

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

| Title of EIA | | Community growing sites |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| EIA Author | Name | Rhian Palmer |
| | Position | Strategic Lead – Green Futures |
| | Date of completion | 30/01/2026 |
| Director | Name | Andy Williams |
| | Position | Director of Regeneration and Economy |
| Cabinet Member | Name | Cllr J O'Boyle |
| | Portfolio | Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change |

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?

This proposal focuses on developing a network of community growing sites across the city, enabling residents to help create, maintain and enjoy shared green spaces. The scheme encourages individuals and community groups to take ownership of their local environment by transforming underused or neglected Council owned land into vibrant areas that benefit the wider community.

These growing sites will provide new opportunities for residents to use disused or underutilised land for food growing and wildlife friendly spaces, delivering a range of significant benefits. These include:

- improved health and wellbeing, through increased physical activity, time spent outdoors and greater access to fresh, locally grown fruit and vegetables.
- enhanced social cohesion, by fostering stronger relationships within and between communities.
- positive environmental impacts, such as expanding local green space, improving biodiversity and supporting climate resilience by increasing local food security.
- The sites will also offer valuable educational and skills building opportunities, enabling residents to learn about sustainable growing practices, horticulture, composting and caring for wildlife.

Nationally, there is growing momentum behind the campaign for government to adopt a 'Right to Grow' across the UK. Coventry is already taking proactive steps in this direction through *Coventry Grows*, a project launched in 2024 by the city's Climate Change Board to pilot several community growing sites in some of Coventry's most green deprived neighbourhoods. The project has been supported through funding from E.ON as part of the city's Strategic Energy Partnership.

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To date, the pilot has successfully established its first site in Stoke Heath, with further sites being developed in Hillfields, Foleshill and Tile Hill. A total of 58 community volunteers have already taken part.

The initiative has been led by the Council, with support from Grapevine to help form new community growing groups, and Garden Organic to provide training—actively encouraging gardening novices to get involved. Pilot sites have benefitted from funding for setup costs, tools, equipment and seeds, helping to create accessible and inclusive spaces that residents can shape and enjoy.

Moving forwards, the Council will introduce a new policy to enable residents and communities to access Council-owned land for community growing, and produce guidance and provide support to communities to help establish sites across the city.

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

CCC services- Climate Change and Sustainability, Property, Legal, Finance, Ecology, Parks and Open Spaces, Highways, Streetpride, Finance, Communications & Engagement, Public Health
 Grapevine
 Garden Organic
 EON
 Coventry Residents

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

Rhian Palmer – Strategic Lead – Green Futures

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.

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Coventry has been found to be one of the least green cities in England. An ENDS Green Cities Index 2023 survey out of 55 primary urban areas in England, ranked Coventry as the 54th greenest. There are big disparities in green spaces across Coventry, with some wards being in some of the highest areas of green deprivation in the country. As well as encouraging local food growing and pride in place, increasing the number of plots of land managed by communities for community food growing or general gardening will improve the quality and quantity of green spaces across Coventry.

The Coventry Grows Pilot sites are situated in some of the lowest wards in Coventry for access to green space, as set out in the Green Space Strategy 2019-2024. The strategy highlights the inequalities in access to green space across Coventry, reporting that residents in St. Michael's, Foleshill and Lower Stoke have some of the lowest amounts of green space per population in Coventry, at 0.86, 0.50 and 0.94 hectares per 1000 residents respectively. This data contrasts greatly with provision from Earlsdon and Henley Wards, with 5.63 and 6.02 hectares of greenspace per 1000 residents.

The strategy also shows that within the West Midlands; Coventry has the second lowest number of hectares per 1000 population at only 3.05 hectares in 2018. In comparison, Stoke on Trent City Council measured double this at 6.60 hectares per 100 population in 2007.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Coventry reinforces this picture. It sets out that despite Coventry's 430 green spaces and many Green Flag awarded Parks, the city trails behind the regional average for green space provision by population, and highlights variation across the city. Whilst many areas of the city benefit from a good supply of green spaces, some residents have no access to nearby green spaces or outdoor sports facilities. Residents in Henley and Wainbody enjoy access to over 100 hectares of green space contrasting with Upper Stoke, Lower Stoke, Radford, and Foleshill who have access to levels below the average of 62.3 hectares.

The JSNA place based profile for Hillfields also highlights the issue of food security within the ward, with only 47% of residents stating their households always have enough food. Community growing sites provide the opportunity to supplement local food systems, as well as encouraging the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables.

