

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Title of EIA		Free to play facilities improvement scheme (War Memorial Park)
EIA Author	Name	Tim Wetherill
	Position	Parks and Open Spaces Manager
	Date of completion	02/02/2026
Director	Name	Mark Adams
	Position	Director of City Services
Cabinet Member	Name	Cllr K Caan
	Portfolio	Sports Physical Activities and Parks

PLEASE REFER TO [EIA GUIDANCE](#) FOR ADVICE ON COMPLETING THIS FORM

SECTION 1 – Context & Background

1.1 Please tick one of the following options:

This EIA is being carried out on:

- ☐ New policy / strategy
☐ New service
☐ Review of policy / strategy
☒ Review of service
☐ Commissioning
☐ Other project (*please give details*)

1.2 In summary, what is the background to this EIA?

War Memorial Park is one of Coventry's most cherished community spaces, welcoming over one million visitors each year and providing vital opportunities for recreation, wellbeing, and social connection. It's free to play facilities have long offered a safe, inclusive environment for children and families, ensuring access to play regardless of income.

However, a historic lack of investment has left these facilities increasingly unavailable and at risk of permanent closure. The park's popular water feature closed permanently in 2023, and the ageing playground is nearing the end of its operational life, with closure likely within the next five years. Without action, War Memorial Park risks losing a vital community asset that supports health, inclusion, and wellbeing for residents of all ages.

To safeguard this essential resource, the Council proposes to invest £450k in a new, fully accessible MultiUse Games Area (MUGA) alongside a modern children's play area. These upgrades will ensure continued free access for all, delivering high quality spaces that promote physical activity, support healthy lifestyles, and strengthen community connections.

By investing now, we can protect a cornerstone of Coventry's wellbeing offer—keeping play free, accessible, and welcoming for generations to come.

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1.3 List organisations and people who are involved in this area of work

Coventry Residents
CCC

1.4 Who will be responsible for implementing the findings of this EIA?

Mark Adams - Director of City Services

SECTION 2 – Consideration of Impact

Refer to guidance note for more detailed advice on completing this section.

In order to ensure that we do not discriminate in the way our activities are designed, developed and delivered, we must look at our duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between two persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

To find out more about local data, please visit the below links:

[Facts about Coventry](#)

[Census 2021](#)

[Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#)

2.1 Baseline data and information to include data on Protected Characteristics, Health Inequalities and Digital Inclusion

Please include a summary of data analysis below, using both your own service level management information and also drawing comparisons with local data where necessary. Where possible, compare your data to local data using: Facts about Coventry; Census 2021; JSNA.

Over 1 million people visit the War Memorial Park annually. Data relating to users is not currently held however evidence suggests that older people, young people, people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, disabled people, and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities are significantly less likely to visit parks or protected landscapes. Barriers include cost, transport, lack of confidence, and not feeling a sense of belonging. These can be both practical (e.g., transport, toilet facilities) and psychological (e.g., fear for safety or not seeing people “like them” in nature spaces).

2.2 Please highlight which Marmot Principles does this EIA Support.

1. **Give every child the best start in life**
2. Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
3. **Ensure a healthy standard of living for all**
4. Create fair employment and good work for all
5. **Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities**
6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention

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7. Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes
8. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity

SECTION 3 – Protected Groups

3.1 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show what the potential impact is for each of the protected groups.

- Positive impact (P),
- Negative impact (N)
- Both positive and negative impacts (PN)
- No impact (NI)

Protected Characteristic	Impact type P, N, PN, NI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
Age 0-18	P	<p>Children and young people will benefit from safe, free to access spaces for play, sport and informal physical activity, supporting physical health, mental wellbeing and social development. Multisport MUGAs encourage regular engagement and positive use of public space.</p> <p>Green spaces with accessible equipment support light to moderate physical activity, which can aid physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.</p>
Age 19-64	P	<p>Green spaces with accessible equipment support light to moderate physical activity, which can aid physical and mental wellbeing</p> <p>Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.</p>
Age 65+	P	<p>Older people benefit from accessible equipment and nearby facilities that promote low impact exercise, helping to maintain mobility, independence and mental wellbeing. Proximity to homes reduces travel barriers.</p> <p>Green spaces with accessible equipment support light to moderate physical activity, which can aid physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free</p>

