and suggestions of this survey have informed the priorities and commitments of our green infrastructure outcomes and the management of green spaces the council is responsible for through our Green Space Asset Management Plans.

Complementing the data, engagement survey respondents also reported powerful comments about the importance of green spaces, particularly during the pandemic, for their health and wellbeing including:



Comments received through our engagement survey which reflect the wider benefits of green spaces respondents reported for their health and wellbeing include:



Some of the barriers highlighted by engagement survey respondents include:



Understanding barriers and co-production of solutions regarding access to and use of green spaces, particularly for people with protected characteristics, continues to be at the heart of our engagement work as further detailed in Greener Places, Section 4.4 Health and wellbeing for all.

### 2.4.3 South Gloucestershire Sensory Impairments Action Plan

Sensory impairment is the term used to describe deafness, blindness, visual impairment, hearing impairment, deaf blindness and smell or touch related impairments. Green spaces related actions were identified with the South Gloucestershire Sensory Impairments engagement group in March 2020. Updates on action were provided by the council StreetCare Place Team (Community Spaces) in March 2021 as summarised in the table below, for action and annual review with stakeholders:





March 2020 actions to address issues for people with sensory impairment needs in green spaces	March 2021 update on progress
Re-developments in Kingswood Park to be checked regarding access issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2019 and 2021 updated Kingswood Park Access Audit provides a comprehensive audit of access issues in the park and recommendations which was prepared working with the South Gloucestershire Disability Action Group and Warmley Park School students and staff.</li> <li>• This includes recommendations to improve park access for people with sensory impairments proposed in the facility enhancement for the Kingswood Park National Heritage Lottery Fund bid.</li> <li>• Access improvements identified and included in the audit recommendations and funding bid include entrance improvements, path network and surface improvements, blue badge parking, provision of changing places and toilet facilities.</li> <li>• Funding is being sought from the National Heritage Lottery Fund for these and other improvements to Kingswood Park.</li> </ul>
Cemeteries can be inaccessible to service users with visual impairments.	<p>In the two cemeteries where we can still offer new graves (Kingswood Remembrance Park and Mayshill), we aim to reserve graves near to accessible paths or car parking pull-in bays for graves where a family member who will be regularly attending the grave has a disability. The aim is to ensure that the grave is easy to reach, regardless of weather conditions.</p> <p>The following questions have also been identified which need to be investigated to improve access for people with visual impairment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the preferred forms of transport for people with visual impairment when planning a visit to our cemeteries?</li> <li>2. Can we improve on public transport links and information?</li> <li>3. How can we improve pedestrian safety at entrance gates and routes across the cemetery for people with visual impairment?</li> <li>4. What features would aid people who have a visual impairment to navigate our cemeteries?</li> </ol> <p>A whole project would be required to address this which is not currently possible due to lack of resources.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Continued next page...</p>



March 2020 actions to address issues for people with sensory impairment needs in green spaces	March 2021 update on progress
<p>Open space issues regarding overhanging trees and bushes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edges need to be kept clear</li> <li>• Signs need to be above head height</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Place Inspection Team</b> work across South Gloucestershire and receive, assess and respond to enquiries and complaints logged on the Kirona CRM system. If after inspection, they are unable to provide the answer or require a specialist team to take action, they will reallocate the job to the relevant team. Issues can be logged online at: <a href="http://www.southglos.gov.uk/general-information/online-services/report/">www.southglos.gov.uk/general-information/online-services/report/</a> or by calling the StreetCare contact centre on 01454 868000</li> <li>• <b>Inspection and management of overhanging vegetation on walkways/paths</b> – Any reports of vegetation encroachment are inspected as urgent work and assessed based on the risk. Any reports of dangerous vegetation (e.g. dangling bramble or fallen limbs) are assessed and the relevant team notified for urgent action. The base line requirements aim to confirm to a 1.2m width and 1.8m height minimum access (where possible) to ensure safe and unrestricted access for all users.</li> <li>• <b>Edges</b> – Edges need to be kept clear of potential trip hazards at ground level such as overgrown vegetation, as per the above point. In addition, potential hazards for slips and trips are inspected and acted on (e.g. accumulations of leaves/mud creating slippery surface, uneven surfaces, upheaval, waste etc).</li> <li>• <b>Signs</b> – Temporary road /street signs should follow the industry code of practice (example attached). Such codes of practice also apply to any permanent installations.</li> </ul>

## 2.5 Public consultation 2021

A public consultation was held from 17 June to 12 September 2021 to gather feedback from residents and stakeholders on the draft strategy. This included what they thought about the vision, objectives, content, plans and clarity of the draft strategy. A draft full strategy, summary version and web accessible version was published on the council website. An Equality Impact Assessment based on our engagement findings and other evidence was also prepared and shared alongside the strategy on our consultations webpage.

