

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

Please read EIA guidelines when completing this form

1. Name of Service Area/Directorate

Name of Head of Service for area being assessed: Steve Burgess, Head of Transport & Access
Directorate: Economy & Place

Individual(s) completing this assessment: Adam Houchen, Transport Services Manager

Date assessment completed: 28th September 2021

2. What is being assessed

Activity being assessed (eg. policy, procedure, document, service redesign, strategy etc.)

National bus strategy – bus service improvement plan

What is the aim, purpose and/or intended outcomes of this activity?

On 15 March 2021 the Department for Transport (DfT) published [Bus back better: National bus strategy for England \(NBS\)](#). In the accompanying press release the department stated:

“This national strategy sets out the vision and opportunity to deliver better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered”.

The NBS aims to rejuvenate local bus services, making them attractive for passengers, cheaper, easier to understand and use, faster and more reliable, and greener. It acknowledges the decades-long decline in bus patronage nationally – and points to towns and cities which have bucked the trend, increasing passenger numbers with coordinated services and investment.

The NBS places new requirements on Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) to develop Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs), with action on networks and services, fares and ticketing, passenger facilities, and on-street bus priority measures.

Name of lead for activity

Adam Houchen

Who will be affected by the development and implementation of this activity?

- Service users
- Patients
- Carers
- Visitors
- Staff
- Communities
- Other: All members of the community (existing bus users, non bus users and visitors) will be able to use bus services in Herefordshire

Is this:

- Review of an existing activity/policy
- New activity/policy

Planning to withdraw or reduce a service, activity or presence?

What information and evidence have you reviewed to help inform this assessment? (name your sources, eg. demographic information for services/staff groups affected, complaints etc.)

- A workshop was held with key representatives from business, education, disability groups, and stakeholder groups in August 2021 to discuss the priorities for improving bus services in Herefordshire
- Results of a public consultation survey, see next section.

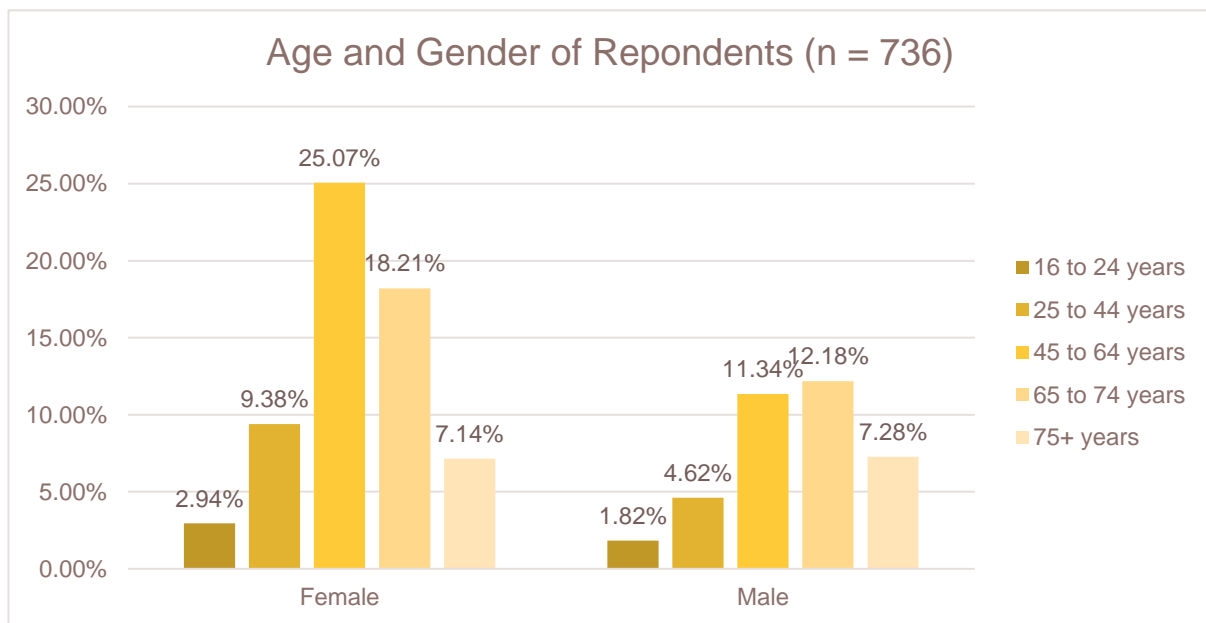
Summary of engagement or consultation undertaken (eg. who and how have you engaged with, or why do you believe this is not required)

Public consultation survey

A public survey ran throughout August 2021 to capture the views of bus users and non-bus users.

There were 753 respondents to the public consultation which ran from Friday 15th July to Sunday 16th August. Of these 96% were local residents, with the remaining respondents being visitors to the area or representatives of local groups and businesses.

