Gender Equality and Plan Making

The Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit

The 'desk top' Toolkit.

Just ask yourself the following questions;

- Who are the planners?
- Who forms the policy team?
- Which sorts of people are perceived to be the planned?
- How are statistics gathered and who do they include?
- What are the key values, priorities and objectives of the plan?
- Who is consulted and who is involved in participation?
- How are planning proposals evaluated? By whom?
- How is the policy implemented, monitored and managed?
- Is gender mainstreaming being fully integrated into all policy areas?

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The RTPI is committed to ensuring that planning practitioners understand the important contribution spatial planning can make in achieving gender equality. The Royal Town Planning Institute's (RTPI) New Vision for Planning (2001)[1] promotes an inclusive approach to spatial planning. Related to this, the RTPI has undertaken to provide guidance to planners on the best available tools to mainstream gender.

In 1999, the RTPI held a major symposium on equality[2]. Subsequently, a report was presented to RTPI Council, which endorsed the adoption of mainstreaming as a strategy[3]. This toolkit builds on this work.

Toolkits have been developed to promote the mainstreaming of gender in structural fund programmes[4]. These have been developed from the Swedish 3Rs, which try to answer the policy question "Who gets what and under what conditions?" It does this by focusing on 3 issues:

- *Representation*
  The process is therefore both quantitative and qualitative. It tells you how many members of each sex are represented and where they are situated in the hierarchy, department or unit.

- *Resources*
  The assessment takes account of the allocation of space and time, as well as the arguably better known concerns relating to the distribution of human resources and financial support.

- *Reality*
  The product of a given process is examined to assess whose needs are met in reality[5].

This toolkit deals specifically with spatial planning at the local level, although aspects of the toolkit will also be very useful for those engaged in planning at the strategic level.

Advice and guidance will be provided and updated with increased use of the Toolkit by Local Planning Authorities. Case studies undertaken during the piloting of the toolkit are published in the 'Report on Gender Auditing and Mainstreaming' which is also available on the RTPI website. Feedback on the value of the toolkit is important and users are encouraged to inform the RTPI of their experiences. Contact us via eo@rtpi.org.uk.

Best practice advice will be disseminated through the RTPI website.

Dory Reeves
April 2003

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1 RTPI (2001) New Vision for Planning, London: RTPI.

2 RTPI (2000) Gender Equality and the Role of Planning, Realising the Goal, Conference held in 1999 and available on the RTPI website:

www.rtpi.org.uk/resources/panels/equal-w/seminars.pdf

3 Royal Town Planning Institute (1999) Mainstreaming Equality into the work of a professional institute, Report to Council, London: RTPI.

4 Scottish Executive (2001) Toolkit for mainstreaming Equal Opportunities in the European `Structural Funds, Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.

5 Gertrude Aström (2002) The 3R approach. http://naring.regeringen.se/inenglish/areas_of/equality.htm

Acknowledgements

Introduction

This gender mainstreaming toolkit provides practical guidance on how to incorporate gender issues into planning at the local level, helping promote equality between women and men. The target audience for this toolkit includes those responsible for:

- Formulating and implementing planning policy (policy planners)
- Making decisions about the content of planning policy (elected members)
- Implementing planning policy (development control planners or development facilitators)

The toolkit will also be useful for those engaged with the planning process, including community groups, groups representing women and men and those providing advice to communities such as consultants and Planning Aid organisations.

Women and men and boys and girls have different needs, aspirations, perceptions and priorities. Gender equality ensures that these differences are valued equally. The current gender inequalities in society (e.g. the labour market, housing market, living conditions and health, access to facilities and transport, power and decision making) show that they are not. Gender inequality persists because of the difficulty in making fundamental changes to the position of women in relation to men, both in society generally and in specific policy areas such as planning.

Planning makes an important contribution to gender equality by determining and influencing the:

- Location of activities
- Interrelationship of activities
- Way in which activities are connected
- Condition and quality of places
- Sustainable development

Places shape the way we live our lives, the opportunities we have to get a paid job, how easy it is to get to school or the hospital and keep in touch with friends and relatives. Environments reinforce identity, but they can also alienate and discriminate. Planning policies influence the lives of women and men in different ways and both perspectives are needed in the planning process. Gender is the most fundamental organising feature of society, affecting our lives from the moment we are born. Gender mainstreaming recognises diversity between genders, as well as remembering that gender cuts across other kinds of differences, ethnicity, class, disability and age.

Gender mainstreaming (GM) is fast becoming a compulsory requirement - not just a voluntary option for all who undertake planning. GM is now a key strategy for achieving gender equality between women and men. First introduced in 1985 and, following adoption by the European Commission in 1995, the pace of development has accelerated, particularly over the last 5 years. It has been adopted by both National and Local Governments and by Professional Institutes. GM is one part of a total strategy that encompasses legislation and positive action.

GM involves the consideration of gender at all stages of policy development and implementation. It involves the 'systematic consideration of the differences between women and men at the point of planning, implementation and evaluation.'

This toolkit will help the user to:

- **Meet** and fulfil statutory and non-statutory equality standards and contribute to the achievement of equality performance indicators and targets.

- **Improve** plan-making processes by making them more inclusive.

- **Develop** policies sensitive to the needs of the whole community, recognising the different needs of particular groups.