The consultation was promoted through our social media channels, consultation email list, resident update and other newsletters. We also arranged workshops and presentations with community groups and our Community Engagement Forums. We met with people and groups from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds to prepare and consult on the draft strategy including the South Gloucestershire Race Equalities Network, Black2Nature and Equalities Voice. We also met with the Diversity Trust, South Gloucestershire LGBTQ Equality Network and Equalities Voice.



There was strong overall support for the strategy vision and what it is aiming to achieve. 75% of those responding to the online survey thought the content of the strategy was good with ambitious goals and objectives. 74% said they felt the explanation of the issues in the strategy were either 'good' or 'very good' whilst only 38% rated measuring progress as 'good' or 'very good'.

People were keen to see the Action Plan to deliver the strategy, and to understand more about the resources needed.

As explained in our Consultation Report (link), the response from the consultation survey did not reflect the population of South Gloucestershire. Participation in the survey was very low from people in regards to race, sexual orientation and gender identity. We supported the survey work with qualitative engagement of equalities and diversity groups as part of our pre-engagement and public consultation work. We will continue to build on and extend this engagement as we implement our equalities action plan and seek to engage with individuals and groups to improve green spaces and make them inclusive for everyone.

The findings of our public consultation survey and engagement work have been used to inform:

- updating of the strategy documents to revise content and information, taking into account the consultation comments and findings
- preparation of the Action Plan which provides further detail of the actions we will take and how success will be measured
- continuing engagement with equalities groups, particularly with people of Muslim faith, people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, the LGBTQ community and disabled people is a priority to understand key issues and to identify solutions together to improve satisfaction levels with green spaces, inclusion and participation.

These findings also supported the priorities for action identified in our engagement work to prepare the draft strategy.

### 3. Identification and analysis of equalities considerations

The following section shows important key information regarding experience, participation and key issues in respect of diverse groups.



### 3.1 Differences in experience

Is there any indication or evidence (locally or nationally) that different groups will have unique needs, experiences, issues or priorities in relation to green spaces and green infrastructure?

Group	Indication or evidence of unique needs or experiences regarding green infrastructure
Age	Yes
Disability	Yes
Gender reassignment	Yes
Marriage and civil partnership	Unknown
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes
Race	Yes
Religion or belief	Yes
Sex	Yes
Sexual orientation	Yes

### 3.2 Differences in participation

Is there any indication or evidence (locally or nationally) that different groups will have different participation levels, satisfaction levels or outcomes in relation to green spaces and green infrastructure?

Group	Indication or evidence regarding differences in participation and satisfaction regarding green infrastructure
Age	Yes
Disability	Yes
Gender reassignment	Yes
Marriage and civil partnership	Unknown
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes
Race	Yes
Religion or belief	Yes
Sex	Yes
Sexual orientation	Yes

### 3.3 Variations and considerations by protected characteristics

For each of the overarching outcomes identified in the Greener Places Strategy, the potential for differences in impact, experience, interaction and outcomes has been considered for people with protected characteristics, drawn from engagement to date. This is summarised in the table below and will be updated as further considerations are identified through continued engagement and partnership work:



	Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual orientation
Protected and restored nature	Access considerations may come into conflict with improving Nature Recovery Network management for nature  Air quality, cooling and shading improvements through increased tree cover of particular benefit				Air quality, cooling and shading improvements through increased tree cover of particular benefit				
Greater resilience to the changing climate	Generational differences, with higher mental health risks for young people, due to concerns for the future	Disproportionate and higher risks of impacts from the changing climate for people with health conditions regarding higher temperatures, flood risk etc  Decarbonisation of travel/ transport must take different access needs into account			Air quality, cooling and shading improvements through increased tree cover of particular benefit	Language and cultural barriers to community engagement in carbon reduction	Focus on rational and scientific basis ignores that many faiths have tenets relating to being responsible custodians of the earth	Comfortable temperature (e.g. for workplaces) varies broadly on gender lines	
Sustainable water management	For older people and children Increased risk of isolation/ crisis in case of flood safety considerations from floodwater drowning and disease risks and awareness of temporary flood retention areas	Increased risk of isolation/ crisis in case of flood safety considerations from floodwater drowning and disease risks and awareness of temporary flood retention areas  Additional challenges for wetland accessibility			Increased risk of isolation/ crisis in case of flood safety considerations from floodwater drowning and disease risks and awareness of temporary flood retention areas  Additional challenges for wetland accessibility	Awareness that proportion of the population who can swim varies across race and cultural groups re water safety  Safety considerations from floodwater drowning and disease risks and awareness of temporary flood retention areas			
	Inclusion in water-based recreation/tourism								

	Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual orientation
Improved health and wellbeing for all	Opportunities for all ages in green space: volunteering, play, sport, exercise, enjoy, relax, rest	Dimensions of access: mobility, energy/stamina, visual, auditory, cognitive, sensory Distance to green space a higher impact if harder to travel	Do transgender, gender fluid and non binary people feel safe and welcome in our green spaces? How does GI support higher mental health/ wellbeing needs of this group?		Are green spaces welcoming to pregnant and new mothers? Breastfeeding friendly benches?	Barriers to accessing green space? Sense of safety? Cultural conflict (eg dogs) What don't we know?	Awareness that for some faith groups dogs can be a barrier for use of green spaces so to consider dog free provision within green spaces. Need awareness of green space considerations which support prayer and reflection	Do women feel safe in our green spaces? How can this be improved?	Do LGBTQ+ people feel safe and welcome in our green spaces?
Sustainable places	Inclusion in planning framework – new green spaces should be all-age & access ready by design to meet changing and diverse needs of communities	Design, management and communications material re green spaces needs to be welcoming and to support all users feeling safe and to 'see myself here'		Design, management and communications material re green spaces needs to be welcoming and to support all users feeling safe and to 'see myself here'		Design, management and communications material re green spaces needs to be welcoming and to support all users feeling safe and to 'see myself here'	Design, management and communications material re green spaces needs to be welcoming and to support all users feeling safe and to 'see myself here'. Need for dog free areas and awareness of design considerations which support prayer and reflection	Design, management and communications material re green spaces needs to be welcoming and to support all users feeling safe and to 'see myself here'	Design, management and communications material re green spaces needs to be welcoming and to support all users feeling safe and to 'see myself here'



	Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual orientation
Valued healthy landscapes		Access to heritage sites – alternative engagement where not possible Whose heritage?				Language barriers to engagement Whose heritage?	Sites of religious historical interest Whose heritage?	Whose heritage?	Whose heritage?
Sustainable and local food production	Age diversity in allotment users – enable skill sharing and plot support	Accessibility of allotments and community gardens – don't assume is impossible, find out how it could be possible	Do transgender, gender fluid and non binary people feel safe and welcome in our allotment and community garden spaces?			Inclusion in community growing. Supporting growing of more diverse crops where possible to reduce food miles for all	Importance of food and shared meals in many faiths	Do women feel safe in our allotment and community garden spaces?	Do LGBTQ+ people feel safe and welcome in our allotment and community garden spaces?
A green and resilient economy	Car-dependent infrastructure excludes the young and the old. Improve BOTH local AND public transport connectivity to green spaces	Include access throughout, not afterthought				Are we welcoming to diverse tourism? What is our reputation beyond the local area?			
Stronger working together	Access to technology for older residents (unintentional exclusion from process) Do people of all ages feel safe and welcome to participate?	Methods of engagement – how do expectations of physical presence in crowded spaces operate as barriers to inclusion	Local stakeholders Do transgender, gender fluid and non binary people feel safe and welcome to participate?	How do we engage with married people? Care not to treat as a single unit even if present as such.	Do pregnant and breast feeding mothers feel safe and welcome to participate?	Language barriers to engagement. Cultural considerations Do people of all races and cultures feel safe and welcome to participate?	Places of worship as community stakeholders Do people of all faiths feel safe and welcome to participate?	Do people of all genders feel safe and welcome to participate	Do LGBTQ+ people feel safe and welcome to participate?
Representation in publicity and materials – is work underway to raise awareness and reduce unconscious bias									
Does the demographics of engagement/consultation match local demographics? Who is missing? Who doesn't feel welcome? Who is over-represented? Solutions?									

