

Diversity impact assessment

River Medway Strategy
10 September 2026
Adam Taylor, Marine Assets Manager
1 Summary description of the proposed change What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation? It is proposed to commence delivery of the 2nd iteration of the River Strategy, renamed The Lower River Medway Strategy. The river runs through the heart of Medway unitary authority and provides a diverse mix of history, heritage and biodiversity which is a geographical key to the character and identity of Medway as a place. The Lower River Medway Strategy is structured around four themes designed to empower river stakeholders to identify and agree projects which improves the river offer, they are: • Health, Sport & Leisure • Natural Environments & Habitats • Tourism, Culture & Heritage • Business & Economy A Partnership Board consisting of key river stakeholders has been created to provide guidance, advice and connections to support the agreed project of each stakeholder group. The board includes representatives from major river stakeholder organisations: • Peel Ports • Chatham Historic Dockyard • Rochester Bridge Trust • Medway Swale Boating Association (MSBA) • Chatham Maritime Trust • Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) • Environment Agency • Natural England • North Kent Marshes Water Level Management Board The Lower River Medway Strategy will be delivered in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders, building on the work of existing groups and organisations to maximise opportunities and harness the enthusiasm and goodwill of river users who are committed to improving the river and its offer.

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2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user.

E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile

A diverse range of intergenerational groups and stakeholders currently use and engage with the River Medway and its waterfront: commercial and industrial users; recreational, sporting and leisure users, tour operators; hobbyists; environmental groups; heritage enthusiasts; birdwatchers; walkers; and an increasing number of both residents and visitors.

It is of importance to all parts of the community, including families, children, and young people through education, culture, recreation, and volunteering.

An extensive process of consultation with key external and internal stakeholders and groups, including representation of different groups through Council services in People and Place directorates has informed the formation of the Strategy and will lead its

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	Yes	Yes
Disability	No	Yes	Yes
Gender reassignment	No	No	No
Marriage/civil partnership	No	No	No
Pregnancy/maternity	No	No	No
Race	No	Yes	Yes
Religion/belief	No	No	No
Sex	No	No	No
Sexual orientation	No	No	No
Care experience	No	No	No

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Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Other (e.g. low income groups)	No	Yes	Yes

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

The River Medway and its waterfront are used and valued by a wide range of stakeholders, including businesses, recreational users, community groups, residents and visitors. The river plays an important role in supporting leisure, culture, education, volunteering and community wellbeing.

There are no identified negative aspects from implementing the Lower River Medway Strategy. It's full potential and implementation should assist all groups gain access to, and benefit from, the improvements to the river and its environs.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

The Council has created an overarching Lower River Medway Partnership Group to guide and advise on agreed projects from the themed stakeholder groups to deliver the ambitions of the Strategy to foster good relations and help mitigate adverse impacts.

This approach will ensure a broad range of knowledge, skills and lived experience is drawn upon to improve the river offer.

6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
To seek continue to deliver the Lower River Medway Strategy and include views and suggestions from diversity and access groups during the planning stages of agreed projects	Adam Taylor	Sept 2026
Utilise existing seed funding to increase project funding to enable the early implementation of projects.	Adam Taylor	Sept 2026
To commence formation and its thematic stakeholder groups.	Adam Taylor	Sept 2026

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7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

It is recommended to continue delivery of the Lower River Medway Strategy, with priority given to creation of stakeholder groups.

This will be driven by the River Strategy Delivery Team and the goal to increase seed funds to deliver stakeholder agreed projects to improve the river offer.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Date of authorisation

23/09/26