- **Increase** awareness of gender issues and their relationship with planning.

- **Produce** spatial plans that meet the needs of all groups within the local community.

Section 1 - Why mainstream gender?

What is gender mainstreaming?

Mainstreaming means embedding an acknowledgement of the different needs of women and men into the planning system, so that it becomes part of the central focus rather than an add-on extra. It recognises the different needs and requirements between women and men and is effective in changing planning processes as well as policy outcomes. GM takes into account the different roles women and men have in society and the different expectations and requirements they have from the planning system. This cannot be done in isolation from other day-to-day aspects of planning – it is a matter of looking at existing and proposed policy areas through a 'gender lens'.

Promoting equality

Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity within the workplace and in the delivery of services. This duty is set out in the Amsterdam Treaty 1997, the Race Relations Amendment Act 2001 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Authorities in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland are covered by legislation on devolution, which includes a duty to promote equality. The Amsterdam Treaty 1997 makes 'the elimination of inequalities and the promotion of equality between women and men' a central principle in all public policy making and activities at local authority level within the European Union.

Local authorities are also obliged to promote equalities under a range of evolving UK legislation. The UK Government has published its programme for implementing the EU Directive 'Towards Equality and Diversity' and guidance that requires Local Planning Authorities to consider both the role of planning policies in addressing social needs and problems, and the likely impact of such policies on different groups in the community. Equality strategies in Scotland and Northern Ireland require that policies be checked against 9 sectoral groups.

The Equality Standard for Local Government in England requires Local Planning Authorities to contribute towards their authority's programme for achieving an assessed level of competence (EOLG, 2001). Similar requirements apply in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Why gender?

The modernising planning agenda stresses a more holistic approach to planning – one that is reflective of the composition of society. Mainstreaming equalities in plan making will improve the quality and performance of plan policy.

European and single regeneration funding regimes require evidence of the collection of gender specific data, and the evaluation of the impact of policy, upon members of the community.

Tools and techniques in place to deal with race and disability issues cannot necessarily be adapted to deal with gender issues. They are no substitute for gender mainstreaming.

'Cross cutting differences' can show that older retired women often require different amenities and services than those required by young working mothers. Rural female car users will have different needs to those dependent on public transport.

Women from different ethnic minority groups have different needs from their male counterparts, and disabled women have different needs from disabled men for a variety of biological, cultural and mobility-related reasons.

> **Facts:**
>
> •
>
> • 8% of working men and 44% of working women had part-time jobs.
>
> • behaviour due to a fear of crime.
>
> • to work.
>
> • escorting the children to school.
>
> • to work.
>
> • group among Afro-Caribbean communities but much urban policy appears to be aimed at young minority males.
>
> Source: Social Trends.

Income, work and caring responsibilities influence women and men's expectations of the planning system.

Other planning initiatives relating to the Toolkit

- The emphasis on greater community engagement throughout the plan-making process, culminating in the essential Statement of Community Involvement and the overarching role of Community Strategies with their generic equality mainstreaming policies and audits.

- The over-riding need to apply the principles of sustainability, as embodied in Local Agenda 21, at all stages and to all plans.

- The need to include firm, focused policies in all plans as set down in the review of the Planning Officers' Society 'Better Local Plans' guidance document (POS, 2002).

Examples of mainstreaming gender

1. If an urban conservation policy favours retention of Victorian houses as single dwellings rather than as divided units, then the chances of women obtaining housing in an inner city area may well decline due to the cost (statistically women earn less than their male counterparts EOC 2001).

2. Retaining facades that have narrow doorways and steps up to the entrance for 'architectural reasons' needs to be reconciled with the requirements of both women and men, especially those with disabilities.

3. If the regeneration of a waterfront location pays more attention to visual urban design issues than the realities of pedestrians trying to access the area, then gender is not mainstreamed into the scheme. Removing unsightly railings from waterside locations without adequate alternative barriers can result in toddlers falling in. 'Interesting' rugged paving stones and cobbles may shake the wheels of baby buggies (and wheelchairs).

4. If a new visitor centre in a tourist area is provided with unequal toilet provision and no baby changing facilities, then this will clearly disadvantage parents and child carers.

5. If village containment policies result in a lack of rural employment opportunities for local women then priorities will need to be reconsidered.

6. If economies of scale result in hospitals, secondary schools and sports centres becoming larger and located on sites not served by public transport (and at the expense of local facilities), then such arrangements will have accessibility implications for women, who are more likely to make a number of different journeys in a regular day.

7. Landscaping a footpath may result in foliage restricting views alongside the route, and if changes of level and steps impede progress for those with pushchairs or toddlers, then it is vital to rethink the scheme. Cycle paths are generally not as attractive to women as men and the reasons why can be linked with related planning policy areas such as crime and personal safety, supporting social infrastructure (such as public toilets) and retail locational policy.

> **Example: Cycling**
>
> Gender sensitive data analysis may also raise questions about previous policy approaches. For example, data that shows large discrepancies in the use of bicycles and cycle paths by women and men may suggest a flaw in the authority's cycling strategy, requiring further research.
>
> In Bristol, women cyclists were concerned with matters of personal safety on more remote sections of commuter cycle paths.
>
> Cutting back adjacent bushes and increasing overall visibility led to a reduction in crime along such routes, which in turn led to a greater number of women cycling to work.

