

Laganside Corporation

Section 75, Northern Ireland Act (1998)

Annual Equality Impact Assessment
Monitoring Report
2003

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Laganside Designated Area Map

Executive Summary

- A. Laganside Corporation is a non-departmental public body created by the Laganside Development (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. The Corporation is a small organisation whose parent department is the Department for Social Development.
- B. The Corporation's objective is to secure the regeneration of its 'designated' area (Map attached as Appendix 1).
- C. The Corporation has been designated as a "public authority" within Section 75 (3) (b) of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) and as such was required to produce an Equality Scheme. The Equality Commission approved the Corporation's Equality Scheme in August 2001.
- D. The Corporation's Equality Scheme set out a timetable for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) on the 8 policies identified through the Equality Commission's screening process.
- E. The Corporation has completed EQIAs on all 8 policies. All EQIAs carried out by the Corporation have been completed to the timetable set out in the approved Equality Scheme using the process set out by Equality Commission guidance.
- F. The Corporation has a duty to monitor any adverse impact of policies adopted by the Corporation on the promotion of equality of opportunity and to publish the results of such monitoring.
- G. On completion of the EQIAs undertaken, the Corporation did not establish any adverse impact of its policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity.
- H. Nevertheless, the Corporation regards the monitoring of its policies integral to the way it operates and hence has committed to undertaking a number of monitoring actions for each policy as set out within the appropriate EQIA report.

Further details of monitoring progress for each policy are contained under the appropriate heading in the main body of this report.

- I. Monitoring has not shown that any policy, which was equality impact assessed, results in greater adverse impact than predicted.

- J. This report is the second annual EQIA Monitoring Report produced by the Corporation.

Background

1. Laganside Corporation was created by the Laganside Development (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 which came into operation in May 1989. The Corporation is a small organisation, whose parent Department is the Department for Social Development. The Object and Powers of the Corporation are described in Part III of the Order as follows:

2. The Object of the Corporation shall be to secure the regeneration of the designated area. See Appendix 1 for a map showing the Laganside Corporation designated area.

3. The Object is to be achieved in particular by the following means:
 - a. by bringing land and buildings into effective use.
 - b. by encouraging public and private investment and the development of existing and new industry and commerce.
 - c. by creating an attractive environment.
 - d. by ensuring that housing, social, recreational and cultural facilities are available to encourage people to live and work in the area.

4. Within this legislative context the aims of the Corporation are set out in its current Corporate Plan as:
 - ◆ To secure the regeneration of the Laganside area, maximising leverage of inward investment
 - ◆ To contribute to the continuing enhancement of Belfast's international reputation through partnership with key stakeholders
 - ◆ To commit to the principles of equality, human rights and targeting social need.
 - ◆ To provide significant long-term economic, social and recreational benefits for the citizens of Belfast and Northern Ireland.

5. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (the Act) requires the Corporation in carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
 - ◆ Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation.
 - ◆ Between men and women generally.
 - ◆ Between persons with a disability and persons without.
 - ◆ Between persons with dependents and persons without.

6. In addition and without prejudice to its obligation above the Corporation shall, in carrying out its functions, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

7. Schedule 9 of the Act requires the Corporation to set out in an Equality Scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75. The Equality Commission approved the Equality Scheme for Laganside Corporation in August 2001. The Equality Scheme sets out the arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by Laganside Corporation on promotion of equality of opportunity.

8. The approved Equality Scheme sets out the Screening process adopted by the Corporation which followed Equality Commission guidance at that time.

9. The Corporation considered the impact of each policy, current at that time, on equality of opportunity in terms of the nine categories listed at Section 75 of the NI Act. For each policy the following criteria were applied:
 - a. Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups within the nine categories?
 - b. Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular main policy area?

- c. Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations by altering policy, or working with others in Government or the community at large?
- d. Have consultations in the past with the relevant representative organisations or individuals within groups indicated that policies create problems that are specific to them?

10. The results from the above screening exercise are set out below, where an 'x' indicated that there may be possible impact:

	a.	b.	c.	d.
Infrastructure Provision		X		
River Use	X	X	X	
Grants for physical works				
Land Disposal				
Events Policy				X
Arts Policy		X	X	X
Community Participation	X	X	X	X
Managed Work Space				

11. It was clear that not every policy would necessarily have a significant impact in terms of all the nine Section 75 categories. The resulting equality impact assessments of the policies concentrated on the categories identified in the table below where possible impact had been established in the initial consideration, indicated by an 'x'.

