



## Equality Impact Assessment

### What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) ("the Act"), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give 'due regard' to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid 'due regard' to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

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Title:	Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve Future Proposals
Related EIAs:	EIA Number: 321

EIA for Savings Programme:	Yes EIA - CCBS - THNNR
Service affected	Countryside Service, Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve.

Description of the service/policy/project/project phase

Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, which is managed by Hampshire County Council Countryside Service, is a coastal nature reserve located to the southwest of Fareham covering 369 acres of the Lower Meon valley. The site includes over 14km of water ways including main ditches, the River Meon and Titchfield Canal. Titchfield Haven is located two miles south of Titchfield, a village in the western part of Fareham. Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve has two quite separate offers to the visitor experience. The National Nature Reserve predominantly appeals to specialist bird watchers, with access to a network of boardwalks and bird hides. This accounts for around 15,000 visits a year. There is an adjoining Visitor Centre (Haven House) with café and shop, which attracts around 85,000 visits a year. Admission to the Visitor Centre is free, and visitors wishing to enter the nature reserve pay a daily admission charge, or annual membership fee. There are currently 651 active members (Oct 2022). Located behind the Visitor Centre is Haven Cottage (recently Grade II listed in Jan 2022) owned by the Hampshire County Council which has not been used for public access or service delivery and is currently vacant. There is also a work yard with timber framed buildings, sheds and workshop facilities for ground staff to store and maintain machinery and equipment.

New/changed service/policy/project

There is a growing need for investment to maintain the Nature Reserve and its habitats to meet statutory standards now and in the future. The recommended option which most closely supports the strategic objectives, is to manage the reserve with minimal visitor facilities. In order to improve and invest in the Nature Reserve, two assets within the site are recommended for disposal; Haven Cottage, a residential property which has been vacant for 10 years, and Haven House (which houses a café, shop and reception area). The closure of Haven House will impact on the estimated 85,000 annual users of the visitor centre/café as they will no longer benefit from the facilities currently provided. Research shows that café amenities remain in the local area, and could cater for these community needs in a similar way. The 15,000 annual users of the Nature Reserve can expect a positive impact as the reinvestment plan includes making

improvements to the reserve and other features such as boardwalks and bird hides. The proposed changes would therefore predominantly impact on visitors who use the facilities currently provided by Haven House (visitor centre) whilst the Nature Reserve can continue to be enjoyed by visitors now and in the future. The proposed change will impact a number of staff, whose roles will no longer be required to manage and operate both the visitor centre and catering facilities currently on offer at Titchfield Haven. There are currently 16 employees (11.15FTE) aligned to the current staffing establishment at THNNR, and 15 individuals engaged via casual working arrangements (as at Oct 2022). The service would retain the ranger roles and reduce its administrative/visitor support provision.

Engagement

The impact of this proposed change on users of Titchfield Haven NNR and its facilities has been assessed following a public engagement survey which was open from 27 September 2022 to 1 November 2022. A total of 2997 survey responses were received.

Anyone with an interest in THNNR was invited to help shape the future of the site. This opportunity was promoted via a range of channels including, but not limited to: press releases, social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), direct communications to key stakeholders, annual members and volunteers. Visitors were also reminded by posters, business cards (including QR codes) and paper copy surveys on site. Respondents were asked to share how they used and experienced THNNR; to comment on proposed plans to improve the sustainability of the site and to share their ideas about how the County Council could invest in THNNR for the future.

The comments, suggestions and feedback received from the survey responses have been summarised and included in the Executive Member for Countryside, Culture & Communities Decision Day report for consideration on 8 December 2022.

Formal consultation with staff and Trade Unions commenced on 27 September 2022. The proposal included potential redundancies and staff and Trade Unions were advised that any meetings to provide formal notice of redundancies would take place after the Executive Member Decision Day. Staff provided feedback on the proposals directly to their management team and HR.

The staff consultation closed on 27 October 2022, however in response to feedback received during this consultation period, some elements of the proposal were amended and the consultation period was extended until 14 November 2022 for staff affected by these changes. Trade Unions were also advised of the amendment and extension to consultation.

In order to assess the impact of protected characteristics on staff, equality and diversity data was extracted and provided by HR, and used in this report.

## Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

### Age

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Negative - Low

Rationale	<p>The results of the survey show that (of the 2898 responses to this question) the highest proportion (29%) were in the 65 to 74 age category, with the next largest categories being 55 to 64 (25%) and 45-54 (16%). 67% of respondents were aged 55 or above.</p> <p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Age'. 38% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with respondents commenting that the Nature Reserve and its facilities provide people of all ages with a hub to explore nature. It performs an important role for the elderly, who may have limited mobility, suffer with health problems, and provides a space to socialise and connect with nature. There were particular concerns about the impact on health and wellbeing and social isolation caused by the loss of a community focal point. Comments also focused on the impact on families and children (27% had children living in their household - aged 18 or below) the loss of a family friendly facility and opportunities to educate/embed a love of nature.</p> <p>Acknowledging the comments and feedback, it is assessed that there is a negative (low) impact on age as a result of the proposed changes.</p> <p>For staff, the age group that would be impacted most by these changes are 55-64 year olds (47%), followed by 45-54 year olds (27%). The number of staff falling into the 55-64 age bracket is higher than the CCBS and wider HCC average; which are 23% and 24% respectively.</p>
Mitigation	<p>HCC agrees that nature is important for people's mental health and wellbeing. Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service inspires people to connect with and enjoy the countryside, and have a life-long active and emotional connection with the outdoors, a love of nature, and a desire to protect and support its recovery. By investing in the reserve, this ensures that the reserve can continue to be accessed and enjoyed by visitors of all ages now</p>

and in the future. The nature reserve is accessible for those with mobility issues and has benches around the site where people can rest.

There are also free green spaces within the wider area for people to enjoy along with a café and pub less than a ten minute walk/short drive from the site as well as a larger recreation area and café at Alver Valley Country Park run by Gosport Borough Council on the other side of Titchfield. Titchfield Community Centre is available to all and the centre is used by many community groups covering a range of recreational, educational and social pursuits.

As part of the investment into the reserve, we could look at including ecological and environmental information boards and interpretation around the site for visitors and continue with bird handouts for children.

For staff, HR policies and procedures will be followed to ensure fair treatment to all in scope of the proposed changes. Where necessary, redeployment support will be available to all those confirmed at risk of compulsory redundancy to help individuals maintain employment within HCC.

## Disability

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were asked 'Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?'. Of the 2780 respondents to this question, 14% said yes, a little and 5% said yes, a lot.</p> <p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Disability'. 27% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with comments including that the visitor centre is accessible which is valued either by themselves and/or family members they visit with. Comments described the lack of other accessible facilities in the area, and the importance of the café in providing a place for rest that enables people with mobility issues to enjoy the reserve. Health and wellbeing of people with mental health needs was also a focus, with respondents highlighting the Haven as a peaceful sanctuary.</p> <p>Currently, the yard area has provision for three accessible vehicle parking spaces, and the proposed changes would reduce this provision to one accessible parking space.</p>

Acknowledging the comments and feedback, it is assessed that there is a negative (low) impact on disability as a result of the proposed changes.

For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.

#### Mitigation

HCC agrees that nature is important for people's mental health and wellbeing. Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service inspires people to connect with and enjoy the countryside, and have a life-long active and emotional connection with the outdoors, a love of nature, and a desire to protect and support its recovery. By investing in the reserve, this ensures that the reserve can continue to be accessed and enjoyed by visitors of all ages now and in the future. The nature reserve is accessible for those with mobility issues and has benches around the site where people can rest.

The proposed changes would include improved access to the nature reserve to continue to support the health and wellbeing of visitors and would include a more accessible entrance path, an accessible toilet and an accessible parking space. Whilst the accessible parking provision would reduce, this is proportionate to the expected reduction in visitor numbers. Accessible parking spaces that visitors currently make use of in the car park opposite the site can continue to be used.

### Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral



Mitigation	
Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNMR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Gender reassignment'. 1% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with two individuals making specific reference to the need for the space to support people going through gender reassignment. It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p>

## Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Pregnancy and/or maternity'. 3% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, however there was no clear mention of how this group would be impacted from the comments. It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>The future proposals for facilities on site would include an accessible toilet including baby changing facilities, and the reinvestment plan includes making improvements to the reserve including board walks and bird hides, which would impact positively on this group.</p> <p>For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p>
Mitigation	

## Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	

The results of the survey show that individuals' ethnic group is predominantly White (90%) with 9% preferring not to say, and 1% from a mixed or multiple ethnic group.

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Race'. 2% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with respondents commenting that THNNR benefits a cross section of the community and is a welcoming environment for those from diverse backgrounds who may otherwise feel excluded, and that the café welcomes and increases the diversity of users of the nature reserve.

For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.

Mitigation

## Religion or Belief

Impact on public

Neutral

Impact on staff

Neutral

Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNMR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Religion or belief'. 2% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, however there was no clear mention of how this group would be impacted from the comments. It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>The data provided for the staff in scope are that two people have indicated they are Christian, one has stated 'no religion or belief' and the rest have no data provided (July 2022). Therefore, there is limited evidence to suggest that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes. HR policies and procedures will be followed to ensure fair treatment to all in scope of the proposed changes.</p>
Mitigation	

## Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Negative - Low

Rationale

The results of the survey show that respondents were mostly female (61%) with 4% preferring not to say.

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Sex'. 1% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, however there was no clear mention of how this group would be impacted from the comments.

Currently there are separate male and female toilets on site. The proposed toilet would be gender neutral and accessible for use by all reserve visitors.