8. If a new out of town office complex offers limited public transport access and unsupervised car parking, then this may deter or prevent women taking jobs in this location. The relationship between travel distances and the distribution of employment opportunities is particularly important for women in the local plan area. As gender mainstreaming works its way into the system, 'good practice' will be evident through increased social topics and lateral policy links appearing on the planning department's agenda.

9. Some of the most essential car users in our society (home care or meals-on-wheels workers, home delivery workers, and those who escort and help others) use their own cars in the community without formal payment or official recognition. If congestion charging and other car-restricting policies are not subject to gender mainstreaming, then they may adversely affect such people, who often can least afford to pay.

10. In areas where public transport is poor, and women have a lower level of car use than men, restricting permission for taxicab firms may actually reduce women's mobility (by restricting their travel options). This

could affect their chances of attending hospital appointments, job interviews and purchasing cheaper goods at decentralised retail outlets. Controls on taxicab premises in the inner city, where no one else is willing to run such a service, might also affect ethnic minority proprietors disproportionately.

11. By restricting permissions for small businesses with catering activities, and by determining home working to be a change of use, then such policy may restrict employment opportunities for women, especially those with home-based caring responsibilities. It might also disproportionately affect ethnic minority families seeking to start a small shop or enterprise in an inner city area. Such business activities often constitute the first steps to regenerating an area and should therefore not be hindered.

12. In more affluent suburban areas where two car families are widespread and public transport is limited, the chances of getting decent employment would depend upon a high level of personal mobility. A policy of restricting off-street car parking spaces may limit such opportunities, especially for women who 'fit in' around their partner's career path. A lack of off-street parking may also limit affordable housing choices for many families. Car-reducing policies impact on women more than men, particularly in areas where there is no viable public transport available for getting to work or the children to school.

Section 2 - The 'Toolkit'

The toolkit shows how to incorporate a consideration of gender into planning. It is based on a series of questions and can be used at any stage of the plan making process. For instance, if the plan has been produced and policies are being implemented, the questions will relate to how the policy is going to be implemented. If the plan is being reviewed or if a plan is being started from scratch, then the questions will be used to help identify issues and develop appropriate policy. Consequently, planners should not wait until the next major planning review before they start mainstreaming gender.

Equally, the questions could be incorporated into a sustainability appraisal or best value review exercise, transport evaluation or environmental assessment.

1) **What are the different experiences and roles of women and men and/or boys and girls which might affect:**

- the issues and problems which need to be addressed by the plan
- how women and men might benefit from a policy proposal
- how the policy or proposal is implemented

2) **What are the implications of these differences between women and men?**

3) **What are the implications for planning policy?**

4) **What policy recommendations would help ensure gender equality?**

5) **Who will assume responsibility for implementation?**

6) **How will success be measured?**

The following examples in **Section 3** demonstrate this approach. It is recommended that you assume all topics are gendered. It is very important that male and female issues should be integrated into the process. A 'gendered perspective' will then permeate through all aspects of the Local Planning Authorities activities.

There should be a clear explanation in each policy topic section of how, where and why gender has been taken into account. Clear objectives, timescales, budgets and evaluation criteria should be set.

Further considerations:

- *Watch for policies that may have a gendered effect on previously 'hidden' groups.*

- *Will an existing inequality be made worse as a result of implementation?*

- *Are complaints to the Local Planning Authority increasing and particularly 'gendered' in content?*

- *Is implementation of policies making the situation worse/better for women/men?*

- *Women and men may identify the same issues but may well have different priorities. Have these been highlighted?*

Section 3 Examples: Office development

1) **What are the different experiences and roles of women and men and boys and girls, which might affect:**

- the issues and problems which need to be addressed by the plan
- how women and men might benefit from a policy proposal
- how the policy or proposal is implemented

Relevant statistics: [6]

- 60% of office workers are currently women
- 80% of public transport users are female
- 30% of women have daytime use of a car

Other relevant data from surveys:

Surveys show that women have a need for more support facilities and more predictable journey times. What do women and men's organisations say about the proposals?

2) **What are the gender implications?**

An out of town office development would disadvantage those without a car, the majority of whom are women.

It is also likely to make it more difficult for those with caring responsibilities (the majority of whom are women) to combine a number of different journeys in the normal day.

> **Example:**
>
> Cambridge City Council recently used gender dis-aggregated statistics to help shape policy. Many women in the area work in city centre offices, whilst most of the jobs in peripheral business parks are occupied by men.
>
> These statistics, when combined with the responses to the City's issues paper (in which women favoured part-time job opportunities), supported a policy of further office development within the city.
>
> In this situation, a policy approach that reduced central office development in favour of peripheral high-tech business parks would not have met the needs or preferences of most local women.
>
> And remember, central locations provide the office worker with access to shops, reducing demand for out of town development.

3) **What are the implications for office development policy?**

An office development policy needs to take account of how potential employees will get to work.

A new out of town scheme would act as a magnet for further development and thus heighten the potential gender bias created by the policy.