### 3.4 Socio-economic inequalities

In addition to the protected characteristics, socio-economic factors were also considered in terms of differences in experience and outcomes regarding access to and engagement in green spaces:

Category			
Income (e.g. in receipt of council benefits)	Yes	No	Unknown
Employment (e.g. unemployed for 1 or more years)	Yes	No	Unknown
Education (e.g. NEET, no qualifications, higher level qualifications)	Yes	No	Unknown
Living environment (e.g. housing quality – problems with condensation, damp or mould, during cold winter weather can you keep comfortably warm in your home)	Yes	No	Unknown

Category	Income	Employment	Education	Living Environment
Protect and restore nature	Consideration in public engagement for those who are prohibited from participation by living in rented accommodation or without resources to participate – what are the barriers to inclusion and access to nature and how can they be overcome?			
Greater resilience to climate change	Lower carbon lifestyles need to be available to all – lifetime costs may be lower but still out of reach if initial cost is unmanageable	Need for new workforce skills and training to both protect workers and optimise contribution to climate change adaptation and resilience.	No	Unknown
Sustainable water management	Flood risk areas should be compared to areas of greatest local deprivation to determine if there are cumulative or increased impacts			
Health and wellbeing for all	Green infrastructure role is particularly important in low income health & wellbeing improvement as it is usually free at the point of engagement		Optimise outdoor learning, practical skills and training opportunities Everyone can appreciate nature.	Local green spaces key for people without private or shared gardens and to reduce inequalities Air quality management areas are in Priority Neighbourhoods with highest deprivation



Category	Income	Employment	Education	Living Environment
Create and maintain sustainable places	Ensure sufficient investment in green space for new developments which are not aimed at luxury market			
Create and maintain valued healthy landscape	Awareness of rural poverty and deprivation in how we value local landscapes and interact with communities to protect and improve them			
Support sustainable and local food production	Making sure local food networks are not only available to the affluent (e.g. farmers markets in middle class neighbourhoods) Do any SGC farmers throw away crop though lack of buyer? How could this produce be brought into the local network of homeless and low income food needs?		Resources and support at all educational levels – written, audio, visual, learning by doing  Fresh produce needs cooking skills – link with training in cooking and seasonal sourcing (links with wellbeing also)	Access to growing space near home if do not have space at home
Build a resilient economy	Consider local impacts of green recreation and tourism and where possible that the benefits are felt locally		Opportunities for skills development and formally recognised training	
Working together	How do we know if we are reaching the socio-economically marginalised in our consultations and engagement? Who can we work with to ensure their voices are heard and they have opportunities to be involved? Awareness that marginalised communities can feel antagonistic towards the Council but more willing to work with local organisations			



### 3.5 Initial engagement findings summary

The impacts and considerations so far identified, indicate that several different approaches are needed. Some areas for action firstly require awareness to be raised, so changes identified can be included in ‘business as usual’ work of the council and our partners. There are also areas for action where we do not yet know enough to identify what may be needed, and others where further commitment and funding will be required to make substantial impacts. There is a need for innovative approaches, particularly around physical access, where Green Infrastructure objectives to improve management for nature and access may be at odds. Assessment of cost and benefit considerations and ensuring value for money also inform decision making.

As with any strategic work, there is the risk of ‘unconscious bias’ and in presuming universal, shared lived experience and meeting an ‘average’ or presumed equality/diversity need which doesn’t truly exist. There will need to be further engagement to explore what we do not currently know and going forward a commitment to diverse and continued engagement on individual implementation projects as they progress. It is not possible to set out a detailed action plan which will meet all needs at this stage. Our focus is to use this initial EqlA as a starting point, to co-identify continued engagement mechanisms and process to underpin our work. Key information, actions and considerations for each overarching objective are set out in section 4 below.

