

CROWHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

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1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) places a duty on all public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between persons who have a “protected characteristic” and those who do not.
- 1.2** This report assesses the Submission Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan to ensure that Crowhurst Parish Council is satisfying its statutory duties in this regard. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a systematic analysis of a policy or policies, in order to explore the potential for an adverse impact on a particular group or community. It is a method of assessing and recording the likely differential and/or adverse impact of a policy on people from different groups. If a policy results in unfairness or discrimination then changes to eliminate or lessen the impact should be considered.

“Protected characteristics” are defined in the Act as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

This document forms part of the assessment of the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan (CNDP) to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan does not have any equalities impacts and that it conforms to the requirements of the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans.

2. Aims of the Equality Analysis

- 2.1** The purpose of the analysis is to increase participation and inclusion, to change the culture of public decision-making and to nurture a more proactive approach to the promotion of equality and fairness at the heart of public policy. The aim in conducting the analysis is the promotion of fairness and equality of opportunity and thus it is the outcomes that are of primary concern.

4. Baseline Data

- 4.1** Data for Crowhurst is available for the following protected characteristics: age, disability, race, religious belief, and sex. Data is not readily available for the following protected characteristics: gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and sexual orientation. Unless stated otherwise the data source is the 2011 Census.

4.2 In 2011 there were 891 people living in Crowhurst.

AGE	Male	Female
0-4	19	19
5-9	29	19
10-14	45	37
15-29	46	63
30-44	62	72
45-64	135	141
65+	94	110
Total	430	461

- The percentage of population in Crowhurst within the 0-4 year age range (4.2%), is slightly lower than the national average (6.2%). This could suggest that the proportion of pregnancy and maternity rates as also slightly lower than nationally, although no direct data is available.
- The percentage of over 65's in Crowhurst (22.9%) is higher than the national average (16.4%).
- Crowhurst has a similar to national average (8.4% vs 8.5%) number of residents whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot. The number whose day-to-day activities are limited a little (11.7%) is higher than national average (9.4%).
- Ethnic Origin
The profile of ethnic origin in Crowhurst in 2011 was:

British White	92.8%
Other White	3.8%
Other	3.4%
- Religious Belief

Christian	59.4%
No Religion	30.6%
Not stated	9.2%
Buddhist	0.3%
Jewish	0.2%
Other religions	0.2%

Further census data can be found in the supplementary information document "Crowhurst – A Rural Village"

5. Aims

The CNDP will provide a framework of policies and proposals for the development of the village to 2028

The Core Strategy for Rother District Council allocates 5,700 new homes to be built in the District over the plan period.

The CNDP allocates sites for up to 30 new dwellings by 2028.

5.1 Aims

The WNP contains fifteen main aims, each of which has a related set of objectives which the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to attain. The aims are:

1. To reduce the amount and speed of traffic through village
2. To enhance opportunities for walking and cycling around the village
3. To maintain and enhance access to public transport especially the train service. Facilitate parking for public transport
4. To seek ways to manage parking issues
5. To improve mobile phone coverage and broadband connectivity
6. To improve sewage and drainage
7. To improve road safety for all users
8. To support local businesses
9. Protect and enhance the rural and peaceful character of village
10. Identify areas of green space, woodland and heritage sites to be protected from future development
11. Protect and enhance biodiversity, nature and wildlife in and around village
12. Alleviate and manage risk of flooding
13. Maintain distinctive views + connections with countryside + heritage sites. Protecting boundaries to avoid coalescing with neighbouring villages
14. To promote the use of renewable energy and sustainable materials
15. Maintain low levels of air, noise + light pollution + reduce amount of litter/fly-tipping

Aims 1, 6, 8 - 15 impinge no differently upon persons with a protected characteristic than anyone else in the Neighbourhood Area; each aim seeks to achieve environmental benefits for all members of the community.

Aims 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 support policies and proposals which might affect persons with certain protected characteristics differently than they might affect the general population. In each case Aims 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 aim to create an environment which would benefit persons with protected characteristics by providing decent homes, by reducing the need for cars, shortening journeys and making village facilities more accessible to those with mobility problems.