4) **What policy recommendations would be necessary to ensure gender equality?**

A policy needs to be developed which will ensure that women and men can both access new jobs. This may mean ensuring that public transport policies are put in place alongside the land-use allocations. If this cannot be achieved, then this kind of policy may need to be reconsidered and new office development concentrated around existing public transport hubs.

5) **Who will be responsible for implementing the policy?**

Local Planning Authority / Developer.

6) **How will success be measured?**

A good gender balance of employees commuting to different work locations. An increased use in public transport (and reduction in car use). Inclusion of on-site crèche facilities / nursery (or located near by).

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[6] Where possible use local statistics and information. In the absence of local information, use national statistics or research reports. In some instances where local information is not available, you may need to rely on local knowledge. If in doubt contact local community groups (representing both women's and men's views) who are likely to have given the issues consideration.

Examples: Location of waste recycling facilities

1) **What are the different experiences and roles of women and men and boys and girls, which might affect:**

- the issues and problems which need to be addressed by the plan
- how women and men might benefit from a policy proposal
- how the policy or proposal is implemented

Relevant statistics:

- 30% of women have daytime use of a car.
- the majority of older women do not own a car and live in single person households.

Other relevant data from surveys:

Women prefer local kerb-side collections or recycling skips to be located in relation to busy workplace sites or a transport termini (train station or bus station) (e.g. MORI survey for Hertfordshire waste strategy).

2) **What are the gender implications?**

A policy which only encourages recycling collection at shopping centres will not be used by those without access to a car, the majority of whom are women. Consideration should also be given to the physical limitations of the elderly (i.e. steps and high entry points for the recycling receptacles).

3) **What are the implications for the siting of recycling collection points?**

If the rate of recycling is to be increased significantly then street facilities are required. Under these circumstances parking restrictions need to be considered, as well as locating the facilities in busy areas with good lighting (safety).

4) **What policy recommendations would be necessary to ensure gender equality?**

A policy needs to be developed which will ensure that both women and men can access facilities. Particular attention should be given to areas with high rise flats (e.g. the siting of disposable nappy recycling facilities).

5) **Who will be responsible for implementing the policy?**

Local Planning Authority and Local Waste Authority.

6) **How will success be measured?**

An increase in both the numbers of women and men participating in recycling and in the types of items being recycled.

Example - Recreation areas and local open space

1) **What are the different experiences and roles of women and men and boys and girls, which might affect:**

- the issues and problems which need to be addressed by the plan
- how women and men might benefit from a policy proposal
- how the policy or proposal is implemented

Relevant statistics:

Statistics showing numbers of boys and girls, their different aged groups, and the types of sports and outdoor recreation that they get involved with.

Statistics for women and men's active sporting interests and other recreational habits, by different age groups.

Note: Recreation and Open Space is interpreted differently by different groups, but it should include the following: Swimming, Football, Cricket, Basketball, Netball, Walking (also with dog) Children's Play Areas, Parks, Cycling, Shopping, Cinema, Bingo, Social Drinking, Eating.

Statistics on the recreation habits and requirements of boys and girls / women and men of different ages, with transport implications, safety, etc.

2) **What are the gender implications?**

What are the kinds of sports & activities undertaken locally? Is there strong evidence that supports male or female participation? (for example, Bingo is a predominantly female past time enjoyed by more people than, for example, those attending football matches).

3) **What are the implications for recreation and access to relevant facilities?**

A thorough collection of data will identify what the recreational habits of the local population are. What would the implications be if people were attracted from other localities?

4) **What policy recommendations would be necessary to ensure gender equality?**

Is there good access to local transport? Good parking facilities?

5) **Who will be responsible for implementing the policy?**

Local Planning Authority, Transport providers, Leisure Facility Providers (particularly Council managed facilities).

6) **How will success be measured?**

Increased participation in local sporting activities, bringing a positive influence on the community's health and local economy.

