

Summary Fair Treatment Assessment (FTA)

Area for Assessment:		
Name of service or function etc	Allotments Service	
Which Service does this affect?	Transport, Highways and Environment – Allotments	
Is this a new, existing or revised function?	Existing	
Summary of findings:		
Main conclusions on the likely impact of the proposed savings on different equality groups (protected characteristics):		
<p>Maintaining an allotment has many identified personal benefits including a positive affect on mental health and increased physical activity. This may be especially important for those who may be at risk of social exclusion. They also provide an opportunity for the local community to grow their own food and flowers, and provide informal opportunities for plot holders to contribute to the sustainability agenda. Allotment sites provide informal opportunities for social interaction and for members of the community to come together and learn from each other, as well as providing important intergenerational activities that are fun and educational. Plot holders are able to use their plots in way that maximises their enjoyment of the allotment in a way that meets their personal needs – including growing fruit and vegetables less available in shops and using enhancements such as sensory areas and raised planters (of a height suitable for them).</p> <p>Usage of allotments has varied over time, partly dependent on economic climate and time. Lack of provision of toilets has been identified as a concern, we will continue to support any funding bids, and many tenants have identified their own alternatives. The main barriers identified anecdotally to taking on an allotment relate to availability, time, health and mobility. As demand has soared over recent years a number of initiatives have been introduced to enable more people to try allotmenting, addressing the barriers identified – such as increased site inspection to ensure cultivation, smaller plot sizes being offered, introducing raised planters and additional sites being established. Data shows that more women and working age people are now taking on plots. There may be additional physical barriers for disabled people, regular maintenance and opportunities to report concerns helps to mitigate against this. We are able to accommodate specific needs where possible, although following this assessment, we will be more pro-active in asking for people to make us aware of requests for a ¼ size plot and any needs relating to disabilities, as well as if disability is a reason for refusing a plot. This assessment has highlighted a need for more monitoring, of existing users and potential applicants so that we have a full understanding of our customer base.</p> <p>Although cost may be a barrier for some people, concessions are offered to those aged over 60, registered carers and the unemployed. Security measures have been improved across our sites.</p> <p>The allotment management process and waiting list policy (which will be reviewed following this assessment) are published to ensure fairness and transparency. Various methods are available for plot holders and potential plot holders to contact us with any concerns, requests for information or to be added to waiting lists.</p>		
Actions		
Actions identified to address negative impacts identified or to better promote equality, human rights, cohesive and sustainable communities and safeguarding issues		
Action	Outcome	Timescale
Review application form to include equalities monitoring questions	Increased knowledge about demand and usage of allotments	April 2011
Review tenants questionnaire to	Increased knowledge about usage of	October 2011

include equalities monitoring questions	allotments	
Promote availability of discounts for those aged over 60, unemployed or full-time carers on the website. Review discount criteria.	Increased take-up of discounts by those entitled to them	October 2011
Application form to include option for people to specify preferred plot size, and any needs relating to a disability	Increased consideration of applicants' requirements	May 2011
Review waiting list policy	Ensure disabled people aren't moved to the bottom of the waiting list if offered plot unsuitable due to disability Consideration given to prioritising those without gardens/in rented accommodation	May 2011
Site representatives to be encouraged to inform plot holders with visual impairments of any temporary notices	Plot holders with visual impairments made aware of temporary notices	Allotment Working Party meetings
Consider the feasibility of toilet provision, including demand, costs and potential funding streams	To inform local strategy	December 2011
Adopt local standard for allotments as proposed in Green Spaces Strategy, and implement work plan to ensure all current and future plots meet that standard	Consistency across the borough, improved standard of sites	March 2012
Develop site management guidance for sites managed by allotment associations to ensure these are being managed properly and fairly/ integrate equality requirements in lease agreements between SMBC and associations	Our public sector equality duties are being met, including when being managed by allotment associations.	December 2011
Include dignity and respect statement in tenancy agreements	All plot holders are treated with dignity and respect	May 2012
Ensure findings of assessment incorporated in development of Allotment Strategy, including priorities for new sites	Strategy reflects the needs of different members of the community	March 2012
Date Assessment Signed Off	16 March 2011	