The Coventry Grows pilot project has seen diverse groups of local residents forming new community groups to manage community growing sites, with the majority of participants being gardening novices. From the data gathered so far, the pilot site in Hillfields has had 40 people involved in community meetings and growing activities, with more than 175 hours of time volunteered by the community. Stoke Heath Community Garden has had 18 participants to date, with more than 130 hours of time volunteered from the local community.

The new policy will unlock barriers and support residents, particularly from areas of green deprivation, to transform underused land into new accessible green spaces, enhancing the quantity and quality of Coventry's green spaces. Promoting the scheme locally in these areas of green deprivation and exploring discounts for applicants from these Wards will further help to encourage uptake in these neighbourhoods and equitably increase provision of green spaces in Coventry.

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

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5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention
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 | The development of community growing sites is likely to have a positive impact across different age groups. Children and young people benefit from opportunities for outdoor learning, hands-on environmental education and intergenerational activities that support personal development. |
| Age 19-64 | P | Older residents may particularly benefit from increased physical activity, reduced isolation and participation in low impact gardening activities that support mobility, wellbeing and community connection. The inclusive nature of the sites enables engagement across all age groups. |
| Age 65+ | P | Older residents may particularly benefit from increased physical activity, reduced isolation and participation in low impact gardening activities that support mobility, wellbeing and community connection. The inclusive nature of the sites enables engagement across all age groups. |
| Disability | P | The proposal has the potential for positive impact on disabled residents, particularly those with mental health conditions, learning disabilities or mobility impairments. Time spent in green spaces is linked to improved wellbeing and reduced anxiety, and accessible gardening activities can support physical and cognitive development. Ensuring that sites are designed inclusively—with accessible pathways, raised beds, seating and clear communication—will further reduce barriers to participation. Engagement with disabled residents and disability groups will help ensure equitable access. |

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| Gender reassignment | P | Transgender and nonbinary residents may benefit from inclusive, community led spaces designed to foster belonging and social cohesion. |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership | NI | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | NI | |
| Race (Including: colour, nationality, citizenship ethnic or national origins) | P | <p>Residents from minority ethnic groups, including those for whom English is not a first language, may benefit from accessible, inclusive community spaces that support social integration and shared activity.</p> <p>Community growing is often culturally significant and may encourage participation from groups who traditionally engage in food growing.</p> <p>Engagement with community organisations will help ensure communication is accessible and culturally sensitive. As the pilot sites are located in some of the city's most green deprived neighbourhoods, the proposal may help reduce environmental inequalities that disproportionately affect some ethnic minority groups.</p> |
| Religion and belief | NI | |
| Sex | P | <p>Both men and women are expected to benefit from opportunities for physical activity, skill development and community interaction.</p> <p>Evidence shows that women may be more likely to experience social isolation and may particularly benefit from increased opportunities for safe, supported community involvement.</p> |
| Sexual orientation | P | LGBTQ+ residents may benefit from inclusive, community led spaces that help build confidence, belonging and positive social connections. |

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 | This group may benefit from inclusive, community led spaces that help build confidence, belonging and positive social connections. |
| Armed Forces | P | This group may benefit from inclusive, community led spaces that help build confidence, belonging and positive social connections. |

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| Social Economic Groups (low income, poverty, education, unemployment, community safety and social support) | P | This proposal is likely to have significant positive impact on residents experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage. Pilot sites are located in some of Coventry's most green deprived areas, providing free access to green spaces, locally grown food, skill building opportunities and strengthened community networks. These benefits support health, wellbeing and community resilience and can help reduce inequalities related to green access, food security and social isolation. |
|--|---|---|

SECTION 4 –Next steps

| Planned Action | Owner | Timescale |
|--|-------|-----------|
| Promoting the scheme locally in these areas of green deprivation. The ReachDeck software on the Coventry City Council webpages will allow residents to translate any information shared on the Right to Grow policy, helping to ensure the scheme is accessible to residents where English isn't their first language. | | |
| Explore applying discounts for applications from groups or individuals in areas of green deprivation- presented clearly by red and orange areas on the map of access to green space in Coventry. | | |

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

Through the comments, compliment and complaints procedure and take up of sites

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

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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 yet 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.

7.0 Approval

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| Name of Head of Service: Rhian Palmer | Date approved by Head of Service: 29/01/26 |
| Name of Director: Andy Williams | Date sent to Director: 29/01/26 |