

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Guidance

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# Introductory Section

### About this guidance

People’s health is influenced by factors outside of the health and social care system. They lie in the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age: the social determinants of health. These are the ‘causes of the causes’ of ill health and they can enable individuals and societies to flourish, or not. Creating a healthier population requires greater action on these issues. This includes addressing the role of both the physical built environment and the social factors which shape neighbourhoods and places.

This guidance has been developed to assist with the process of carrying out a Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment for Planning (HIA).

### What is a HIA?

A HIA is a tool that can be used to estimate and assess the possible health and wellbeing implications, both intended and unintended, of development and planning proposals. It provides an opportunity to explore potential actions that could be taken to maximise positive impacts and minimise potential negative ones.

The completion of a HIA helps to ensure that health and wellbeing is properly considered when preparing, evaluating, and determining development proposals.

### How to use the HIA form?

The HIA form can be used in one of three ways:

* By developers and consultants when preparing development proposals to help shape and inform design choices and to demonstrate the benefits of the proposal to health and wellbeing.
* By local authorities, health bodies and other statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations to evaluate development proposals and feedback on identified issues and areas for improvement in a consistent way, as well as to inform reports.
* By members of the public to understand impacts on their local community.

### How to carry out an assessment using the HIA form?

When using the assessment form the length and detail of the answers you give should relate to the scale and complexity of the proposal. As the completed HIA will be uploaded onto the planning portal for anyone to see, please answer the questions **using plain English and avoid technical words, phrases and links to technical documents**. This will ensure that the information provided about the positive and negative impacts of the development, and any measures put in place to enhance positive impacts or mitigate any negative impacts, are able to be understood by the general public.

The HIA consists of a series of questions, themed for particular types of development. The process for completing a HIA is detailed below:

### Section 1 – Planning Reference

Please input your planning application reference number or in absence of this a short description including location.

### Section 2 – Population Groups

You should start the HIA process by identifying the specific population groups which the development will affect and the positive and negative impacts the development will have on those groups identified. Please explain your reasoning. It is important that developments do not increase existing health inequalities or create new ones.

Proposals will not affect all individuals or groups across the community in the same way, so consideration should be given to all affected groups and potential impacts.

### Section 3 – Ward Profiles

Consider the geographical areas affected by the proposed development. Consider which neighbourhoods, communities, etc. the proposal will mostly affect and how. Please explain your reasoning.

### Section 4 – Community Consultation

Community engagement can help developers and communities build positive relationships and work together for the benefit of local areas. It provides an opportunity for developers to explain proposals and gain valuable input and feedback from the community, leading to stronger and more sustainable developments. Effective community engagement has the potential to increase local support for developments, and reduce objections and complaints, saving time and money.

In this section, detail to the best of your knowledge, whether you have involved the local community in your consultation, how they have been involved and what the results of their involvement are, including any changes that have been made to the application.

### Section 5 – Themed Questions

This is the largest section of the HIA form and is divided into the themes below (these vary dependant on the development type). Within each theme there are explanatory notes and links to guidance that you might find useful when completing the HIA.

In your answers, consider how aspects of the proposal impact on any group or community. For each answer, specify the type of impact this will have on health and wellbeing (positive, negative, neutral), and justify why this will be the case, demonstrating how this guidance has been considered.

Where you believe there is **no impact**, please provide appropriate justification to support this assessment.

# Themes

## Homes for all

### Housing and Health

Housing is not simply a roof over our heads. Homes are where people raise families, socialise, eat, and sleep. Homes should always promote health by being safe and comfortable and provide security and stability. They should meet people’s diverse needs, whether that is accessible housing for those who are older or have a disability, affordable housing so that everyone can afford a home to live in, or supportive housing for people who need extra support to be independent and thrive. They should always be of decent quality, regardless of age or tenure. They should also be affordable and efficient to run, and well connected to vibrant, active communities (Doncaster Housing Strategy, 2015-2025).

***Further information:***

**Homes, health and COVID-19, Centre for Ageing Better**

<https://ageing-better.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-08/Homes-health-and-COV19-poor-quality-homes.pdf>

**Good Homes for All, Centre for Ageing Better**

<https://ageing-better.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-09/good-homes-for-all-a-proposal.pdf>

**City of Doncaster Council Housing Strategy 2015-2025**

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/housing/our-housing-strategy-2015-2025>

**No place like home? Exploring the health and well-being impact of COVID-19 on housing and housing insecurity, World Health Organisation**

<https://phwwhocc.co.uk/resources/no-place-like-home-exploring-the-health-and-well-being-impact-of-covid-19-on-housing-and-housing-insecurity/>

### Meeting Community Need

We would expect high quality developments to incorporate a mixed-communities approach, whereby house type, tenure, and size are spread across the whole of the development rather than in just one area. Housing should meet the needs of the local community, and this should be supported by relevant evidence such as Doncaster’s latest Housing Needs Study. House design should include principles as set out in the relevant design guide, as well as promoting good health and wellbeing using the Decent Home Standard and Nationally Described Space Standards.