## 4. Actions to be taken as a result of this EqlA

### Key areas for action across our outcomes

For each of the Greener Places Strategy outcomes, we have identified the following key areas for action arising from the EqlA:

- **Raising awareness is required and must be integrated into business as usual to:**
  - ensure diverse inclusion and representation in consultation and public engagement relating to both protected characteristics and socio-economic factors.
  - ensure access to communication materials in multiple languages and using a mix of written, audio-visual, pictorial and interactive resources to include people across a full range of racial, cognitive and educational diversity.
- **Research and engagement is needed to identify:**
  - who is not currently included in engagement and determine routes to better targeted contact.



- who is disproportionately represented in engagement and how prioritising their needs may disadvantage other currently silent groups.
- what kinds of representation in publicity and materials feels like inclusion, and what feels tokenistic.
- **Wider change**, where significant work is required to address wider changes regarding awareness raising, information and guidance, engagement, planning and asset management considerations to meet and integrate equalities considerations into 'business as usual' more effectively.
- **Funding** is needed to meet some areas for action identified.
- **Balancing priorities** may be needed, particularly where nature recovery and equalities objectives may be difficult to align.

### Protected and restored nature

#### Awareness is needed

- of the role of green infrastructure in Air Quality Management Areas, contributing additional air quality improvements and therefore potential benefits to all, particularly young children, elderly, disabled and pregnant mothers.
- of barriers to community participation that arise where most households are low income and living in relatively insecure rented accommodation which disproportionately includes people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people, LGBTQ+ communities and single women.
- regarding unconscious bias for council staff and community groups to enable everyone to continue to understand changes in awareness and action that we can all make so that everyone feels welcome to participate and get involved in local work and action for nature.

#### Research and engagement

- barriers to engagement and inclusion in neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation and how they can be overcome.

#### Balancing priorities

- balancing management for nature and biodiversity with access considerations in public open spaces
- green infrastructure networks and corridors provide and improve connectivity routes for people and nature with management considerations which need to be balanced carefully.



### **Funding**

- to optimise accessibility improvements particularly of sites managed primarily for nature such as board walks in wetland habitat areas
- unconscious bias training for staff and community groups.

### **Greater resilience to the changing climate**

#### **Awareness is needed**

- that the impacts of climate change will be greatest on those who already experience inequality such as disabled people and people living in socio-economic deprivation
- that many faiths have tenets relating to being responsible custodians of the earth which can inspire engagement within communities where appropriate
- to overcome financial barriers to reducing carbon footprint and impact on nature for low income households – the lifetime cost may be less but the initial cost is prohibitive without support
- of the health benefits of green and blue infrastructure for cooling, shading and air quality
- to raise public awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of using local green spaces on our doorsteps for recreation, walking and cycling
- to raise awareness of opportunities for food growing and the health and cost benefits of local grown in season food.

#### **Research and engagement**

- to gather further evidence regarding projected impacts and to identify solutions to inform the design, management and role of green infrastructure.

#### **Balancing priorities**

- to take differing needs into account when optimising local green space provision as part of work to decarbonise transport and localise neighbourhoods.

### **Sustainable water management**

#### **Awareness is needed**

- to ensure sufficient safety, signage and access measures are in place for flood retention areas which are often dry and accessible. Flood water in these areas could have disproportionate impact on people with physical or sensory disabilities without forewarning of changes to conditions when wet.





### Research and engagement

- to assess local flood risk information alongside indices of multiple deprivation data and numbers of elderly and/or disabled people who could experience increased impacts in a flooding event. How could these impacts be mitigated?

### Funding

- wetland habitats which present additional access and safety challenges, can be managed to balance priorities for nature and access with investment.

## Improved health and wellbeing for all

### Awareness is needed

- to integrate diverse needs into landscape and public open space planning, design and management so that everyone in our communities feels welcome and 'can see myself here'
- that distance to local accessible green space is a significant barrier for many people, and that requirements for 'accessible green space' are different across the needs of people with protected characteristics
- that green infrastructure plays a particularly significant role in improving health and wellbeing for low income households, particularly households with no or limited access to a private or shared outdoor space, as it is free at the point of engagement
- regarding unconscious bias for all staff, services and volunteers to enable everyone to continue to understand changes in awareness and action that we can all make so that everyone feels welcome and can benefit from green spaces.