> **Example:**
>
> A City proposal to close several local swimming pools and replace them with two large out of town leisure pool complexes was proposed. This decision was based upon the assumption that users travel by car and extensive car parking was seen as vital to the new developments' accessibility and success. Consultation exercises had focused on the predominantly male official swimming clubs in the area.
>
> Local women who had the use of a car pointed out that their children would no longer be able go swimming after school without being driven to the new site. Those women without access to a car, including members of older women's swimming clubs, complained they would no longer be able to use the facilities. The result could have had health implications for several octogenarians who have kept healthy by swimming all their lives.
>
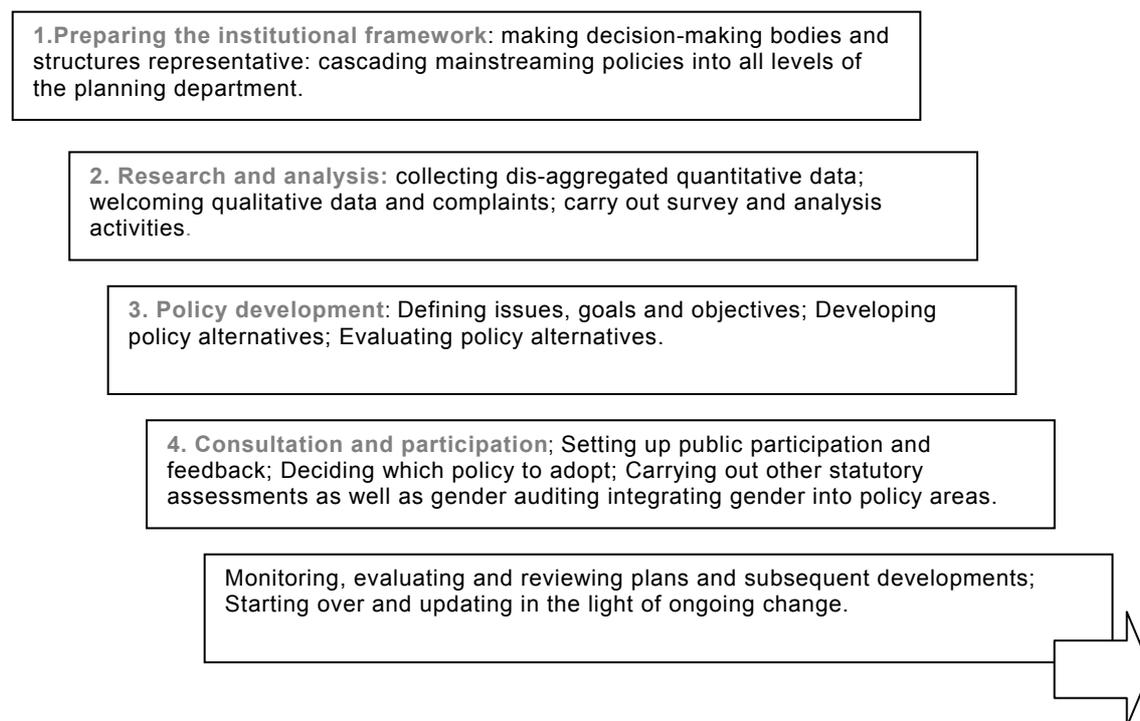> Dis-aggregated data collection on existing users and inclusive public participation exercises would help reveal the actual situation and add weight to the argument for retaining local facilities. The Local Planning Authority would therefore avoid introducing a scheme that encouraged the use of the private car whilst helping encourage inner city regeneration by retaining the facilities, with sustainable results.

Section 4 – Getting the context right

Mainstreaming requires integrating relevant issues into each stage of the policy making process.

1. Preparing the institutional framework
2. Research and analysis
3. Policy development
4. Consultation and participation

An expanded flowchart version of these stages comprises of:

> **1.Preparing the institutional framework**: making decision-making bodies and structures representative: cascading mainstreaming policies into all levels of the planning department.

> **2. Research and analysis:** collecting dis-aggregated quantitative data; welcoming qualitative data and complaints; carry out survey and analysis activities.

> **3. Policy development**: Defining issues, goals and objectives; Developing policy alternatives; Evaluating policy alternatives.

> **4. Consultation and participation**; Setting up public participation and feedback; Deciding which policy to adopt; Carrying out other statutory assessments as well as gender auditing integrating gender into policy areas.

> Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing plans and subsequent developments; Starting over and updating in the light of ongoing change.

The stages described above are not separate entities and they may not necessarily take place in this sequence - there will also be some overlap. Providing Local Planning Authorities seek to cover all the main five aspects, they can go about it in whatever way works best. It is not always possible to begin mainstreaming at the start of the plan-making process (although this is the ideal).

1. **Preparing the institutional framework**

There needs to be evidence of women and men's involvement within all stages of the planning process, both as the 'planners' and the 'planned'. Mainstreaming often focuses on institutional or organisational frameworks to ensure that women and men are represented at the highest plan policy-making levels.

The intention to undertake mainstreaming should be fully discussed with Committee members, appropriate training undertaken and full explanation given, particularly at the early stages of change. The toolkit includes check questions on this aspect. Successful mainstreaming will often include a cultural change within the authority, through training and awareness raising among planners, CPD programme preparation as well as sharing and comparing approaches and progress with other Local Planning Authorities.

There is a danger with such equality exercises that institutional and personnel matters become a major issue, so much so that the purpose of planning – the improvement, control and design of the built environment – is sidelined. Emphasis is given throughout this section to the importance of 'outputs', namely urban and rural areas that are better planned to the benefit of all their inhabitants.

Image and the planning process

Everything depends upon the Local Planning Authority adopting a positive attitude and providing a supportive political and organisational setting to the mainstreaming process. The 'good planner' will naturally incorporate gender into his or her individual perspective on planning because of a commitment to the RTPI's Code of Professional Conduct. Nevertheless, much work needs to be done behind the scenes to lay the groundwork in terms of staffing, resources, time, budgets, commitment, and any one of the following may involve considerable work.

Some of the institutional changes recommended would require higher-level managerial change within the local authority itself. They are beyond the scope of an individual planner to change, and may be beyond the remit of the planning department to influence too. However, if the local authority is also committed to equalities under EO and EU requirements, then the achievement of these objectives should not be a problem, but a manifestation of good corporate management.

Development control is a major aspect of planning activity and the facilitator of all development (buildings and uses). It is also a key means of policy implementation. Indicators should therefore be in operation for individual land use and topic areas (as above), but there is also the question of the whole style and ethos of the development control process shaping the decision-making. One problem that besets planning departments is that of the 'image' of an off-putting unwelcoming culture, in which many members of the general public, both women and men, feel awkward and unwanted if they dare to visit their Local Planning Authority.

