

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

### General Details:

Name of Policy Holder / Creator: (Include full contact details)

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Start Date of this EQIA process:

10 July 2007 – first of the EWTF workshops in Reading

If an external organisation (a partner) is responsible for the EqIA give contact details and attach a copy of their Equality and Diversity Policy. If no policy exists refer this to the Diversity Manager (GB).

([lesley.crozier@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lesley.crozier@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) )

Not applicable.

## 1.0 SCOPE OF POLICY OR FUNCTION

1.1 What is the Title of the policy or function being assessed or reviewed?

The Delivery Plan for the government's Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests published by Defra in June 2007. The assessment is based on version 5.0 of the draft.

1.2 Is the policy or function contracted out or is it dealt with in-house?  
Dealt with in-house

1.3 Aims of the Policy or Function

a. What is the purpose of the policy or function?

b. Who are the intended beneficiaries?

### c. How will it affect others e.g. employees, local communities?

- a) to set out the delivery of the Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests
- b) the immediate beneficiaries are the stakeholders and partners directly involved in the delivery of the strategy including those who work with us (our trading partners) and to whom we provide a service . The wider beneficiaries are the general public who will experience the improved outcomes from England's trees, woods and forests either directly to their quality of life or indirectly through the existence of a sustainably managed, climate change proofed and economically viable resource
- c) the delivery plan will provide a clarity of direction and begin to change the emphasis of the FC's work towards, among other things, more work on: climate change; green infrastructure and community and personal engagement with woodland particularly in urban areas; and business and markets. The greater clarity of direction will assist FC staff with prioritisation of their work and will effect the range of work and skills needed by existing and future employees and volunteers and local communities. The detailed Actions of the Delivery Plan (to sit on the web, "below" the "printed plan") has yet to be finalised and it is within these actions that much of the detail likely to have an impact on all sections of the community will become more apparent.

### 1.4 In what ways will you involve any of the people affected by the policy or function in this process? For example, consultation exercise, Forum meetings, briefing notes, etc.

During the process of formulating the delivery plan we held a number of workshops and forums, and held a bilateral meeting with a number of key representative organisations and potential contributors to the delivery plan including business partners (e.g. England Forest Industries Partnership liaison).

FC staff also had the opportunity to provide their thoughts and comments on the development of the delivery plan. A presentation was made to the Recreation Managers in April inviting them to give feedback on the initial proposals. Senior FC staff have been involved through national seminars and workshops sessions. There were also regional meetings.

N.B. Learning note: a more inclusive approach, with wider staff awareness and engagement in the delivery plan process (particularly of front-line staff) would have been valuable and should be considered for similar processes in future.

## 2.0 CONSIDERING THE EXISTING EVIDENCE

### 2.1 What evidence or information is available on different groups to indicate that this policy or function could or does result in different outcomes for different groups? (i.e. how different circumstances or needs or differences in experiencing the policy or function can lead to different outcomes)

In preparing its Outdoors for All diversity action plan (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/issues/recreation/diversity-actionplan/index.htm>), Defra and Natural England, with input from the Forestry Commission, undertook research into why certain groups were under-represented in visits to the countryside. This research and Defra's action plan published in February 2008 forms much of the basis of the evidence underpinning the delivery plan.

For example, we know that:

The majority of minority ethnic populations and the LGBT community can be found in the larger towns and cities (from evidence from the 2001 census and National Statistics of the distribution of civil partnerships).

Leisure surveys (England Leisure Visits 2005

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/leisure/recreation/dayvisits05.pdf>) suggest that ethnic minorities and disabled people are under-represented in those visiting the countryside (and by extrapolation woodland) when compared to the background population. Although women, who are often under-represented in other countryside destinations are generally well represented in visits to woodland. (ref: FC's Quality of experience surveys)

We also know from research (Outdoors for All [Defra, 2008] and Race Equality and the Forestry Commission [Dave Edwards and Sue Weldon, Forest Research 2006] that facilitated visits targeting key community groups, can help in disseminating information; building confidence and encouraging repeat visits. Other organisations such as BTCV have had experience in developing capacity within key target communities through volunteering and practical conservation work. Both outreach and volunteering feature as activities within the delivery plan.

Women are well represented in those visiting and using woodland – from the 2007 England Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 76% of women and 77% of men responded “yes” to the question “In the last few years, have you visited forests or woodlands for walks, picnics, or other recreation?”