### Wider change

- is needed to expand the concept of accessibility beyond physical access needs (e.g. wheelchairs/level access) to include stamina/fatigue, visual, auditory, cognitive, sensory processing, cultural and considerations for access for all protected characteristic groups.

### Research

- to understand the experience and perceptions of safety and welcome in our Green Spaces by women (including breastfeeding mothers) and LGBTQ+ residents
- to understand racial barriers to using Green Spaces. Are there cultural conflicts (e.g. relating to dogs) which can be addressed with better spatial management.

### Funding

- for training and awareness raising for staff and community groups.



## Sustainable places

### Awareness is needed

- of the importance of maintaining and improving the green infrastructure the council is responsible for so it is more accessible and welcoming for everyone.
- learning from COVID-19 that people do not always want to stay local and change of scenery is good for wellbeing. Therefore car-free/sustainable connectivity between neighbourhoods and green spaces using walking, cycling and public transport routes is as important as having provision near where you live.
- to continue to update our planning policy and guidance aligned with latest statutory and best practice standards so that new housing developments include green spaces which are inclusive, all-age and access-ready by design to meet the changing and diverse needs of communities.

### Research and engagement

- to understand what currently marginalised groups want from green spaces that could be improved or is not currently considered?
- to understand how we can further optimise the multiple benefits of green infrastructure management and design to improve access and health outcomes for everyone in our communities
- to calculate the natural capital value, return on investment and value for money of access improvements to contribute to improved health, wellbeing and participation outcomes.

### Funding

- for investment in access improvements for public open spaces which showcase good practice to inspire wider investment.

### Balancing priorities

- access considerations with ecological, heritage and landscape considerations.

## Create and maintain valued healthy landscape

### Awareness is needed

- of rural poverty and deprivation in how we interact with and value local landscapes to improve the lived experience of the communities as well as the landscapes
- of the challenges of access to services for people in rural areas, particularly people with protected characteristics or facing economic challenges, whereby the quality of local green space and other services is particularly important
- of the opportunities for green jobs and skills linked to care for and management of our heritage and landscapes including heritage land management skills which deliver benefits for nature.



### Research and engagement

- on additional dynamics of heritage and cultural value – whose heritage are we missing? What aspects of heritage are not included (e.g. colonial impacts of industrial history)? What aspects of landscape value from diverse communities are not known?

### Wider change

- to improve engagement at heritage and landscape interest sites in multiple languages and formats, such as use of personal mobile technology to interact.

### Funding

- for high quality alternative engagement where physical access to heritage sites is not feasible.

### Balancing priorities

- public rights of way are a key feature of our landscape and improvements to accessibility are made where possible, however this can be a challenge due to a range of land use, land ownership, heritage and other issues such as preventing unauthorised use of motorbikes, mountain bikes or horse riding
- where green spaces include religious heritage sites, sensitivity is required to balance needs of conserving heritage with religious use.

### Sustainable and local food production

#### Awareness is needed

- of the importance of food and shared meals in many faiths and how this can interact positively with sustainable local food production
- that food growing is deeply embedded in many cultures and there is a rich opportunity for cultural exchange and learning across our allotment and community food growing networks
- of the knowledge being lost as experienced allotment and home-growers become elderly or life circumstances change due to health or disability. How can we support knowledge sharing and mentoring/buddying between experienced and new allotment holders as well as supporting continuity of well-managed growing spaces as gardeners age? How can we also help allotment holders to continue to enjoy food producing with support and the opportunity to pass on knowledge and experience?
- that existing dynamics of local food networks and local produce tend to be concentrated in affluent areas – how can wider engagement be supported?
- of the cooking skills gap which can be a barrier to using more local seasonal produce, including home and community grown food.



- of diverse needs in presentation of resources to encourage behaviour change – language, audio-visual, learning by doing
- of the importance of local food production and supply resilience particularly for people on low incomes in our response to climate change and nature crisis.