It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.

87% of staff working at Titchfield Haven are female, whereas 13% are male. These figures are proportionate to the data across CCBS (78% female) and HCC (76% female). 12 out of the 13 staff at Titchfield who work part time are female (92%) which is higher than the trend across CCBS (71%) and HCC (45%).

The majority of the roles in scope of the review are within the administration and catering teams, roles which could be perceived to be 'typical' roles occupied by women.

Mitigation

HR policies and procedures will be followed to ensure fair treatment to all in scope of the proposed changes. Where necessary, redeployment support will be available to all those confirmed at risk of compulsory redundancy to help individuals maintain employment within HCC.

## Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Sexual orientation'. 1% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with two individuals making specific reference to the need for the space to support people who need time to consider their sexual orientation.</p> <p>It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposal.</p>
Mitigation	

## Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNMR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Marriage and/or civil partnership'. 3% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with respondents commenting that Haven House could be used as a potential wedding venue in order to increase revenue.</p> <p>It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposal.</p>
Mitigation	

## Poverty

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Negative - Low

## Rationale

The results of the survey show that (of the 2517 responses to this question) 42% of survey respondents preferred not to indicate their total household income. For those who did, 10% indicated the £20,001 to £30,000 category, 8% indicated the £30,001 to £40,000 category, and 7% indicated the £40,001 to £50,000 category. Overall, 26% of respondents indicated their household income was £40,000 or below, and 29% indicated their household was over £40,001 or over.

Using Mosaic profiling for the area, we know that the average household income for Titchfield Haven members is higher than the average for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton, reflecting a relative affluence in the core customer segments.

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNRR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Poverty'. 10% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with comments including that Titchfield Haven provides an affordable option for people on low incomes. Overall, comments encompassed a range of factors relating to universal access to amenities, including community facilities, affordable ways to support wellbeing, access to nature, and activities for children and people with disabilities and health issues. Also emphasis on loss of jobs and revenue to support the Reserve. Consideration is also given to the current economic climate and increased cost of living.

The café at Haven House is a subsidised facility run by HCC available to all, as opposed to other more expensive facilities in the immediate area.

Using evidence from the household income information and the comments by individuals who felt there would be an impact on poverty, it has been assessed that this protected characteristic would not be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.

The grade profile of staff working at Titchfield Haven is skewed towards the lower grades. 73% of staff are grades A to C and 27% are grades D to E. This grade profile reflects the nature of the roles required (administration, front-of-house, catering, facilities management, care of nature reserve). Whilst it is recognised that lower pay does not necessarily equate to poverty, workforce changes at lower grades may have a disproportionate impact in relation to this characteristic. Consideration is also given to the current economic climate and increased cost of living.



Mitigation	<p>Following feedback from the staff consultation, it has been recognised that it would be beneficial to retain more visitor focused aspect to staff roles. As a result, it has been recommended that two Visitor Services Assistants are retained as part of the future structure. Therefore, opportunities have been provided for future employment and for some current staff to retain employment in HCC.</p> <p>HR policies and procedures will be followed to ensure fair treatment to all in scope of the proposed changes. Where possible, management will make staff aware of alternative employment opportunities elsewhere in the service to help them maintain employment. Where necessary, redeployment support will be available to all those confirmed at risk of compulsory redundancy to help individuals maintain employment within HCC.</p>
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## Rurality

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral

<p>Rationale</p>	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Rurality'. 21% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with comments stating that the area is a rural community which provides job opportunities, and that the closure could have a detrimental effect on the local community, citing the loss of a central hub and amenity that brings local people together and contributes to a sense of community. They also flagged concerns about the impact of commercial / property development in the area.</p> <p>63% of survey respondents told us that they usually travel to Titchfield Haven using private motorised transport (e.g., car, motorbike) and 33% said they used active transport (e.g., cycling, walking, microscooter, mobility vehicle). There are no anticipated impacts to current travel arrangements as a result of the proposed changes.</p> <p>Rural communities are ageing faster than urban, and taking into consideration that the majority of Titchfield users fall into the 55 or above age categories (67%), isolation could be a factor due to the proposal to remove an existing rural service such as the café. For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>There are other venues in the local area that can provide a similar provision. Titchfield Community Centre hosts regular group activities and affordable rooms for hire for events, as does Titchfield Parish Rooms. There is also a pub and café less than a ten minute walk/short drive from THNNR.</p>

Geographical Impact: All Hampshire

## Equality Statement

### Additional information:

The geographical impact has been assessed as all Hampshire, as we know from membership data that people who visit Titchfield Haven live across the county and also live outside of Hampshire. Postcode data taken from the survey indicated that 38% of respondents live in Fareham, and concerns raised particularly flagged the detriment to the local community which implies that proposed changes would impact on people living in this particular area within the local authority most significantly.

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