

Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) (“the Act”), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give ‘due regard’ to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid ‘due regard’ to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
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Title:	Countryside Service Charges 2026
Related EIAs:	None
EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Countryside Service - Access Team, Countryside Sites, Lepe Country Park (LCP), Queen Elizabeth Country Park (QECP), River Hamble Country Park (RHCP), Royal Victoria Country Park (RVCP), Staunton Country Park (SCP), Manor Farm, Staunton Farm.
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	The Countryside Service manages: Five country parks with daily parking charges and annual parking passes as well as the following available at some parks: BBQ or picnic area hire, field hire, room hire, caravanning, dog fields, angling permits, horse riding permits, horse box parking and birthday party packages. Two farm attractions (Manor Farm and Staunton Farm) with admission charges, annual memberships, birthday party packages and venue hire. The Royal Victoria Chapel with admission charges to the tower and venue hire for weddings and events. Countryside sites with rural car parking. Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve with admission charges and annual memberships. Charges for processing applications, orders, notices etc. regarding Rights of Way and Commons and

	Village Greens. The Countryside Service has a Pricing, Charges and Fees Principles document to define the approach to creating a pricing and charging structure in line with Hampshire County Council strategic aims, and more specifically with the aims of Universal Services. In line with the principles document the Service reviews its charges on an annual basis. This EIA covers the changes coming into effect from 1 February 2026.
New/changed service/policy/project	Changes are in line with the department Charging and Pricing Principles, to review charges on an annual basis and adjust based on available data, to provide an affordable pricing structure whilst remaining competitive within the market place. The proposed charges are either in-line with or lower than the benchmarking against prices for similar services. The impact on customers is that some charges will be increased as outlined below. The proposals are to: Access Team charges - increase by 2.6%. Rural car parking charges - maintain at their current level. Country Park daily parking charges - maintain at their current level. Country Park Annual Parking Passes - increase by up to 8% at LCP, QECP, RHCP and RVCP (3,977 sold in 2024/25), by up to 25% at SCP (202 sold in 2024-25) and by up to 4% for the multi-park pass (315 sold in 2024-25). Farm attraction day admissions - increase by up to 10%. Farm attraction annual memberships - 1) align so the same membership types are sold at both attractions and increase by up to 17%; 2) introduce a new membership charging structure (resulting in an increase of up to 27% for family memberships), when the new memberships and ticketing system is implemented. 3,120 memberships were sold across the farm attractions in 2024/25. Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve day admissions and memberships - maintain at their current level. Royal Victoria Chapel Tower day admission - maintain at their current level. Weddings and venue hire (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 6%. Room hire (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 9%. Field hire (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 6%. BBQ and picnic area hire (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 10%. Horse box charges at QECP - maintain at their current level. Birthday parties (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 7%. Angling annual membership at SCP - increase charges by up to 8% (maximum 25 permits available). Horse riding annual permit at RHCP - increase charges by 5%. Caravan rallies at RVCP - increase charges by 13%.

Engagement
The changes to prices have been developed with the teams who manage the sites affected. Prices are reviewed annually and teams are given the opportunity to input into any changes proposed based on the available data.
A benchmarking exercise was conducted to assess how the prices of Hampshire County Council (HCC) visitor attractions and country parks compare. It was discovered that for admission to the HCC farm attractions, the market is charging higher prices. For example day admission to other farm attractions is 4-42% higher for adults and 20-58% higher for children. For parking charges at HCC country parks, prices sit in the mid-high range compared to the market, this has contributed towards the decision to maintain the current daily parking charges.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	Daily admission prices to HCC farm attractions for children, adults and seniors will increase.
Mitigation	<p>Prices have been benchmarked against similar attractions and remain at the lower end of the market to maintain affordability. The price of day admission to other farm attractions was found to be 4-42% higher for adults, 20-58% higher for children and 12-50% higher for seniors.</p> <p>Family day admission tickets are available for the farms, which represent a saving of 6% compared to buying individual tickets.</p> <p>Children under 3 will continue to have free admission (under 5s at the Royal Victoria Chapel).</p>

Disability

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The cost of Blue Badge annual parking passes will increase by £5-10.
Mitigation	The discounted Blue Badge annual parking passes still represent a saving of 20-29% compared to the price of the standard annual parking pass.

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	None of the changes have been assessed as having an impact, either positive or negative, on the above group.
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
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Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	None of the changes have been assessed as having an impact, either positive or negative, on the above group.
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	None of the changes have been assessed as having an impact, either positive or negative, on the above group.
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	None of the changes have been assessed as having an impact, either positive or negative, on the above group.
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	None of the changes have been assessed as having an impact, either positive or negative, on the above group.
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	None of the changes have been assessed as having an impact, either positive or negative, on the above group.
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	None of the changes have been assessed as having an impact, either positive or negative, on the above group.
Mitigation	

Mitigation	
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Poverty

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Charges are increasing for:</p> <p>Access Team charges - increase by 2.6%.</p> <p>Country Park Annual Parking Passes - increase by up to 8% at LCP, QECP, RHCP and RVCP, by up to 25% at SCP and by up to 4% for the multi-park pass.</p> <p>Farm attraction day admissions - increase by up to 10%.</p> <p>Farm attraction annual memberships - increase by up to 17% under the current structure and by up to 27% under the new charging structure (to be introduced when the new memberships and ticketing system is implemented).</p> <p>Weddings and venue hire (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 6%.</p> <p>Room hire (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 9%.</p> <p>Field hire (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 6%.</p> <p>BBQ and picnic area hire (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 10%.</p> <p>Birthday parties (multiple locations) - increase charges by up to 7%.</p> <p>Angling annual membership at SCP - increase charges by up to 8%.</p> <p>Horse riding annual permit at RHCP - increase charges by 5%.</p> <p>Caravan rallies at RVCP - increase charges by 13%.</p>
Mitigation	<p>Charges have been benchmarked against similar country parks and attractions to maintain affordability. It was discovered that for admission to the HCC farm attractions, the market is charging significantly higher prices. For example day admission to other farm attractions is 4-42% higher for adults and 20-58% higher for children. Family day tickets are only offered at one other farm attraction and the price was found to be 8% higher. For parking charges at HCC country parks, prices sit in the mid-high range compared to the market. The parks can be accessed free of charge to those arriving without a vehicle.</p> <p>Consideration has been made to help keep other charges affordable for example by offering cheaper off-peak rates for BBQ hire, field and venue hire (i.e. different seasonal or weekday/weekend charges).</p>

Rurality

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	None of the changes have been assessed as having an impact, either positive or negative, on the above group.
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact:All Hampshire

Equality Statement

Additional information:

None.

Overview Statement:

A summary assessment to show that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been paid, which is undertaken when a full EIA is not needed:

EIA reference number: 01024

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