### Research and engagement

- to understand if the historic 1950s-based approach to provision via allotments is still fit for purpose and appropriate to 21st century needs.
- is needed on perceptions of safety and welcome in our community food growing spaces by women, BAME and LGBTQ+ residents
- is needed to understand barriers to community growing
- to determine if local farmers have surplus produce which could be used locally – if so, how can this be prioritised for low income households/projects?
- to understand and share information regarding methods and models of food growing which are accessible, achievable and affordable?

### Wider change

- to explore new accessible growing options in allotment and community growing spaces. Resources and potential partners include:
  - [Disabilities and Allotments](#) | [South West Counties Allotment Association](#)
  - [Carry on Gardening](#) | [Thrive garden charity resources on gardening with a disability](#)
- to understand food needs of diverse communities and how they could be met more effectively locally.



## A green and resilient economy

### Awareness is needed

- that car dependence is not a choice for some households and for many rural communities, and there is a need to optimise provision of local green infrastructure for walking, wheeling and cycling alongside high-quality public and community transport to support car-free connectivity
- of the role of green infrastructure and greening our neighbourhoods and highstreets to make them more attractive and welcoming which boosts health and wellbeing and benefits the economy by attracting visitors and increasing the likelihood of people staying local as long term residents and spending their recreation time in the area
- of the need and opportunity for training and skills which will support new jobs and green economy objectives.

### Research and engagement

- to understand how to make the most of our green infrastructure to improve South Gloucestershire as a tourist destination for people from equality and diversity groups. What are the strengths, barriers and opportunities? How can we improve?

### Funding

- for formally recognised training and skills development to address educational and employment inequalities and support the workforce changes needed to underpin a greener economy.

### Balancing priorities

- of addressing rural poverty and deprivation alongside development of green recreation and tourism such that the benefits are felt locally and contribute to reducing inequalities.

## Stronger working together

### Awareness is needed

- of barriers to access arising from different routes of engagement.
  - Where technology is the primary route of engagement, this particularly impacts older residents, disabled residents and those without home internet devices. This may also benefit those experiencing barriers for access related to disability or language, because assistive methods and translation can be used.
  - Paper material can be simpler to access but is limited in colour, font and language by being a static resource.
  - Expectations of physical presence, particularly in crowded spaces can be barriers to inclusion and perpetuate the risk of the missing voices from discussions.



- of the role of networks including faith groups as key community stakeholders and routes of access to local communities.

#### **Wider change**

- to develop a wider network of diverse community stakeholders through which to engage with and monitor the GI strategy throughout its duration

#### **Balancing priorities**

- of responding to the loudest voices whilst upholding the silent and marginalised

## **5. Objectives and next steps**

### **5.1 Our key actions**

Listening to the views of people with protected characteristics, representative groups and organisations has highlighted key barriers and potential solutions to improve accessibility, inclusion and participation regarding local green spaces.

**As highlighted in this Equalities Impact Assessment, key areas for action include:**

- KA1 - Raising awareness
- KA2 - Research and engagement
- KA3 - Service improvement
- KA4 - Investment
- KA5 - Balancing priorities

**Specific actions we will take include:**

1. Develop a working partnership with South Gloucestershire Equalities Voice to understand barriers and further action that can be taken to reduce inequalities. Annual reporting of progress. (KA2, KA3, KA5)
2. Respond to the findings of the council budget survey and GI Strategy engagement of the need to strengthen work and engagement with local mosques and networks for people of Muslim faith; the South Gloucestershire Race Equality Network, LGBTQ+ people and the South Gloucestershire Disability Equality Network, to understand barriers, solutions and take action to improve access and satisfaction with parks and green spaces. Annual reporting of progress. (KA2, KA3, KA5)
3. Review our cemeteries service offer with faith groups. By end 2022. (KA2, KA3)
4. Match Park improvements to local health needs in our asset management plans and bids for funding. from 2021. (KA2, KA3, KA4, KA5)



5. Prepare an online map of council owned parks and open spaces with information including facilities and access considerations. 2022. (KA1)
6. Update council webpages for parks and open spaces as part of the council digital transformation programme. By 2023. (KA1)
7. Deliver Equality and Diversity training for community group volunteers each year as part of the annual training programme. (KA1, KA2, KA4)
8. Investigate opportunities for dog free areas and/or dog exercise areas within specific parks and open spaces. By end 2023. (KA1, KA2, KA3, KA5)
9. Investigate opportunities to install Changing Places facilities for parks and open spaces. By end 2022 (KA4)