	Religion	Political opinion	Gender	Race	Disability	Age	Marital Status	Dependants	Sexual orientation
Infrastructure Provision					X				
River Use					X				
Grants for physical works									
Land Disposal									
Events Policy	X	X							
Arts Policy	X	X		X	X				
Community Participation	X	X	X	X					
Managed Work Space									

12. In prioritising policies for impact assessment i.e. deciding the sequence in which equality impact assessments would be carried out the Corporation used the following criteria;

Relevance to social need

Number of people potentially affected by the policy

Effect of policy on people's daily lives

Scale of expenditure incurred by the policy

13. The timetable for impact assessments was determined as:

Year 1 The Extension of Community Participation policy.
 Provision of Managed Workspace in Cathedral Quarter for Arts,
 Cultural and Community groups policy*.

Year 2 The Public Art policy.
 The Facilitation and Encouragement of Events policy.
 The Employment policy

Year 3 Promotion of the Use of the River Lagan policy.
 The Procurement policy
 The Provision of Physical Infrastructure policy.

* Although this policy showed no score on either table A or table B it was a recent policy and the Corporation considered that it should be one of the first to undergo the EQIA procedure.

14. The EQIAs timetabled have been completed and reports are available.

15. The Corporation wishes to take this opportunity to thank all consultees for their comments received during, and after, the various EQIA consultation periods.

The Extension of Community Participation policy

(EQIA report advertised 14 Jan '02)

'Effective and sustainable regeneration requires community participation to ensure long term economic, social and recreational benefits for the citizens of N. Ireland'.

- Baseline Data - Laganside Corporation will consider baseline data supplied by the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA) on the Laganside community if and when it becomes available.

During initial discussions with NISRA, the Corporation was advised that data based on census information would be difficult to determine due to the small geographical size of the Corporation's designated area (approx 200 hectares).

'Local communities' for Laganside, in the strict sense of the term, could logically mean those within the designated area. However, Laganside has taken a wider view and has extended the definition of 'Laganside community' to include the residents and the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, based in the 14 wards in and adjacent to the Laganside designated area.

We are awaiting the results of the 2001 Census.

The 'Belfast Area Perceptions study: Mobility, Employment and Exclusion' published by the Department for Employment and Learning, a mind map study of young people, contained the following... 'Laganside is understood by young people in many parts of the city as a location where there are jobs.'*

- Laganside Corporation Awareness & Attitude Survey - Laganside Corporation will review monitoring the Community policy.

Survey work has, in the past, provided statistical evidence of the Corporation's performance which has been consistently positive. For 2002-03 it was decided to replace this quantitative approach with a series of group discussions. This allows Laganside to impact on strategy and it is also flexible, i.e., can explore point further rather than relying on statistics. The main objective of the group discussion programme is to assess attitudes to Laganside and the work it does.

Key areas of study for Community Policy:

- *Employment and employability benefits*
- *Providing neutral space and bringing communities together*
- *'Laganlines' – Laganside Corporation's new sheet, published a number of times during the year*

Local community respondents from south Belfast gave examples of people they knew getting jobs and also positive steps to give opportunities to the long-term unemployed from local areas. Economic benefits were seen as important but were not largely seen as the role of Laganside.

Increasing the neutral area of the city is a very important aspect for all local communities. Laganside are felt to have done a good job with regard to this in that none of the developments are seen as 'no go' areas for people of any community background.

Some respondents were aware of 'Laganlines' but only after prompting and few had read it in any detail, it tended to get lost amongst junk mail and had no real impact with respondents but was felt to be a good idea.

The key areas of study for the Community policy will be extended to include:

- *Communication – are we effectively and efficiently keeping people informed about developments and opportunities*
- *Community Event Grants Application Criteria Review – Laganside Corporation will review the Community events/grants process.*

Laganside has a strategic objective to 'support appropriate initiatives, directly related to the Laganside area that address the needs of and benefit the Laganside community'. In addition to the 'Activity Grant' (small grants circa £250) a new Community Grant Scheme is being created, the funding formula being reviewed and the criteria being equality-proofed.