***Further Information:***

**Decent Homes Guidance, DLUHC** <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7812/138355.pdf> (this is subject to change as currently under review)

**Building for a Healthy Life**

<https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/othermanuals/building-healthy-life>

### Principles of accessible and inclusive design

Developed in the early 1990s, the concept of Lifetime Homes sought to ensure that homes were designed to be inclusive, accessible, adaptable, sustainable, and good value. Building Regulations, in the form of a national standard (Part M(4)), have since superseded Lifetime Homes.

To ensure the site meets people’s needs now and in the future, we would expect to see applications for residential developments stating the number and location of dwellings that meet Part M(4) category 2, as well as Part M(4) category 3.

Accessible and inclusively designed spaces may include:

* entrances that are well-lit,
* internal doors and hallways wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs and pushchairs,
* step free access such as stair or through-floor lifts,
* the installation of accessible bathrooms,
* enough space to turn and move inside,
* adaptations and aids to meet potential changing future need such as grab rails and external aids,
* and radiator and cooker hood controls, sockets, glazing, and window handles at the appropriate height.

Exterior to the dwellings, the development should benefit from level access to properties as well as for those moving through the site. Shared spaces, if they are included, should be clearly marked out so people with impairments can safely move about. Disabled parking should be of an appropriate amount and width.

***Further information:***

**Access to and use of buildings**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m#full-publication-update-history>

**Living Home Standard, Shelter, October 2016,** <https://assets.ctfassets.net/6sxvmndnpn0s/5KR1ksNEZBqZ1M5UBjychd/7ddcdc92fd4d09b054abfebbf781ad54/FINAL_Living_home_standard_report.pdf>

**Accessible Housing Standards 2015, Housing LIN**

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Accessible-Housing-Standards-2015-WEB.pdf> (Comparison of Lifetime Home Standards and Building Regulations (Part 4(M) category 2))

## Connected Places

Nationally there is growing interest in creating places in which most of people’s daily needs can be met within a short walk or cycle. The benefits of this are multiple: people become more active, improve their mental and physical health; traffic is reduced; air quality improved; local shops and businesses thrive; and people see more of their neighbours, strengthening community bonds.

A connected place provides people with clear ways to get around the development, as well as the ability to reach nearby local facilities. Developments should feature wide, safe pathways, with high-quality cycle lanes (e.g., built to LTN 1/20 standards), safe crossing points that correspond with desire lines, and resting points at regular intervals. The site should be well-lit, with clear wayfinding, to enable all to use the routes at all times of the day and throughout the seasons. Linking new and existing infrastructure should be considered, to create joined up places.

As well as the physical environment, places should be digitally inclusive as this is important to ensure that developments support social connectivity and reduce isolation. Digital poverty and the digital divide are often exacerbated by other types of poverty, geographical location, and skills and knowledge.

***Further information:***

*Active by Design*

[Active by Design: designing places for healthy lives - Design Council](https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-work/skills-learning/resources/active-design-designing-places-healthy-lives/)

*Building for a Healthy Life*

[14JULY20 BFL 2020 Brochure\_3.pdf (udg.org.uk)](https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf)

*Cycle Infrastructure Design – LTN120*

[Cycle Infrastructure Design (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951074/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf)

*The 20-Minute Neighbourhood*

[The 20-minute neighbourhood - Town and Country Planning Association (tcpa.org.uk)](https://tcpa.org.uk/collection/the-20-minute-neighbourhood/)

*15-Minute Cities*

[15-Minute City (15minutecity.com)](https://www.15minutecity.com/)

*Digital inclusivity*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uks-digital-strategy>

https://digitalpovertyalliance.org/

## Open, Green and Blue Spaces

There is growing evidence of the physical and mental health benefits of green and blue spaces. Research shows that access to green space is associated with better health outcomes, and income-related health inequality is less pronounced where people have access to this space. However, this access is unequally distributed across England; those living in more deprived areas have less access to green space.

Access to good quality green and blue spaces is associated with positive health outcomes, including:

• Improvements in mental health and wellbeing, such as depression, stress, dementia

• Increased longevity in older people

• Higher levels of physical activity leading to improved cardiovascular health, improved bone health, muscle strength, mobility and flexibility

• Better self-rated health

Green spaces can improve the environmental quality of an area which can bring numerous health benefits to individuals and communities. Some of the environmental benefits of green spaces include both improved air and water quality, and noise absorption. The links between access to green spaces and levels of physical activity are well-established in research, which shows higher levels of physical activity in areas with more green spaces.

Similarly, living close to blue spaces has shown to significantly increase physical activity levels, lower stress, and anxiety, whilst boosting people’s mood and psychological wellbeing.

All developments should include access to inclusive green and blue open spaces on-site, which, at a minimum, meets the relevant policy standards. Inclusive open spaces may include wheelchair ramps, accessible pathways, and bathroom facilities. It is important that the open space is well-lit, well-surfaced and maintained, and overlooked to ensure that everyone feels it is safe to use.