([http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ForestryEnglandAdditionalAug07.pdf/\\$FILE/ForestryEnglandAdditionalAug07.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ForestryEnglandAdditionalAug07.pdf/$FILE/ForestryEnglandAdditionalAug07.pdf)) However, women are under-represented within the workforce of the forestry and arboricultural sector (information from Lantra suggests that 89% of staff and 85% of proprietors were male [Trees and Timber Sector

Skills Agreement, Lantra, 2007). Younger people may also be under-represented – with the most common age of staff in the same survey being the 45-54 year old age group.

Within the Forestry Commission (across GB for 2008) women make up 32% of the workforce and tend to be under-represented in senior and in operational (rather than administrative) grades (Forestry Commission Gender Equality Scheme Annual Monitoring Report 2008).

## 2.2 What does this evidence or information tell you about the actual or likely impact on different groups?

FC has a good reputation for providing access for all and specialist facilities and infrastructure for disabled people. In implementing the delivery plan we will look to draw and build upon our experience, for example from managing over 100 million visits to woodland each year. There is a strong cultural connection with trees, so our work is likely to generate a positive response.

The Delivery Plan (Aim 4 Quality of Life) acknowledges that in the context for our work *"Society is becoming more culturally and ethnically diverse. This changing demographic brings with it a broader range of cultural experiences and views of the natural environment"*. Also *"Opportunities to interact with, learn and take risks in the outdoor environment – particularly for children and young people – have been constrained, reducing wider understanding and appreciation of the natural world."*

*"While many people already use woodlands and forests for informal recreation, healthy physical activity and education, some sectors of the community are still under-represented in their engagement with trees, woods and forests. They may therefore miss out on the many individual and community benefits that trees, woods and forests can offer. This means helping both individuals and community leaders gain a greater understanding of the benefits and opportunities trees, woods and forests could provide. It also means local woodland managers and staff putting greater emphasis on communication and outreach."*

The outcomes (envisaged for 2020) include of "a rich mix of opportunities for leisure, natural play and sport and recreation" and "new tree planting and woodland creation closer to where people live and work are increasing the availability of accessible woodland in identified areas of need and opportunity". This will support another outcome where "More people in more places understand and appreciate the full value of their local trees, woods and forests and champion their sustainable management. There is increasingly active community involvement with neighbourhood trees and woodlands, with a greater range and diversity of people directly involved in their planning, care and enjoyment. As a result, new and innovative social enterprises are contributing to the prosperity and cohesion of local communities"

The Plan includes the following actions, among others, that are intended to increase the diversity of people using and benefiting from trees, woods and forests:

*Further develop the Forestry Commission's role as a provider of high quality recreation, natural play and leisure experiences to a wide audience for the benefit of their health, well-being and personal development. Pilot new ways of getting more people, particularly from under-represented groups, involved in the creation, management and enjoyment of their local trees, woods and forests.*

The second activity is towards the objective of "Active, stronger and more sustainable communities: To enable more people in more places to enjoy the personal and social benefits of trees, woods and forests, contributing to more active, stronger and sustainable communities."

The shift in emphasis within the Delivery Plan towards the new provision of accessible woodland and associated community engagement which will predominantly be in or on the edge of urban areas is likely to benefit minority ethnic populations, disabled people and the LGBT community.

Any shift towards urban areas could also benefit those who are reliant on

public transport. The provision of more accessible woodland closer to where people live could make such woodland available to a wider proportion of society. For example evidence shows that only 10% of the population in England currently have access to woodland within 500 metres of where they live.

Increased opportunities to engage with woodlands as individuals or as communities are likely to have a positive impact.

The Delivery Plan (Aim 5 Business and Markets) acknowledges that *"Employers in the forest business sector report problems recruiting and retaining employees. There are also shortages of skills within the existing workforce. The industry has an ageing workforce and a projected escalating loss of skills and employees as increasing proportions of the current workforce retire."*

The outcomes (envisaged for 2020) include: *"The forest business sector has a well-trained workforce with recognised skills, regular opportunities for professional development and structured career progression. This has resulted in... a healthy flow of new entrants. ....Local communities are benefiting from better training opportunities and professional development."*

There is an intermediate objective (for 2008-2012) to *"improve recruitment and retention rates for the sector and enhance skills through the provision of accessible and relevant training"* with an activity to *"improve the image of the sector to potential new entrants, including developing stronger linkage between the forest sector businesses and educational institutions"*

The lack of diversity in the workforce may be addressed at the recruitment stage using routes such as volunteering, educational initiatives, careers information and exposing the industry to a wider cross section of society.