Remember, first impressions count!

A 'gender lens' should be cast over the following areas within the Local Planning Authority:

- Staff composition
- Numbers of appeals/complaints
- Receptionist training
- Organisation/style of section
- Liaison with forward planning
- Links with community
- Staff training
- Overall image
- Overall attitude to the general public
- Are toilets, baby changing facilities, coffee machines, seats and photocopiers available for members of the general public visiting the planning office?

2. Research and analysis

Every plan is based on a survey and analysis of the issues facing the local area and its needs for the future. If a plan is to meet such needs then there has to be an analysis of what is happening to the population, and an identification of the issues that are important to particular groups.

Integrating gender into the research process depends on the availability of dis-aggregated statistics for women and men within the location concerned. This first stage requires the collection and analysis of such data – as well as on ethnicity, disability and age (as these are all crosscutting factors). This will help the authority to identify the differences and similarities between women and men in the local area.

Key statistics are likely to include:

- Population characteristics
- Income groups and employment
- Travel use by mode
- Trip length and purpose
- Employment and participation rates

The analysis of gender dis-aggregated data will highlight areas of difference that might affect future planning policy. For example, the proportion of women and men working in different sectors and locations needs to be

investigated carefully. As Local Planning Authorities gain expertise they will be able to develop more sophisticated and complex models of the situation, thus achieving 'better planning' for everyone. Some gender specific facts and figures will be available from existing data sources e.g. the census and the impact and needs assessment reports required by the Local Government Equality Standard.

Other data will need to be collected by the authority. Data collection processes and systems may need to be set up for the collection of such information as a matter of routine. Ethnicity and disability should be gendered too, as these are not homogenous groups. Figures on employment, home ownership, participation in sport and leisure should all be collected separately for each gender.

Adopting such an approach will help the authority meet the Local Government Equality Standard. However it will involve time, resources, staffing and most importantly, <u>commitment</u>!

3. Policy development

Do not assume that only women will benefit from gender mainstreaming. Men are often responsible for childcare in areas where there is high male unemployment and therefore experience the same problems when accessing the built environment.

Policy areas such as 'waste management' may appear unrelated to the process of mainstreaming, but as we have seen in the toolkit application examples, such areas can have significant gender dimensions[7]. Recycling skips are often located in car parks some distance from residential areas. If there is not a door to door collection, then those without cars will have difficulty getting to these facilities, resulting in low levels of recycling activity.

Some individuals, for example elderly women, may have difficulty reaching up and using recycling facilities. Elderly women form a large percentage of the population in many retirement and rural areas. In fact, just about every topic is likely to have some gender dimension and therefore it is important to carry out the process thoroughly.

Mainstreaming gender in the formulation of policy objectives may be approached in **three ways**:

1. In response to community needs
2. As key planning topics
3. In association with other initiatives, audits and appraisals

a) The first approach

Starts with an understanding of community needs as identified with gendered research and by the needs assessment report as required by the equality standard. Once the needs of particular groups in the local community have been identified, the next step is to think about implications for policy.

> **Example**: (divided land uses and transport policy).
>
> Women are usually responsible for childcare, shopping, homemaking and other essential caring activities. Whilst women use public transport twice as much as men, those with cars tend to use them for more family-related journeys. 40% of car journeys undertaken by women are for escort purposes such as taking children to school, spouses to the station and other family members to the shops, doctors and to leisure activities (compared with 11% in the case of men). In contrast, a typical male journey to work is likely to be an uninterrupted journey during the morning, with the occasional 'stop-off' to either the pub, the video store or to buy a take-away meal during the return journey.
>
> The division of work, home and employment, and residential areas has been exaggerated by land use zoning and policies of dispersal and decentralisation. Such policies make it difficult for parents to combine work and home duties. The situation is made worse by transport policies that favour the needs of commuters who make simple mono-purpose journeys to and from work.
>
> Such policies will not easily accommodate journeys from work to home that include trips to the childminder, food shopping, newsagents, etc. Land use transportation policy designed to meet the needs of male workers may prove impractical for many women with more complex travel patterns.

Although many groups within the community will have shared needs, there may be particular groups (e.g. young mothers, Asian women and elderly men) with very specific needs.

In some circumstances it may be appropriate to target policies to <u>meet the needs</u> of this group. In other cases, it will be important to ensure that policy objectives do not <u>disadvantage</u> them.

b) The second approach

Begins with key policy topics such as transport, housing, employment, tourism, the natural environment, built heritage and so on. It is then possible to ask a series of evaluative questions about the impact of each policy area on men, women and/or other groups.

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[7] http://www.ndpgenderequality.ie

For example:

- Who does the issue affect? Does this affect women and men differently?
- Is there evidence of any existing inequality in this area?
- Has the Local Planning Authority received complaints that are specifically related to gender issues?
- Are complaints to the Local Planning Authority particularly gendered in content?
- Where and what are the positive and negative impacts of the policy in question?
- Will the policy make it worse/better for women/men after implementation?

Answers to these questions should be used to shape policy priorities. Absence of data should not be interpreted as confirmation that there isn't a problem, or that there is no differential impact on women and men. To undertake such policy evaluation dis-aggregated data is essential in order to establish the 'before' and 'after' situation in terms of monitoring equality impacts.