In the period April '03 to Nov '03 of the 42 projects which applied, 28 were offered Activity Grants and 14 were not successful for the reasons given in table below:

<i>Reason for rejection</i>	<i>Number of applications unsuccessful</i>
<i>Double funding</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Profit making</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Applicant withdrew</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Unable to fund charities</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Late application</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Applicant failed to respond to request for more information</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Unable to fund entrance into a profit making venture</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Unable to fund over a three year period</i>	<i>1</i>

- Pre-employment Training Programmes – Laganside Corporation will continue to support pre-employment recruitment courses directly relating to jobs in the Laganside area as relates to the Laganside Corporation New TSN action plan.

The Corporation, although not the lead funder, has supported two key pre-employment projects. One project Interact provided 18 – 24 year olds with Contact Centre training. There were 6 courses with 31 students in total. The other project is a 3-year pilot employability scheme focusing on deprived inner-city communities in south and east Belfast. Between 01 – 04 the project aims to recruit 600 unemployed /long term unemployed, of whom 290 will be placed into employment, and 310 into education/ training. As at the end of November '03, they had recruited 727 clients, of whom 332 were placed into employment (54% into Laganside companies) and 331 into training.

*New TSN Action Plan 2003 – 04 available on Corporation's website:
www.laganside.com*

- Communication Assessment – Laganside Corporation will monitor/assess annually the distribution performance of Laganlines.

Ongoing action. Mailout list reviewed prior to distribution to ensure all appropriate groups included. After distribution, mailout lists assessed using returned Laganlines with addresses altered where appropriate.

- Monitor any equality of opportunity complaints which may result from the implementation of this policy.

Zero equality complaints received to date.

**Belfast Area Perceptions Study: Mobility, Employment and Exclusion.
Ian Shuttleworth, School of Geography, QUB
Anne Green, Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick
Stuart Lavery, School of Geography, QUB
Published by DEL. ISBN No. 0-9545592-1-5*

Provision of Managed Workspace in Cathedral Quarter for Arts, Cultural and Community groups policy

(EQIA report advertised 14 Jan '02)

'Laganside, where considered necessary to retain and enhance arts, cultural and community activity in Cathedral Quarter, will seek to ensure provision of appropriate work space accommodation'

- Laganside Corporation will monitor the turnover rate of occupation of the managed workspace accommodation.

Ongoing monitoring with managing agents. During the period this report covers one occupier left and the space was subsequently let to a new tenant.

- The process for selecting occupants to managed workspace accommodation will be monitored and reviewed if necessary and appropriate.

Vacant space is usually advertised to determine interest in the spaces available.

- Monitor any equality of opportunity complaints which may result from the implementation of this policy.

Zero equality complaints received to date.

The Public Art policy

(EQIA report advertised 24th June '02)

'Laganside considers the provision of public art is an integral aspect of a regeneration strategy which seeks to create distinctive and memorable public places which are the setting for private investment and for residential, commercial and leisure activity'.

- Community Involvement – Monitor community involvement

There was one temporary art piece implemented this year – no community involvement

- Community Involvement – Consider how best to capture information, e.g., using the Awareness and Attitude Survey.

Survey work has, in the past, provided statistical evidence of the Corporation's performance which has been consistently positive. For 2002-03 it was decided to replace this quantitative approach with a series of group discussions. This allows Laganside to impact on strategy and it is also flexible, i.e., can explore point further rather than relying on statistics. The main objective of the group discussion programme is to assess attitudes to Laganside and the work it does.

Key areas of study for the Arts policy were:

- *Awareness & opinion of arts policy*
- *Awareness & opinion of arts trail*
- *Opinion of public art in general*

There was little knowledge among respondents of the arts policy or arts trail. Most could name at least one piece of public art. In general terms most people are in favour of public art so long as it isn't too expensive or too 'stupid'.

- Art Content – Keep under review the criteria for the selection of artworks.

No change to criteria

- Artist Selection Process – Keep under review the criteria and process for selecting artists.

No change to criteria or process

- Artist selection Process – Await the outcome of the voluntary monitoring system put in place by the Arts Council.

Ongoing – no release of statistics from Arts Council yet.

- Arts Advisory/Selection Panels – Keep under review the roles of the Panels.

No change

- Review the outputs of the Public Art Strategy

Ongoing

A number of organisations have contacted Laganside as a model of best practice regarding the Public Art Strategy including:

Dublin Docklands Development Authority

Londonderry City Council

West Belfast Partnership Board

- Monitor any equality of opportunity complaints which may result from the implementation of this policy.