One area of interest is in the issue regarding the assessment and verification of qualification from overseas (notably migrant and in particular eastern European) workers seeking employment in Great Britain. The skills shortage of the sector and the employment of BME communities could be addressed by investigation into this area at a GB level. This could involve FC GB (through the AFAG (Agricultural and Forestry Advisory Group sub-committee which reports to the Health and Safety Commission) but will require wider government action.

## 2.3 What gaps are there in the available information?

Spatial distribution of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender populations.

More specific evaluation of outreach interventions

Specific recreational needs of certain disability groups for example: the blind and visually impaired

Specific needs of faith/religious belief groups.

Longitudinal work to ascertain whether certain interventions have long term impact on behavioural change of key target groups

The link between skills shortages and recognition of overseas qualifications.

## 3.0 ASSESSING IMPACT

### 3.1 Is any consultation already scheduled for this policy or function?

No

Yes - please see 5.1

Date: Ongoing

**3.2 Consider the ways in which different groups are or may be affected by the policy or function or the way in which it is put into practice. You should think about different circumstances or needs and different experiences of the policy or function that may lead to different outcomes.**

Please identify the likely impacts on following the grounds	Beneficial impacts	Adverse impacts, who these affect, and whether or not these could be unlawful discrimination.	Comments (e.g. reason for adverse impact)
Race	<p>Provision of woodland which is more accessible and closer to towns will benefit urban-based ethnic communities (e.g. providing specific health related benefits)</p> <p>Targeted work on volunteering and building capacity within local communities</p>	<p>Wider employment opportunities may not be realised by migrant workers if overseas qualifications are not recognised</p>	<p>Recognition of overseas qualification may be beyond FC influence, although representations could be made at FC GB level to Government consultations.</p>
Gender	<p>Accessible woods are being equally used by both men and women</p>	<p>Workforce is predominantly male. The lack of diversity in the workforce may be addressed at the recruitment stage using routes such as volunteering, educational initiatives, careers information and exposing the industry to a wider cross section of society. Women may not feel safe in an open remote situation</p>	<p>Evidence suggests a largely balanced service delivery with access woods being equally used by both groups. The FC needs to monitor gender use and breakdown of workforce</p>
Disability	<p>Provision of woodland which is accessible and closer to towns may favour people with disabilities for whom distance to travel or provision of public transport are significant.</p>	<p>Development of "hub" sites not close to where people live. Finite budget permits 'all access' areas only where practical.</p>	<p>The inherent nature of woodlands tend to means a degree of limited accessibility is inevitable unless on highly managed sites.</p>

	Provision of high quality recreational infrastructure, which may include specific adaptations		Work with wider service providers to try and get people to our sites.
Sexual Orientation	Provision of woodland which is more accessible and closer to towns will benefit urban-based LGBT communities	All who use the forests etc need to respect the fact that they are public places and act in an appropriate manner.	Everyone ideally should respect the feelings of others. However, there is no realistic way of achieving this in forests etc unless they are intensively managed which is not economically viable.
Religion or Belief	Increased contact with nature can provide an enhanced spiritual well-being.	Other people's enjoyment needs to be respected too.	As above.
Age	Provision of woodland which is accessible and closer to towns will favour older people or parents with young children or young adults for whom distance to travel or provision of public transport are significant	The ageing workforce within the woodland industry could be addressed by encouraging wider interest in employment and enabling the engagement of the migrant workforce.	See race category.

#### 4.0 What does the information you have tell you about how this policy might impact positively or negatively on the different groups within the target audience?

Age	Potentially positive
Disability	Potentially positive
Gender	Potentially positive
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender	Potentially positive
Race	Potentially positive with justifiable negative impacts regarding recognition of overseas qualifications.
Religion and Belief	Potentially positive

## 5.0 MODIFYING ANY ADVERSE IMPACT

5.1 If you have identified any adverse impacts have you considered how you can change the policy or function to reduce or eliminate these and increase or promote equality? You must be careful to ensure that your proposed changes will not create any new adverse impacts.

