

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Name of activity:	Update on Beach Access for All	Date Completed:	19 th October 2023		
Directorate / Division responsible for activity:	Environment and Climate Change	Lead Officer:	Karl McLaughlin		
Existing Activity	N	New / Proposed Activity	Y	Changing / Updated Activity	N

What are the aims / main purposes of the activity?

To introduce measures to improve beach access to the lower foreshore following a review of existing ramps. The report sets out a methodology for reviewing the ramps by considering the entire access chain taken into account elements such as; public transport, accessible parking, accessible toilets, accessible café's and whether modifications could be made to enhance the offering.

What are the main actions and processes involved?

The evaluation of the existing infrastructure found that two ramps are the most suitable for accessing the lower foreshore for most users. The primary action is to clear the ramps for the summer period to facilitate improved beach access.

The secondary action is to set up a stakeholder engagement group.

Who is intended to benefit & who are the main stakeholders?

The intended outcomes will aid all members of the public in accessing the beach. However, the target audience include members of the public which either cannot, or struggle to, navigate the shingle beach.

Key stakeholders

Internal: Coastal Engineers and Flood Prevention, Property and Estates and Legal.

External: Bognor Regis Town Council, West Sussex County Council, Local Businesses, Chichester University, Scope, VAAC.

Have you already consulted on / researched the activity?

In early 2023 Coastal Partners were commissioned to carry out included a review of the work of the Bognor Regis Beach Access Working Party to date including the results of the 'call for evidence' survey carried out in June 2022. Analysis of the survey results identified where additional more specific information concerning users would be beneficial.

The work also referred to equalities compliance with a review of the latest guidance for access to the countryside and open space sites with the aim of providing practical support for improving accessibility. The report presented a options review which included a range of proposals from the large to the small scale. It assessed these and other possible solutions against a R (red) A (amber) G (green) rating for capital and operational & maintenance cost.

Following the recommendations made in the report further stakeholder engagement has begun including discussions with users who have had difficulty in accessing the beach in the past. The project is seeking to undertake further stakeholder engagement investigating both local and national stakeholders.

Officers have also taken the opportunity to contact neighbouring authorities who are also seeking to improve beach access. The council has drawn on their experiences to ensure that fit-for-purpose improvements are delivered in Arun.

Impact on people with a protected characteristic (What is the potential impact of the activity? Are the impacts high, medium or low?)

Protected characteristics / groups	Is there an impact (Yes / No)	If Yes, what is it and identify whether it is positive or negative
Age (older / younger people, children)	Yes	<p>Positive - The project is seeking to improve access for all adopting a 'Least Restrictive Access' approach. This should make the beach easier to navigate for both older and younger people. It will also assist those caring for people in these groups.</p> <p>Between the 2011 and 2021 census the average (median) age of Arun residents increased by two years from 47 to 49 years of age. This is a higher than the Southeast whole figure which is 41 and for England which is 40 years. The number of people aged 50 to 64 years rose by around 15.2%, whilst the number of residents between 35 and 49 years fell by 5.8%.</p>
Disability (people with physical / sensory impairment or mental disability)	Yes	<p>Positive - The project is seeking to improve access for all adopting a 'Least Restrictive Access' approach. This should make the beach easier to navigate for those with disabilities although further engagement will need to be completed to ensure it captures</p>

		<p>as many people as possible.</p> <p>The latest national guidance, which was referred to in the Feb 2023 Environment Committee report is being applied to the beach access as work progresses. By way of a reminder the following sets out how this is applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design standards help us see the levels of accessibility that are acceptable for all, including those 'people with health conditions or impairments'. • The character and topography of the natural environment exists without reference to the needs of visitors. • We can use the least restrictive access approach so that where levels of access are not as good as the standard, they are as good as they can be for as many people as possible. • Most people accept that not all areas of the natural environment can be made fully accessible.
Gender reassignment (the process of transitioning from one gender to another.)	No	There is no known impact on members of the public due to gender reassignment.
Marriage & civil partnership (Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Civil partnerships are legally recognized for same-sex couples)	No	There is no known impact on members of the public on people due to marriage or civil partnership.
Pregnancy & maternity (Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant & maternity refers to the period after the birth)	Yes	Positive – The project is seeking to improve beach access for All adopting a 'Least Restrictive Access' approach. This should make the beach easier to navigate for all.
Race (ethnicity, colour, nationality or national origins & including gypsies, travellers, refugees & asylum seekers)	No	There is no known impact on members of the public due to race.
Religion & belief (religious faith)	No	There are no known impact members of the public due to religion or belief.

or other group with a recognised belief system)		
Sex (male / female)	No	There is no known impact on members of the public due to sex.
Sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual)	No	There is no known impact on members of the public due to sexual orientation.
Whilst Socio economic disadvantage that people may face is not a protected characteristic; the potential impact on this group should be also considered	No	The scope of the project is limited to a defined study area. However, the learning and outcomes from the project will be able to be applied to the rest of the district. It is envisaged that improvements will be made across the rest of the district, where possible.

What evidence has been used to assess the likely impacts?

There are no documents specifically relating to the design of assets to aid beach access Coastal Partners signposted Arun District Council to natural environment guidance and best practice documents. The information and general approach included within these documents is being encompassed within every aspect of this piece of work and will likely form part of the discussion at the stakeholder engagement groups.

The documents include:

- Countryside for All, Good Practice Guide – Paths for All (Fieldfare Trust) 2005
- Easy Access to Historic Landscapes – Historic England 2015
- By All Reasonable Means – Sensory Trust / Natural England 2022
- Inclusive Mobility - Department For Transport 2023

The project has also looked at how it can incorporate elements of the Building Regulations as the parameters set by them has been considered best practice where no specific regulations exist.

Decision following initial assessment			
Continue with existing or introduce new / planned activity	Y	Amend activity based on identified actions	N

Action Plan			
Impact identified	Action required	Lead Officer	Deadline

Monitoring & Review	
Date of last review or Impact Assessment:	19/10/2023
Date of next 12 month review:	19/10/2024
Date of next 3 year Impact Assessment (from the date of this EIA):	19/10/2026

Date EIA completed:	19 September 2023
Signed by Person Completing:	Karl McLaughlin