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		access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.
Disability	P	<p>The provision of modern, fully accessible MUGAs and outdoor gym equipment supports disabled people by reducing physical and environmental barriers to participation. An open and inclusive design promotes independence, builds confidence, and supports social inclusion. Improved access to physical activity also contributes to better physical and mental health outcomes for disabled residents, who are disproportionately affected by health inequalities.</p> <p>Green spaces with accessible equipment support light to moderate physical activity, which can aid physical and mental wellbeing</p> <p>Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.</p>
Gender reassignment	P	<p>Open, inclusive public spaces designed for community use help reduce exclusion and can foster safer environments.</p> <p>Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	NI	
Pregnancy and maternity	P	<p>Pregnant people and new parents benefit from flexible, informal, and free facilities that can be accessed around caring responsibilities. Local green spaces with accessible equipment support light to moderate physical activity, which can aid physical and mental wellbeing during and after pregnancy.</p> <p>Reduced financial barriers are particularly beneficial during periods of reduced income.</p> <p>Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.</p>
Race (Including: colour, nationality, citizenship ethnic or national origins)	P	<p>Free, local park based facilities help reduce barriers related to cost, transport and cultural accessibility.</p> <p>Multi-sport provision (e.g. cricket alongside football and basketball) supports culturally diverse patterns of participation and inclusion.</p>

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		Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.
Religion and belief	NI	
Sex	P	<p>Research shows that traditional MUGAs and competitive sports areas are often dominated by boys, which can discourage use by girls unless spaces also include informal, social features. Evidence from UK and international studies demonstrates that girls, including teenagers, are more likely to use parks that provide swings and other non-competitive equipment, alongside seating and layouts that support socialising and improve feelings of safety and belonging. <i>(Sources: Make Space for Girls; LSE Cities, 2022–2024; Duncombe et al., 2025; ArchDaily, 2022)</i></p> <p>Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.</p>
Sexual orientation	P	<p>Open, inclusive public spaces designed for community use help reduce exclusion and can foster safer environments for LGBTQ+ residents.</p> <p>Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.</p>

3.2 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show any impact on the following characteristics which are not specified as protected characteristics but should be considered.

Group	Impact type P, N, PN, NI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
Care Experienced	P	Green spaces with accessible equipment support light to moderate physical activity, which can aid physical and mental wellbeing
Armed Forces	P	Green spaces with accessible equipment support light to moderate physical activity, which can aid physical and mental wellbeing
Social Economic Groups (low income, poverty, education, unemployment, community safety and social support)		The proposed investment will have a positive impact on people from low socioeconomic backgrounds by protecting and improving free access to high quality play and sports facilities. A new MUGA and children's play area will allow residents to take part in physical activity without the need to pay entry fees, purchase memberships.

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		<p>Access to free outdoor play supports both physical and mental health. This is especially important for children from low income households, who are more likely to experience health inequalities and lower activity levels. Retaining and improving free facilities helps reduce these inequalities and supports healthier lifestyles.</p> <p>Good transport links to War Memorial Park mean it is accessible by bus, walking, and cycling from many parts of the city. Retaining free access is particularly important for residents who may already face travel costs.</p>
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SECTION 4 –Next steps

Planned Action	Owner	Timescale

4.2 How will you monitor and evaluate the effect of this work?

The impact of this proposal will be monitored through feedback received during the consultation process and after implementation, if the proposal is adopted.

SECTION 5 – Impact on Council Staff

5.1 Will this area of work potentially have an impact on Council staff? Yes/No

If yes

Nature of impact and any mitigation required

N/a

SECTION 6 – Completion Statement

As the appropriate Head of Service for this area, I confirm that the potential equality impact is as follows:

- No impact has been identified for one or more protected groups ☐
- Positive impact has been identified for one or more protected groups ☒
- Negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups ☐
- Both positive and negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups ☐
- The potential impact of this proposal on protected groups is not known ☐

Before you submit this form - please save your progress and forward the email you receive with any questions to equality@coventry.gov.uk. The team will review your Equality Impact Assessment and provide you with feedback.

Only click submit if the Equality Impact Assessment has been reviewed and you have been advised to by the equality team.

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7.0 Approval

Name of Head of Service: Sarah Elliott	Date approved by Head of Service: 02/02/2026
Name of Director: Mark Adams	Date sent to Director: 02/02/2026