

Title of action plan being assessed	Access to Services
LAA indicator	LI 5.1
Name of person completing this assessment	Nick Shuttleworth (Target Lead)
Contact Telephone Number	0844 4773938
Date Assessment Completed	October 2008 revised June 2009
Which Partners are involved?	Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE), Essex County Council, District and Borough Councils, Rural Shops Alliance, Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC), Federation of Small Businesses, other service providers as relevant to individual circumstances.

**1. What are the aims and objectives of this action plan – are there any in addition to achieving LAA indicator target?**

To facilitate improved access to services for disadvantaged people and communities in the rural areas of Essex by:

- Empowering local communities to develop their own solutions to local service needs.
- Targeting assistance more directly towards communities and groups that have been identified as disadvantaged in terms of access to services.
- Promoting the benefits and potential of local services to communities, businesses and local authorities.
- Strengthening partnership working and improving co-ordination between relevant agencies.
- Working with ECC Passenger Transport to develop public transport for better access

The action plan will also deliver cross-cutting benefits relevant to each of the four key strategic themes of the Essex Strategy.

**2. What are the steps used to deliver the action plan?**

The action plan will be delivered by setting up projects to provide direct advice, support and facilitation to communities and groups in need. It will also facilitate a more co-ordinated approach to the marketing and promotion of local services in rural areas.

**3.a. Think about each of the equality groups in turn. Could the action plan have an adverse or positive effect on people in the group? Put a tick against any group that could be positively affected, and a cross against any group that could be negatively affected. Some groups may have both a tick and a cross.**

√ X	Race and Culture	√	Disability
√ X	Age	√	Gender
N/A	Sexual orientation	N/A	Religion and Belief
√	Rurality	√	Economic deprivation

**3.b. Describe any positive or negative issues that you think are relevant under each equality strand. If you identify a substantial issue that might stop a particular group benefiting, state what changes you will make to the action plan to address this.**

**Race and Culture**

**Issues**

- English is not a first language
- They might not have access to the information they need
- Attitudes of front-line staff

**Changes to Action Plan**

- Provision of information on local services will need to be comprehensible to BME groups who do not have English as their first language – e.g. migrant workers employed in land based businesses – translations will be offered as required
- Any images used will be inclusive
- Information will be targeted
- Front-line staff will be encouraged to access equality training

**Age**

**Issues**

- Elderly people are likely to be disproportionately dependent on the availability of local services, so will benefit from the delivery of this action plan. However, it will be essential to ensure that the needs of elderly people are fully considered in the planning of any new services.
- Young people also are disproportionately dependent on availability of services for their physical, mental, social and economic development – school, college, leisure/friends, employment experience, including public transport to access services.

**Changes to Action Plan**

- Consideration of one stop shops in certain village areas
- Engagement with older and younger age groups to inform planning of, and access to, services

**Sexual Orientation**

**Issues**

None identified to date

**Changes to Action Plan**

**Disability**

**Issues**

- People with disabilities are also likely to be disproportionately dependent on the availability of local services, so will benefit from the delivery of this action plan. However, it will be essential that the needs of people with disabilities are fully catered for in the planning of any new services and the provision of information.
- Accessible venues and public transport – wheelchair access, hearing loops, etc

**Changes to Action Plan**

- Engagement with disabled groups to inform planning of, and access to, services

**Gender**

**Issues**

- Widows/widowers, single men, mothers with children in one/no car families particularly have problems accessing services using public transport.

**Changes to Action Plan**

- Consideration of one stop shops in certain village areas

**Religion or Belief**

**Issues**

None identified to date

**Changes to Action Plan**

N/A

**Rurality**

**Issues**

- The purpose of the entire action plan is to address rural disadvantage and to deliver benefits to rural communities.

**Changes to Action Plan**

- Setting up of an interactive website would especially benefit people in rural areas,. This could be done through Essex Rural Partnership, Parish websites and RCCE. The website should be clearly advertised on all information leaflets.

**Economic Disadvantage**

**Issues**

- Economically disadvantaged people are likely to be disproportionately dependent on the availability of local services, so will benefit from the delivery of this action plan. However, it is essential that their needs are fully recognised in the planning of any new services.

**Changes to Action Plan**

- Identify and target particular areas of economic disadvantage
- Engagement with economically disadvantaged groups – unemployed, etc. - to inform planning of, and access to, services

**What equality statistics or other evidence from public engagement do you need to help you to test your initial conclusions in Section 1?**  
**What statistics and reports already exist?**  
**What else do you need to know – what are the gaps in evidence?**  
**How will you collect this evidence? If you feel that particular organisations or community/ voluntary groups will be able to help you please list these too.**

### STATISTICS PLAN

What evidence do you want?	Where is it available?	How will you use the evidence?
Evidence on the availability and trends in the provision of key services in rural areas for the equality strands	Countywide, parish-by-parish survey completed by Parish Councils (already undertaken and under analysis). This will need to be reviewed in future. It will also be augmented by information from individual community-led plans –see below.	To identify particular gaps in service provision and communities will particular evidence of service deprivation.
Rate of take-up by equality strands.	From recordings of demographic data, broken down by equality strands	Monitoring of outcomes by comparison with baseline Parish data
Public Transport data on accessibility and distance to nearest bus stop.	ECC	To inform ECC dialogue with bus companies and service planning.

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN

What do you want to know?	What questions are you going to ask?	Who are you going to ask?	What will you do with the answer?	Name of planned source (if known)
As above	As above	As above	As above	Information held by RCCE on behalf of Essex Rural Partnership
Additional information on local needs of equality groups re. access to services	Questions on local service needs, requirements and priorities.	Local equality communities via individual community-led plans facilitated by RCCE.	To identify needs, gaps in provision – as above.	Individual community-led plans facilitated by RCCE. 'Plan It' database held by RCCE – showing breakdown by equality strands.

**5. The Essex Partnership needs a copy of this Section of your EIA in order to co-ordinate any public engagement activities. You will be given feed back by the Essex partnership on the best way to manage the public engagement activity you have identified on the form. Please send this completed section of your EIA to the e-mail address below.**

Please submit this form to the Essex Partnership team: [info@essexpartnership.org](mailto:info@essexpartnership.org)