

Equality Impact Assessment



Name of project/proposal

Royal Victoria Country Park - Chapel Improvements (HLF funded)

Contact name

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Department

Culture, Communities and Business Services

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Purpose for project/proposal

Our project will see the Grade II* Listed Chapel conserved and established within an enhanced landscape setting as a focal point for interpretation and activities that connect visitors with the hidden heritage of the site, helping them to understand that they are walking in the footsteps of the patients, doctors and nurses of the once vast and imposing Royal Victoria Military Hospital. The combination of urgent conservation works, access improvements, interpretation and activities will bridge the gap between today and the site's past to create a new, sustainable future for a significant and much-loved local landmark.

Consultation

Has a consultation been carried out?

Yes

We have consulted with English Heritage, Eastleigh Borough Council's Conservation Officer of whom have indicated their support for the planned approach to the works to the Chapel and landscape. We have also liaised with the local Fire Officer to ensure the works will enable access to the Chapel and tower to the base of the staircase for all visitors. We have also consulted with and Hampshire Wildlife Trust and had bat surveys carried out in the roof and dome of the chapel.

Customers/visitors to the park are also consulted/informed through social media - e.g. blogs, tweets and webpage info for any comments or thoughts on the plans and/or any questions they may have.

In developing the Activity Plan and Business Plan we have consulted widely with visitors, existing volunteers, families, teachers, potential partners, comparator organisations and other local organisations that use or work with the park. Consultation has provided us with insights into existing barriers and challenges and identified strengths and opportunities to build upon, as well as looking at customer/visitor need. Examples of this are as access to the chapel, uneven ground steps to the entrance, pathway of shingle (making it difficult for mobility aids to be used effectively). Customers with mobility issues cannot currently access any other floor than the ground floor. The lift does not work, and access to the second floor and tower floor is via steps and/or a spiral staircase. The accessible toilets were dated. Interpretation within the chapel and the "old" exhibition is dated and in a style that means it is not accessible to all groups. The build programme and activity plan introduce a range of elements to overcome the examples previously given.

The interpretation, building and activity plans draw on visitor feedback, consultation with key stakeholders, observation of visitor behaviour and learning drawn from visits to other sites. Examples of this are:

- Access to the tower base and other floors via an accessible lift that meets regulations for use in a fire situation, emergency, enabling visitors with mobility issues to get to parts of the chapel tower where they would not previously be able to.
- Flat entrance to the chapel, rather than ramped or steps.
- Interpretation around the park that where fonts and images will be shared with accessibility group representation for comment and consideration
- iPads with 360 degree images of the view from the top of the chapel for the customers that cannot access the final ascent to the chapel
- Parent and child changing room installed
- Interactive elements of the exhibition will be at wheelchair height
- Exhibition text fonts etc. will be of a style that meets the accessibility requirements.

We have worked closely with the Friends of RVCP throughout the development phase. The Friends are represented on the Project Board and members of the group have been involved with the development of the activity and interpretation proposals. The Heritage group are heavily involved with the content for exhibitions. We have recruited a Volunteer Coordinator, who is actively recruiting a variety of volunteers from all communities - as well as a Learning and Participation officer, where a range of activities crossing all sectors of the public are being developed. Examples:

- working with minority groups such as Indian Sikhs to look at a Sikh Memorial to World War 1 Indian soldiers treated at the former hospital
- pew cushion knitting/embroidery - focusing on local pensioner clubs, recording oral history of older visitors that worked at the hospital

- working with local schools and their students to help in the oral history projects and to improve learning linked to key stages of their curriculum.

Statutory considerations

Impact

Age	Low
Disability	Low
Sexual orientation	None
Race	None
Religion and belief	None
Gender reassignment	None
Sex	None
Marriage and civil partnership	None
Pregnancy and maternity	None

Other policy considerations

Poverty	None
Rurality	None
Other factors	None
If other please describe	na

Geographical impact

Have you identified any medium or high impact?*

All Hampshire

Yes

No

Why do you consider that your project/proposal will have low or no impact?

Age and Disability

The chapel restoration will enable visitors to access upper floors (to the base of the chapel stairs) via an accessible lift, previously not achievable due to a spiral staircase and small lift.

An addition to the exterior of the café will have a toilets meeting DDA needs

The Access Officer has been briefed and consultation with access groups is taking place in August. No initial issues have been identified by the Access Officer

Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment

There is no impact on equality issues within the above categories in relation to the Chapel conservation, or external interpretation in the park, as the work is primarily repair, conservation and the installation of exhibition items

Sex, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy

There is no impact on equality issues within the above categories in relation to the Chapel conservation, or external interpretation in the park, as the work is primarily repair, conservation and the installation of exhibition items

Poverty, Rurality, Other

There is no impact on equality issues within the above categories in relation to the Chapel conservation, or external interpretation in the park, as the work is primarily repair, conservation and the installation of exhibition items.

Poverty is impacted in a minor positive way through the museum exhibition being free to enter.

Final decision date

Final decision date due

Decision to be made by

Nothing selected