

# Forestry Commission

## Equality Impact Assessment Summary

Name of policy, function or service

**Woodlands for Wales Action Plan**

The *Woodlands for Wales* Action Plan sets out what needs to happen over the next 5 years to deliver the aims and objectives of the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) strategy for woodlands and trees.

Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) managed the development and publication of the Action Plan on behalf of WAG.

The Strategy itself went through a full WAG Equality Impact Assessment and the Action Plan has been through their EQIA screening which has been approved by WAG's Equality and Human Rights Division.

Purpose and aim(s) of the policy, function or service

*Woodlands for Wales* Action Plan sets out what needs to happen over the next five years to make progress towards achieving the outcomes of *Woodlands for Wales* - the Welsh Assembly Government's 50 year strategy for trees and woodlands

*Woodlands for Wales* has five key themes relating to woodlands and trees which are:

**Welsh Woodlands and Trees** – this theme covers the nature of trees and woodlands in Wales, the benefits they can deliver and objectives for their future sustainable management

**Responding to Climate Change** – this covers the contribution trees and woodlands can make to reducing the carbon footprint of Wales.

**Woodlands for People** – this covers the opportunities and benefits trees and woodlands can provide for people in Wales

**A Competitive and Integrated Forest Sector** – this looks at the contribution trees and woodlands make to the Welsh economy and forest industry and considers how these can be increased and provide wider benefits.

**Environmental Quality** – this considers the contribution trees and woodlands make to environmental quality - including bio-diversity, landscape character and soil and water management.

The actions in the *Woodlands for Wales* Action Plan are grouped under the same five key themes. Each action is linked to an overarching key outcome and has an identified lead/leads who will involve other organisations from across the public, private and third sectors in their completion.

### Who will benefit mainly from this policy, function or service?

- The Welsh population will benefit, including diversity groups, with the Woodlands for People section being the focus of inclusive and equitable delivery of the aims and objectives of the strategy. The Action Plan identifies methods of delivering these – again with a focus of inclusive and equitable delivery in the actions under the Woodlands for People theme.
- Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) staff will benefit as the strategy sets out the aims and objectives WAG has for trees and woodlands in Wales and the Action Plan identifies the actions to be taken to deliver them.
- Private woodland owners and businesses operating in the forest sector will benefit through clarification of WAG's aims and objectives for woodlands and their products - the Action Plan identifies methods of delivering these.

### Information and Data (evidence) used

A full EqIA has been undertaken for the Woodlands for Wales strategy. The results of this can be accessed here: [Woodlands for Wales - WAG Equality Impact Assessment](#).

A WAG EqIA screening for the *Woodlands for Wales* Action Plan was undertaken. This screening can be accessed here: [Woodlands for Wales Action Plan – WAG EqIA screening](#)

From the WAG screening it was evident that a full EqIA on the *Woodlands for Wales* Action Plan was not needed as it flows from the *Woodlands for Wales* strategy which underwent the full WAG Inclusive Policy Making process.

It was also evident that the actions under the *Woodlands for People* theme will be the focus of inclusive and equitable delivery.

The Action Plan was prepared on behalf of WAG by Forestry Commission Wales with the involvement of the Woodland Strategy Advisory Panel. This panel includes representatives from government, social, business, voluntary and environmental sectors.

### Summary of Impact

The outcomes of the *Woodlands for Wales* Action Plan will have positive benefits for the people of Wales including those included in the six diversity strands.

There is limited evidence relating to religion and no evidence relating to sexual orientation in the context of this plan. However in both instances no negative impact is envisaged. However there may be issues that will be picked up through the screening process when specific projects are being developed.

Throughout the *Woodlands for People* section of the Strategy itself there are underlying themes of social inclusion and fairness which support equality and human rights. It recognises the issues faced by many sectors of the population

including the young and old, different levels of fitness and ability and urban and rural communities. This section clearly promotes an inclusive approach to delivering objectives.

The Action Plan gives direction to how the aims and objectives of the strategy are to be delivered with due regard for equality and diversity (E&D). However specific projects which arise from the *Woodlands for Wales* action plan may require more focused EqIAs to consider impacts and give opportunities to promote diversity. Local consultations may be appropriate in some instances and representatives from equality groups may need to be involved when planning specific projects which may impact on them.

### **Monitoring/Evaluation**

Continual monitoring will take place through the Woodlands for Wales Action Plan monitoring procedures - this will be a continual process

FCW will continue to fund public opinion and public access surveys related to forestry and the use of woodlands and forests.

### **Further Information**

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