**We will also continue to:**

10. work with the South Gloucestershire Disability Action Group to undertake disability access audits for parks and open spaces to identify priorities for action and funding bids. (KA2, KA4, KA5)
11. review our parks and open spaces management plans regarding equality and diversity considerations to identify priorities and take action to improve inclusion and accessibility. Annual reporting on progress. (KA2, KA3, KA4, KA5)
12. update our planning policy and guidance aligned with latest statutory and best practice standards so that new housing developments include parks and green spaces which are inclusive, all-age and access-ready by design to meet the changing and diverse needs of communities. Local Plan timetable. (KA3, KA4, KA5)
13. seek ways to improve our response to hate crime, and our work to proactively take action to make green spaces safer and welcoming for everyone.
14. seek ways to improve our response to reported issues where accessibility is compromised on public open spaces
15. improve community safety through working with Avon and Somerset Police on environmental design
16. adopt a proactive approach to preparation of site management plans and inspections, so that equality and diversity considerations are informed by continued engagement with stakeholders





Progress on these commitments will be reviewed with stakeholders, who will continue to shape, co-develop and co-deliver our work together.

Within the Green Space Asset Management Plan section 6 of the Greener Places Strategy, more detailed plans for the management of specific green space groups are included.

## 5.2 Next steps

Listening to the views of people with protected characteristics, representative groups and organisations has highlighted key barriers and enabled co-production of solutions to improve the accessibility of local green spaces through the Greener Places Strategy Action Plan.

Equality Impact Assessment is a continuous process, and it is essential that these conversations remain at the heart of a regular and continued review of progress, to inform future action in our work together to increase the role of green infrastructure to reduce inequality.

As a result of the information identified and areas of action set out in this EqlA, whilst significant work required, it is anticipated that by implementing this EqlA that the impact for people from the nine protected characteristic groups regarding access to, safety and engagement in public open spaces and green infrastructure will be improved.

**The Green Infrastructure Strategy Board will review this EQIA with stakeholders every 6 months or in response to changes in requirements or needs from stakeholders, national legislation or council policy.**

## 5.3 Evidence informing this EqlA

The sources of information that have been used to inform this EqlA.

### Engagement includes:

- Viewpoint survey, June 2020 (included specific green space questions) – 871 responses
- Greener Places public engagement survey, Autumn 2020 – 510 responses
- Green Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Report 2021
- South Gloucestershire Council Budget Consultation Report 2021
- South Gloucestershire Equality Forum
- South Gloucestershire Race Equality Network and Black2Nature



- SGC staff BME network
- [South Gloucestershire Disability Equality Network](#)
- Sensory Impairment stakeholders group
- [The Diversity Trust](#)
- Town and Parish Council Forum
- The South Gloucestershire Friends Forum
- South Gloucestershire Young Ambassadors
- Engagement meetings with other stakeholders and representatives from equality and diversity groups and the voluntary sector
- StreetCare customer satisfaction survey (bi-annual)

**Evidence includes:**

- [Improving access to greenspace: 2020 review \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Public Health England \(PHE\) 2014 Local action on health inequalities: Improving access to green spaces](#)
- [BMJ July 2020 Covid 19 highlighting inequalities in access to high quality green spaces](#)
- [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC Report 2019](#)
- [One in eight British households has no garden – Office for National Statistics 2020 \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)
- [ID-2019-Full-South-Glos-Report.pdf](#)
- [Air Quality Management Areas](#)
- [English Indices of Deprivation 2019 South Gloucestershire Priority Neighbourhood Analysis \(southglos.gov.uk\)](#)
- [South Gloucestershire Equality Plan 2019-2022](#)
- [South Gloucestershire Disability Equality Network](#)
- [The Diversity Trust](#)



- [The English National Study of Flooding and Health – Summary of the evidence generated to date \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [South Gloucestershire Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy \(JHWS\) 2017 – 2021](#)
- [PHE promoting healthy weight in young children and families 2018](#)
- [South Gloucestershire Early Help Strategy 2019-2024](#)
- [South Gloucestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#)
- [South Gloucestershire Adult Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy 2017 – 2021](#)