6. The Process of Community Consultation: Hard-to-reach groups

All written communications were in English and it was not considered necessary to translate them into any other language.

Several visits were made to the local primary school and state secondary school to consult with younger age groups.

Hardcopies of the meeting minutes were delivered to those residents who requested them in paper format, rather than email.

Meeting minutes were also published in the village magazine which is delivered to about two thirds of the residents.

Requests could be made to the village LINK service for help in getting to exhibitions.

Some home visits were also made to residents unable to get to exhibitions/events.

Surveys were checked for “ease of reading” to try and ensure everyone could understand them.

7. Impact of Policies on Groups with Protected Characteristics

The CNDP aims to create benefits for everyone who lives, and works in the village. This will be achieved by developing new housing, particularly affordable housing and smaller housing, preserving social, community and leisure facilities, improving access to local services and facilities, and preserving and enhancing the quality of the environment.

Groups with the various protected characteristics will be affected in different ways by the Neighbourhood Plan and the purpose of the analysis in this section of the assessment is to identify how various groups will be affected and whether the proposals and policies in the CNDP will adversely affect disproportionately those in the groups with protected characteristics.

Without exception where policies in the Neighbourhood Plan do have an impact on groups with protected characteristics, it is a positive impact and not a negative one.

7.1 Age

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the need to provide and protect play facilities for children when new development is being considered.

Policies CF1- Community Facilities and CF2 - Open Space and

Recreation supports and enhances, where possible, the existing distributed set of community buildings and spaces to continue to facilitate as wide a range of village activities as possible. Priorities include: facilitating wider use of the Youth Club Hut.

Policy CH2- Land south of Forewood Rise a children's play area (LAP) shall be incorporated into the scheme as part of the development.

The Neighbourhood Plan also recognises the need to provide local affordable housing for young people when they leave home:

Policies CH1 and CH2 the schemes shall deliver a proportionate mix of 1, 2, 3 or 4 bedroom homes including 40% to be either 1 or 2 bedroom homes suitable as starter homes or for the elderly.

Policies CH1 and CH2 the developments shall provide 40% of the properties as affordable homes on site and these shall be secured by legal agreement which should prioritise occupation by local people.

Policy CH3- Land adjacent to the Station Car Park the development shall be laid out as a flatted development which shall consist of 1 or 2 bedroom units.

With regard to older people there are a range of housing policies which recognise and seek to meet their needs:

Policies CH1 and CH2 the schemes shall deliver a proportionate mix of 1, 2, 3 or 4 bedroom homes including 40% to be either 1 or 2 bedroom homes suitable as starter homes or for the elderly.

Policy CH3 - Land adjacent to the Station Car Park the development shall be laid out as a flatted development which shall consist of 1 or 2 bedroom units.

The Neighbourhood Plan also contains policies which seek to improve and retain key facilities and services used by older people:

Policy CF1 - Community Facilities supports new community facilities within the village boundary and exceptionally outside the village envelope where both an overriding need and local support can be demonstrated and landscape and other policy requirements are met.

7.2 Disability

The needs of persons who are disabled or who have limited mobility are recognised in:

Policy CB1 Design: new housing shall comply with the National Floor-space Standards, Built for Life standards and should accord with the

Accessible/Adaptable dwelling standards (and any relevant subsequent future standards).

Policy CB1 Design: any new housing development should have access to an area of private amenity space or where this is not practicable have access to the local footpath network.

Policy CB1 Design: parking provision should meet the relevant standards, be well designed, landscaped and be of porous construction.

Policy CC1 Economic Sustainability: development which supports home working or reduces out commuting such as live work units or ancillary development that supports home working, i.e. home offices.

Policy CC2 – Infrastructure: safe pedestrian and vehicular access and, where it is practicable, off-road pedestrian routes provided to the key parts of the village and public transport links.

Policy CC2 – Infrastructure new development should include on-site infrastructure to allow connection to high speed broadband connections where available.