More females (62%) than males (37%) responded, with the 45-64 years old category being the main age group of respondents. There was slight under representation of the under 24s (5%). See figure 1 below for a further breakdown of respondents.



Summary of relevant findings

- The areas of least satisfaction were hours of operation, facilities to cater for disabilities (although this category also received the most “don’t know” responses), and frequency of services
- Amongst both users and non-users of the bus the main barrier to using the bus as opposed to the car is that buses are unavailable when needed and that they are not frequent enough with 383 respondents selecting this reason
- 51 respondents gave feeling unsafe as a reason for prioritising car use over the bus
- 31 respondents gave difficulty using the bus due to a disability, mobility difficulty, or health issue as a reason for prioritising car use over the bus
- 37% of respondents said better facilities for catering for people with a disability would make them use the bus more often
- For both bus user and non bus user categories an increased provision of facilities for disabled people were the most poorly ranked (32-33%) in terms of priorities, however amongst disabled respondents this increased to 60% for users and 55% for non-users.

3. The impact of this activity

Please consider the potential impact of this activity (during development and implementation) on each of the equality groups outlined below. **Please tick one or more impact box below for each Equality Group and explain your rationale.** Please note it is possible for the potential impact to be both positive and negative within the same equality group and this should be recorded. Remember to consider the impact on staff, public, patients, carers, partner organisations, etc. in these equality groups.

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Age	✓			Older people can already access free bus travel via the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) but this project will include additional bus services which will extend access for older people beyond current provision.
Disability	✓			Disabled people can already access free bus travel via the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) but this project will include additional bus services which will extend access for disabled people beyond current provision. The BSIP includes a specific project to improve access to bus services for people with a disability: A service for all –Operators putting disabled passengers at the heart of their service provision and playing a leading role in creating a more accessible transport system in Herefordshire, through training and resource (i.e. involvement in DfT’s Inclusive Transport Leaders Scheme).
Gender Reassignment		✓		Assessed as neutral, services will be available to all residents in Herefordshire.
Marriage & Civil Partnerships		✓		Assessed as neutral, services will be available to all residents in Herefordshire.

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Pregnancy & Maternity		✓		Assessed as neutral, services will be available to all residents in Herefordshire.
Race (including Travelling Communities and people of other nationalities)		✓		Assessed as neutral, services will be available to all residents in Herefordshire.
Religion & Belief		✓		Assessed as neutral, services will be available to all residents in Herefordshire.
Sex (including issues of safety and sexual violence)	✓			Through a series of network improvements the BSIP will increase the frequency of buses, and provide buses at more times of the day e.g. evening buses 6 days per week. This will improve safety as it will reduce waiting times and increase the opportunities for people, who may otherwise be without transport, to travel home safely. Improved availability of information will also reduce waiting times and in turn safety, as will improvements to infrastructure such as bus stops as set out in the BSIP.
Sexual Orientation		✓		Assessed as neutral, services will be available to all residents in Herefordshire.
Other Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Groups (eg. carers, care leavers, homeless, social/ economic deprivation, etc)	✓			Increasing the opportunities to travel by bus will assist people with limited resources/private transport to access services.
Health Inequalities (any preventable, unfair & unjust differences in health status between groups, populations or individuals that arise from the unequal distribution of social, environmental & economic conditions within societies)		✓		Increasing the opportunities to travel by bus will assist people who suffer health inequalities.

What actions will you take to mitigate any potential negative impacts?

Potential negative impact	Actions required to reduce/eliminate negative impact	Who will lead on action?	Timeframe
Department for Transport funding if approved, will be time limited and therefore there is a risk that in the future the number of bus services available will reduce.	The BSIP includes promotional campaigns and measures aimed at increasing bus use and making services commercially viable in the future without supportive funding.	Project Lead/Communications team.	Throughout the project.

Where an impact on any of the Equality Groups is realised after the implementation of the project/service/policy, the commissioners and/or providers of the project/service/policy will seek to minimise the impact and carry out a full review of this EIA.

4. Monitoring and review

How will you monitor these actions?

The Governments National Bus Strategy comes with a requirement to monitor the performance of BSIP's on a 6 monthly basis, these actions will be monitored as part of that process.


When will you review this EIA? (eg in a service redesign, this EIA should be revisited regularly throughout the design & implementation)

This EIA will be reviewed on a 6 monthly basis in line with the required BSIP reporting set out above.

5. Equality Statement

- All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to set out arrangements to assess and consult on how their policies and functions impact on the 9 protected characteristics.
- Herefordshire Council will challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, and population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.
- All staff are expected to deliver services and provide services and care in a manner which respects the individuality of service users, patients, carers etc, and as such treat them and members of the workforce respectfully, paying due regard to the 9 protected characteristics.

Signature of person completing EIA



Date signed

8/9/21