Example: (Call Centres)

Most call centres employ women, many of them part-time. Statistically they are less likely than men to have the use of a car to travel to work and if public transport is unavailable, then they may join the rising numbers of women car owners.

When considering zoning and locational issues, both at plan-making and development control stages, it is important to note the extent to which women's employment equality rights are affected by decentralisation policies which are not supported by appropriate public transport options.

Attention to such gendered issues will also reinforce environmental policies such as reducing the use of private cars and creating sustainable transport systems. However, seeking to reduce the use of private cars, or making parking less available locally may be seen as discriminatory.

This is particularly so if there are few off peak bus services at times when many part-time workers are travelling (most of whom are women). Such transport policies are more likely to disadvantage women than men.

c)   The third approach

Incorporates gender equality into other statutory and non-statutory appraisal processes (such as environmental and sustainability appraisal). A gender sensitive perspective can therefore be incorporated into existing appraisal process, eliminating discrimination and maximising equality benefits.

Many policy areas offer the opportunity for linkages to be made with ethnicity and disability policies and gender mainstreaming activities. This will require a greater depth of data collection at first, but with time the Local Planning Authority will build up a robust database to tackle gender, disability and race mainstreaming demands.

Assessment techniques

The following supports the detailed range of checklists within the toolkit by introducing approaches on how to assess the gender impact of policies, including techniques such as Gender Impact Assessment (GIA).

The purpose of a GIA is to help ensure that policy proposals achieve the optimum results and do not unwittingly discriminate against particular groups. The Race Relations Amendment Act 2001 requires a similar process of appraisal. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Recommendations for Implementation (namely PAFET: Policy Appraisal for Equal Treatment) are being widely used for this purpose and incorporate an impact assessment approach. PAFET is based upon evaluating policy at three stages:

Identify the impact of a policy on different groups

Validate the legal requirements for minority individuals

Amend the proposals accordingly

Using a matrix

Plymouth City Council used their ***sustainability matrix** as a basis for building in social and community issues, which helped develop gender auditing within the planning process. Planning topics and policy issues were listed down the left side of the matrix and a series of column headings were put along the top, namely, Gender Implications, Relevant Gender-specific Data and Policy Implications. By using such a matrix, you can progress down each policy listed and track across the columns to consider the implications. This process enabled Plymouth to get a manageable overall view on how gender issues impinge of each policy issue.

(*Plymouth 2001 - *See Illustrative Policy Matrix on opposite page)

Sustainability Matrix

Planning Policy or Proposal	Relevant Gender Specific Data	Ongoing Community Feedback	Gender Implications	Planning Implications	Policy Recommendations
1. Pedestrianise key central area streets as part of urban design programme	*Check gender of pedestrian users, street crime rates and reasons for using these routes.*	*Check feedback on what local people want, as well as consultations.*	*Decrease in access, reduction in safety, longer distances to bus stops.*	*Check that scheme meets user needs. Avoid design features that are anti-social such as lumpy paving stones and steps.*	*Specify detailed requirements, possibly back up by revised Central Area Design Guide.* *Consider allowing cars back in during evenings to increase surveillance. Provide better lighting, toilets and bus stops.*
2. Relocate office development beside motorway outside town	*60% of office workers are female.* *80% of public transport users are female, with only 30% of women having potential daytime use of car.*	*Existing complaints about journey times, lack of support facilities.* *Increase in children suffering from asthma.*	*Lack of access to new site for those without cars.* *Reduces female employees job opportunities - will affect economic viability of the town.*	*New scheme not linked to schools, shops, public transport.* *Reduces proximity for trip-chaining of journeys, increases time travelling*	*Ideally do not proceed with this proposal.* *Alternatively improve public transport links and seek to co-ordinate future policy on adjacent location and access to schools, shops, housing.*

3. And so on . .

There are several different approaches to undertaking GIA, but basically it involves identifying the different uptakes and/or benefits for women and men to a particular policy. This process therefore identifies:

- **Direct benefits** - policies that benefit women specifically, such as off peak transport for part-time women workers with new bus routes serving predominantly female workplace locations.
- **Indirect benefits** - accessibility for disabled people that will also benefit people with pushchairs.
- **Neutral impacts** - landscaping improvements that look better but do not reduce visibility.
- **Groups at risk** – pedestrianisation schemes that affect public safety on streets at night.
- **Missed opportunities** - encouraging the evening economy without addressing issues such as bus stops, accessible streets, toilets and integrated transport. Creating a variety of attractions other than bars and clubs will attract a wider mix of types of people, creating a less threatening environment for women, elderly and families.

GIA gives an overall impression of whether policies are performing well on gender issues, and illuminates areas of policy which could be strengthened by revealing gaps in both the data and understanding of particular issues. For example, it is not possible to know if a policy promoting cycle paths has a differential impact on women and men unless data has been collected that reports on the issue. Local knowledge is also valuable, including feedback from community development workers, residents groups and letters from the public concerned about aspects of policy and public facilities.

Another approach to GIA is to ask a more searching series of questions about each policy to establish its positive and negative impacts, and to identify areas for improvement (see equality Impact Assessment in Northern Ireland box). The results of these assessments should be used to develop and refine policy, removing areas of weakness and identifying areas for further research. It is a step by step process, with gender embedded in the policy.