	<b>Actions required to reduce or eliminate discrimination</b>	<b>Actions required to increase or promote equality</b>	<b>Have any new adverse impacts been created as a result of the changes. If yes, can they be justified? If no, what do you intend to do about them?</b>
Race	Need to recognise overseas qualifications	Flag up issue in response to government consultations and working on AFAG sub-committee	None apparent
Disability	Not applicable	Where practical ensure access paths, play parks, cafes and toilets suitable for those with a disability and their carers.	None apparent
Gender	Not applicable		<b>None apparent</b>
Age	Not applicable		<b>None apparent</b>
Sexual Orientation	Not applicable		<b>None apparent</b>
Religion or Belief	Not applicable		<b>None apparent</b>

5.1 If any, what internal and external consultation has already taken place and what was the outcome?

<b>Name of consultee</b>	<b>Time of consultation (dates)</b>	<b>Consultation methodology</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Countryside Access for All Group	March 08	Invitation to Seminar	No response
Black Environment Network	12 July 2007 1 May 2008	Invite to Workshop Invite to Seminar	Attended Attended Written comments received 19 May
Fieldfare Trust	19 May 2008	Email to contribute to draft plan / engage in discussions	No response
National Youth Agency	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Help the Aged	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto

Age Concern	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Women's National Commission	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Refugee Council	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Mental Health Foundation	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Runnymede Trust	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Ethnic Minority Foundation	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Stonewall	Ditto	Ditto	??
Inter Faith Network	Ditto	Ditto	E-mail received to request further future discussion
Royal National Institute of Blind People	Ditto	Ditto	FC already engaged working on a specific project as part of the delivery plan list of actions
National Children's Bureau	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Lantra	Including 2 July	Ditto	Advice on evidence including skills, training, employment, gender and ethnicity

## 5.2 What additional internal and external consultation is planned? (N.B. Consultation periods should last 12 weeks and should not take place during peak holiday periods).

Name of consultee	Time of consultation (dates)	Consultation methodology	Outcome
<p>The original Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests included a formal period of consultation for three months from May 2006 which received more than 200 written responses.</p> <p>The delivery plan has been developed jointly by Forestry Commission and Natural England and has involved extensive discussion with a range of potential contributors; stakeholder workshops (at the beginning and end of the process); regional meetings; bilateral meetings (with Other Government Departments, Defra officials, Non-Departmental Public Bodies, business groups and Non-Governmental Organisations) and sharing of earlier drafts to elicit further commitment of activity</p> <p>No additional consultation is planned for the moment. However delivery often will involve consultation for example, it is established practice to consult and engage with local communities concerning accessible woodland initiatives.</p>			

## 6.0 Does your policy provide the opportunity to promote equality of opportunity or good relations?

Age	Yes	✓	No	
Disability	Yes	✓	No	
Gender	Yes	✓	No	
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender	Yes	✓	No	

Race	Yes	✓	No	
Religion and Belief	Yes	✓	No	
Age	The Delivery Plan stresses the importance placed on as many people as possible using the forests etc. This Equality Impact assessment (EqIA) has shown that engaging and consulting with communities and other stakeholders benefits the whole process and ensures that the ETWF's are safe, welcoming and accessible.			
Disability	The Delivery Plan stresses the importance placed on as many people as possible using the forests etc. This Equality Impact assessment (EqIA) has shown that engaging and consulting with communities and other stakeholders benefits the whole process and ensures that the ETWF's are safe, welcoming and accessible.			
Gender	The Delivery Plan stresses the importance placed on as many people as possible using the forests etc. This Equality Impact assessment (EqIA) has shown that engaging and consulting with communities and other stakeholders benefits the whole process and ensures that the ETWF's are safe, welcoming and accessible.			
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT)	This Equality Impact assessment (EqIA) has shown that engaging and consulting with communities and other stakeholders benefits the whole process and ensures that the ETWF's are safe, welcoming and accessible.  We need to engage much more with LGBT groups to ensure their views are included			
Race	The Delivery Plan stresses the importance placed on as many people as possible using the forests etc. This Equality Impact assessment (EqIA) has shown that engaging and consulting with communities and other stakeholders benefits the whole process and ensures that the ETWF's are safe, welcoming and accessible.			
Religion and Belief	This Equality Impact assessment (EqIA) has shown that engaging and consulting with communities and other stakeholders benefits the whole process and ensures that the ETWF's are safe, welcoming and accessible.  We need to engage much more with religious and belief groups to ensure their views are included			

## 7.0 Based on the work you have done rate the level of relevance of your policy?

Tick one box for each strand [column?]