Having access to seating areas not only allows people to enjoy the outdoors for longer, but also increase social interaction between communities. Developments should provide good quality seating areas, which are shaded to provide protection from the sun and rain. It is important to consider the people most likely to use the space. For example, the installation of a variety of safe play equipment in developments suitable for families can encourage physical activity and social connection. Where new developments do not offer access to open green and blue spaces on-site, it is important to consider what green and blue spaces are nearby that everyone can enjoy, such as local parks, woods, rivers, and lakes. These spaces should offer people various opportunities to be physically active, to socialise, to rest and relax and to connect to their local community. These spaces should be accessible and safe for everyone to get to, such as well-lit roads, safe crossings, and clear signposting.

***Further Information:***

*Improving Access to Greenspace (UK Gov, 2020)*

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904439/Improving_access_to_greenspace_2020_review.pdf>

*Social Benefits of Blue Spaces (UK Gov, 2020)*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/928136/Social\_benefits\_of\_blue\_space\_-\_r](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/928136/Social_benefits_of_blue_space_-_report.pdf)eport.pdf

*Community Gardening (RHS, 2022)*

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening>

## Environment

A healthy environment is vital for human health and wellbeing. Poorly planned and managed communities with unsustainable transport systems and a lack of access to public and green areas increase air pollution, noise, and heat islands, reduce opportunities for physical activity and have a negative impact on community life and people’s physical and mental health (WHO, 2020). Improving access to a healthier environment (e.g., better air quality) will help improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Doncaster residents such as reduced risk of chronic conditions and better mental health.

There are several aspects, therefore, of the environment that can have a serious impact on people’s health now and in the future. For example, noise can affect physical health and overall well-being and touch many aspects of everyday life, including concentration, sleep, and mental health. Places which use renewable or low-carbon energy contribute to addressing climate change, through mitigating for any unintended consequences such as air quality or flooding. The inclusion of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features (green infrastructure) can also deliver a wide range of environmental, economic and health and well-being benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities, and prosperity. This could in turn, decrease the frequency and intensity of heatwaves, droughts and extreme rainfall and reduce the transmission of food-borne, water-borne, and zoonotic infectious diseases.

***Further information***

**Home Quality Mark**

<https://www.homequalitymark.com/discover/how-is-it-assessed/my-home/>

**Noise Pollution**

[Noise - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/noise--2)

[Auditory and non-auditory effects of noise on health - The Lancet](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(13)61613-X/fulltext)

[Noise (who.int)](https://www.who.int/europe/news-room/fact-sheets/item/noise)

**Air Quality**

<https://www.blf.org.uk/sites/default/files/Indoor%20air%20pollution%202021.pdf>

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/inside-story-health-effects-indoor-air-quality-children-young-people>

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng70>

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng149>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-air-pollution/health-matters-air-pollution>

**Green Infrastructure**

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>

**Overheating**

<https://www.bre.co.uk/filelibrary/Briefing%20papers/116885-Overheating-Guidance-v3.pdf>

**Natural Daylight**

[Right to Light Planning: Site Layout Planning for Natural light - BRE Group](https://bregroup.com/services/testing-certification-verification/indoor-environment-testing/natural-light/)

**Flooding**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flooding-and-public-mental-health-assessment-and-management>

**Renewable Energy**

<https://www.teamdoncaster.org.uk/environment-and-climate>

## Local Economy

Evidence shows us that adverse work conditions and lower pay are more common among certain groups such as ethnic minority groups and disabled people. The nature of work can adversely affect our health through the physical and psychosocial conditions at work, poor pay and insufficient hours, job insecurity and job dissatisfaction. It is clear therefore that access to good-quality work and fair employment is crucial when considering people’s health and wellbeing.

All developments have the potential to create new jobs, either during or after the construction phase. Positions should be advertised in the local community where appropriate, including providing information on where this is likely to be. Similarly, construction materials should be sourced from suitable local places where possible to promote a local, circular economy. Consideration should be given to the economic make-up of the local community where possible, alongside demonstrating how any existing inequalities will be reduced rather than increased.

***Further Information:***

# Local action on health inequalities: promoting good quality jobs, Public Health England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-action-on-health-inequalities-promoting-good-quality-jobs>

**City of Doncaster Council Borough Strategy**

<https://www.teamdoncaster.org.uk/doncaster-delivering-together>

**City of Doncaster Council Economic Strategy**

<https://www.teamdoncaster.org.uk/doncaster-economic-strategy-2030>

## Healthcare Services

Access to comprehensive, quality health care services is important for promoting and maintaining both physical and mental health. Everyone deserves to have access to good quality healthcare services, close to where they live. Large developments have the potential to put a strain on primary healthcare services, possibly having a negative impact on capacity and service delivery. It is important to understand what services are currently being delivered in the area, such as GP surgeries and dentists and consult with the appropriate healthcare providers to get their view on the development. This may provide opportunities to understand potential impacts in advance, and work collaboratively to mitigate any negative impacts the development may have such as on customer demand.