7.3 Race

Non-white ethnic groups are a small proportion of the population in Crowhurst – in 2011 only 3.4% of the population was non-white.

Non-white ethnic groups can experience difficulties around discrimination (sometimes leading to hate crime), language, health and well-being, deprivation and culture.

A public realm designed with safety in mind will minimise opportunities for hate crime. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that new development follows good urban design principles and provides safe and inclusive public environments.

Policy CB1 Design - Development should be of high quality design and have regard to its site and village context to reinforce and create a sense of place.

7.4 Religious Belief

Key issues for religious groups are discrimination relating to employment, housing and the provision of services, and their portrayal in the media.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not and cannot directly address the social attitudes that are involved in this issue. However, it does seek to provide a built environment

which is open to all, with a safe public realm which all social groups can access and use equally.

7.5 Sex

The Neighbourhood Plan contains no specific policies or proposals for any particular gender. The Neighbourhood Plan has been written to provide equal opportunity to both sexes in respect of the provision of development and access to facilities.

Neither sex is disadvantaged by any of the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan; on the contrary both sexes will benefit equally from the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

7.6 Gender Reassignment

Key issues for gender re-assigned people, are personal relationships, transphobia and/or discrimination, and hate crime.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not and cannot directly address the social attitudes that are involved in this issue. However, it does seek to provide a built environment which is open to all, with a safe public realm which all social groups can access and use equally.

7.7 Pregnancy and Maternity

Key issues for women who are pregnant or who have young children are access to appropriate housing, flexible employment, and access to facilities including health, developmental play, and recreational facilities. The Neighbourhood Plan has policies which help meet all of these needs:

Policy CE1 - Landscape Character of Crowhurst does not result in the erosion or loss of the identified protected village gaps and important green spaces as shown on CNDP Map 2 and CNDP Map 3.

Policy CC2 – Infrastructure new development should include on-site infrastructure to allow connection to high speed broadband connections where available.

Policy CF1 - Community Facilities supports new community facilities within the village boundary and exceptionally outside the village envelope where both an overriding need and local support can be demonstrated and landscape and other policy requirements are met.

The Neighbourhood Plan also contains policies which aim to retain, and improve access to, key facilities and services used by young mothers and their children:

Policy CF1- Community Facilities supports new development that supports the long term viability of an existing community facility where this does not undermine its principal use.

Policy CF2- Open Space and Recreation protects and maintains existing walking routes within the village including the 1066 Country Walk and create new routes where appropriate, ensuring coherency of the footpath network is maintained. It also protects existing spaces and encourages inclusion of these within new development where appropriate.

Policy CF3- Local Green Space Protect areas of green spaces, as shown on CNDP Map 4, that are of particular importance.

Policy CH1 - Land at Station Road and Forewood Lane - A safe means of access to the site will be achieved to the relevant standards to the adopted highway which maintains access to both the farm holding and the residential development

Policy CH2- Land south of Forewood Rise - A safe means of access to Forewood Lane is provided

Policy CH1 - Land at Station Road and Forewood Lane - The development will either provide, or if not viable set aside land, for a village green/amenity space on land adjacent to Forewood Lane

7.8 Sexual Orientation

Key issues for gays and lesbians are personal relationships, discrimination, and hate crime.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not and cannot directly address the social attitudes that are involved in these issues. However, it does seek to provide a built environment which is open to all, with a safe public realm which all social groups can access and use equally.

8. Conclusion

The CNDP provides a strategy for the development of the parish, and a range of policies and proposals, which will result in positive benefits for many parts of the local community with protected characteristics: older people, young people, mothers to be and with young children, disabled people and those with limited mobility.

The CNDP does not explicitly addressing the needs of racial or religious groups, or transgender, gay or lesbian groups, or women, the Neighbourhood Plan does make equal provision for affordable housing and for a range of housing, and seeks to provide additional community and leisure facilities which will benefit these groups

equally. It also seeks to provide a safer environment, particularly a safer public realm, where people with protected characteristics will be less liable to be subject to hate crime.