Zero equality complaints received to date

- Review the Arts Trail leaflet.

Arts Trail leaflets reviewed and released 2003. Large print version available. 'Talking' tour also available using headsets which may be hired for a nominal charge.

The Facilitation and Encouragement of Events policy

(EQIA report advertised 24 June '02)

'Laganside Corporation will promote events which are socially inclusive and help educate the public as to new areas of recreational opportunity in the Laganside area, as well as encouraging both local community and general public involvement in Laganside'.

- Monitor the financial sponsorship process

Ongoing – the Corporation continues to sponsor events through the marketing support process. This process is continually monitored and reviewed to ensure it is in keeping with Landside's policy.

- Keep criteria for financial sponsorship under review

Ongoing – The system for financial sponsorship remains unchanged and is continually monitored and reviewed.

- Monitor any equality of opportunity complaints which may result from the implementation of this policy

Zero equality complaints received to date.

Laganside have been awarded two Arts & Business Awards, one for 'The Book' project and the other for 'Lagan Reels' Project

The Procurement Policy

(EQIA report advertised 30 September '02)

'Corporation procurement is carried out in accordance with EU legislation and best public sector practice'.

- Monitor equality of opportunity complaints resulting from the implementation of this policy.

Zero equality complaints received to date.

- Be guided by the outcomes of appropriate Procurement Service/Department of Finance and Personnel equality impact assessments.

Ongoing

'The Northern Ireland Practical Guide to the Green Book' has been produced by DFP to replace the 'Northern Ireland Preface to the Green Book'.

The Provision of Physical Infrastructure policy

(EQIA report advertised 30 September '02)

'Laganside will undertake and provide physical infrastructure works within its designated area which will address environmental and physical constraints impeding regeneration and provide the setting which will attract private investment and development'.

- Monitor equality of opportunity complaints resulting from the implementation of this policy.

Zero equality complaints received to date.

- Be guided by the outcomes of appropriate Planning Services' equality impact assessments

No impact or changes to date.

- Consider how best to capture information, e.g., through the Awareness and Attitude survey.

Survey work has, in the past, provided statistical evidence of the Corporation's performance which has been consistently positive. For 2002-03 it was decided to replace this quantitative approach with a series of group discussions. This allows Laganside to impact on strategy and it is also flexible, i.e., can explore points further rather than relying on statistics. The main objective of the group discussion programme is to assess attitudes to Laganside and the work it does.

Key areas of study for the Physical Infrastructure policy are:

- *Opinion of benefit Laganside brings to Belfast*
- *What sort of future development would be appreciated*
- *Have Laganside made the city more attractive – if so, how*
- *General issues on access/linkages*

Laganside is believed to be doing a good job in helping regenerate Belfast. The biggest contributing factor has been the physical regeneration of areas of Belfast that were eyesores in the recent past – the transformation of areas with no visual appeal and where sections of the community previously felt unhappy to visit.

- Continue monitoring use of the Laganside Pathways via the Pathways survey

Pathway survey due to be undertaken in 2004

- Monitor infrastructure progress against appropriate Corporate Plan targets.

Ongoing monitoring

Employment Policy

(EQIA report advertised 17 October '02)

'The Corporation will provide equality of opportunity for all job applicants and for its staff.'

- Keep under review the Employment policy and associated policy statements.

The employment policy is kept under review with changes in equality legislation being the main driver.

- Update the Employment policy and appropriate policy statements in the Corporation's Annual Report, Corporate Plan and Staff Handbook.

The Staff Handbook is revised on an 'as and when needed' basis taking account of new/changes to legislation and Departmental instruction.

- Continue monitoring the workforce as required.

Fair employment and treatment return completed and submitted to the Equality Commission for 2002.

- Monitor any equality of opportunity complaints which may result from the implementation of this policy.

Zero equality complaints have been received to date

- Seek advice from statutory bodies where appropriate.

Occurs on an 'as and when needed' basis.

Use of the River Lagan policy

(EQIA report advertised 3 February '03)

'Laganside will promote, encourage and facilitate greater use of the river and its banks within its designated area for a range of activities and users.... The context for promoting such uses will include Corporate Plan priorities, a River Strategy, Events Strategy, statutory bye-laws and river/navigational guidelines...'

- Monitor equality of opportunity complaints resulting from the implementation of this policy.

Zero equality complaints have been received.