The starting point is 'the people' - their composition, diversity and needs, rather than starting with the land uses or developments themselves. The success or failure of the whole enterprise will be judged by the resulting built environment.

4. Consultation and participation

Consultation is a fundamental part of plan preparation, referred to in both the equality standard for local government and guidance on the preparation of community strategies (EOLG, 2001). Councils should ensure that consultation techniques do not discriminate against particular groups, particularly where English is not a first language. Attention should be given to the way in which participation is undertaken, especially where and when it takes place This is one of the most important stages in achieving social inclusion and equality in the planning process

Accessibility in all sectors of the community is a key issue for achieving inclusive participation. For example, it is important to hold public meetings and exhibitions in places well served by public transport. It is also important to hold meetings in buildings accessible to those with mobility problems (including those with sight or hearing impairment).

Consultation procedures alone are not sufficient to ensure that planning policy is gender mainstreamed. The community must see the results of their efforts. Consultation can help identify key issues, it can be educational for the planners and it can be linked with community strategies. Consultation can also contribute to the achievement of the Local Government Equality Standard. For monitoring purposes, records should be kept of all meetings held, timings, location, gender composition of audience, style of meetings, etc.

Meaningful Public Participation

Research for this toolkit showed that arranging public participation meetings in inner London boroughs during the religious period of Ramadan will not be supported in areas with a large concentration of Muslims. (Fridays are generally not suitable days for public meetings because of devotional duties within several religions).

Arranging meetings for ethnic minority women in a community hall that contains a bar selling alcohol, or is seen as a venue for white working class men, may discourage a wide range of women from attending due to religious, cultural and social class reasons. Meetings during the evening in halls surrounded by badly lit streets, offering no childcare provision, would also prove unpopular.

Successful participation events have been held in factories, supermarkets and shopping centres, attracting a wider and more representative range of women and men. In order to assist the participation of women in the Sandwell UDP, a number of different techniques have been adopted, including weekend and evening meetings for those that work, and providing childcare facilities where necessary. In situations where ongoing, long term public participation is required, (for example, in respect of regeneration projects) some urban regeneration agencies pay participants an attendance fee to ensure a continued input.

Higher priority should be given to long-term capacity building, rather than 'hit and run' exercises. Similarly, the excessive collection of statistical, quantitative research without a balance of qualitative participatory activity may result in key issues being overlooked. Balance is essential.

Monitoring and evaluation: effects and outputs

The final element in the process relates to monitoring and evaluation - looking at the effects of the process and the resulting change in 'what is built'. This can be the most challenging and difficult part of mainstreaming (as with the local government equality standard, focus on the highest levels of achievement). The Local Planning Authority must monitor statistics on 'the difference' that gender mainstreaming makes to ensure effective monitoring.

Effects can be evaluated in terms of the impact on people and by the physical output of the process – the changing nature of the built environment itself. It should not be forgotten that 'planning is for people' and that user and resident satisfaction is a key measure of good planning.

Equality Impact Assessment in Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland the equality impact assessment asks the following questions:

1. Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups?

2. Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular main policy area?

3. Is there an opportunity to promote greater equality of opportunity or good relations by altering policy or working with others in Government or the community at large?

4. Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems that are specific to them?

Effects on policies and people

A gender perspective will affect every policy issue and subject area that impacts on people's lives. Areas that are most likely to affect women and men differently are:

- The provision of affordable housing (data on income and lone parent families).

- Retail development (data on work and travel patterns).

- Childcare, eldercare and healthcare facilities (data on work and caring).

- Transport and accessibility (data on travel patterns and caring).

But remember, everything must be checked as topics such as waste management, greenbelts, industrial development can have gender impacts too. Gender Mainstreaming will also affect a range of aspects of policy formulation, for example;

- Mainstreaming gender into employment policy has implications for land use zoning policy, location and distribution of workplaces, development control over office, shop and industrial locations and related transport, childcare and access considerations.

- The inclusion of women in decision-making committees and in executive levels of the planning process would in turn influence urban regeneration and renewal policies. Such areas are recognised as under-representing women's views.

- A balanced representation of women and men in the planning department, in decision-making bodies and in the organisations contacted during participation and consultation stages will help reflect the different life experiences encountered by women and men (for example, travel patterns, personal safety issues, recreational time). This is particularly important in Local Planning Authorities where the percentage of women planning officers and members is relatively low.

- Achieving a balance of family and work life, which is integral to EO policy, would drastically affect land use decisions. It would influence the distribution, location, and ease of access of local facilities and the relationships between employment areas, residential areas, shops, schools, leisure and other social infrastructural services and amenities. Gender mainstreaming would reshape locational policy and transport considerations. All this would take time, but if the Local Planning Authority sets the course, then clear evidence of change should be visible by the next forward planning review.

- Higher levels of economic development, employment and sustainability would be achieved, resulting in higher recruitment and retention rates among women, less absenteeism, less pollution and more balanced land use zoning.

Further Information and guidance

Further advice, information and sources for further reading are published on the RTPI website under the following headings;

- Executive summary

- Further information and links

- Gender auditing and mainstreaming report

- Power point presentation