	Age	Disability	Gender	LGBT	Religion	Race
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					and belief	
<b>High</b> - There is substantial evidence that people from different groups or communities are (or could be) differently affected by the policy (positively or negatively) - There is substantial public concern about the policy, or concerns have been raised about the policy's potential impact by relevant bodies - The policy is relevant to all or part of the respective general duty, in the case of race, disability and gender.	✓		✓			✓
<b>Medium</b> - There is some evidence that people from different groups or communities are (or could be) differently affected (positively or negatively). - There is some public concern about the policy. - The policy is relevant to parts of the respective general duty, in the case of race, disability and gender.		✓				
<b>Low</b> - There is little or no evidence that some people from different groups or communities are (or could be) differently affected (positively or negatively). - There is little or no evidence of public concern about the policy. - The policy has little or no relevance to the respective general duty, in the case of race, disability and gender.						
<b>Unknown</b> - No evidence or data has been collected therefore an assessment cannot be made				✓	✓	

## 8.0 Do you need to carry out a further impact assessment?

Age	Yes		No	✓
Disability	Yes		No	✓
Gender	Yes		No	✓
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender	Yes		No	✓
Race	Yes		No	✓
Religion and Belief	Yes		No	✓

Age	All areas, but particularly the LGBT and Religion/Belief interests will need to be revisited following the monitoring and review of the implementation
Disability	
Gender	
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender	
Race	
Religion and Belief	

## 9.0 MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

### 9.1 What arrangements are in place for monitoring the **delivery** of the policy or function, and what is the review date for the policy or function?

There is a core set of indicators of success based on the FC England CSR07 indicators. The Delivery Plan is to be revised in March 2012, the revision is expected to be accompanied by some form of review.

### 9.2 The impact of the policy or function needs to be monitored and evaluated, what process is in place to do this?

Within the CSR07 indicators, the Quality of Life indicator will, for a sample of sites, monitor the demographics of the users of the sites. This will allow comparison with the background population of a site's catchment and assist the adjustment of our interventions.

If there are further national leisure surveys, the results may be able to be disaggregated to provide information on the visits of ethnic minorities and disabled people.

There may be an option to include a question on the perceived performance of the FC on equality and diversity in the next Staff Survey due in the summer of 2008.

Lantra Sector Skills employment surveys.

There is a continuing programme of dedicated research in this area to address the evidence gaps.

### 9.3 What other, if any, recommendations are you making about the policy or function?

Race – the lack of recognition of overseas qualifications (particularly from eastern Europe) requires further investigation (at FC GB level) and raising this issue with other government departments.

## 10.0 PUBLISHING THE EqIA RESULTS

10.1 How do you intend to publish the EqIA and, if applicable, the consultation results which formed part of this assessment, (e.g. method to be used, and how specific groups (if applicable) will be reached etc.)


The EqIA will be available on the FC website alongside the completed delivery plan. If requested, a hard copy can be made available.

10.2 Do you have any other relevant information relating to this EqIA that you wish noted?

This assessment has largely been carried out retrospectively. Future projects will realise greater value from this process by being started at the beginning of the project cycle and by engaging with staff more widely and earlier.

## 10.3 The Forestry Commission EqIA – Summary for Publication

<b>Title of Policy or Function:</b>	England's Trees, Woods And Forests – Delivery Plan
<b>EqIA Assessor (names etc):</b>	Joe Watts
<b>Others involved in the EqIA (names etc):</b>	Lesley Crozier, Helen Townsend and Simon Pryor

<p><b>Summary of EqIA:</b></p> <p><b>What you did</b></p> <p><b>What evidence you used</b></p> <p><b>What you found</b></p> <p><b>What consultation you undertook</b></p> <p><b>What changes you made</b></p> <p><b>What will happen next</b></p>	<p>Considered the impact of the implementation of the Delivery Plan on various groups</p> <p>Statistics of distribution of various groups to relate to where our interventions were to be</p> <p>Largely positive impacts expected</p> <p>Invited various diversity and equality groups to contribute to the Delivery Plan (see 5.1)</p> <p>None - but we have noted the need for continuing monitoring of the make-up of those using and benefiting from trees, woods and forests</p> <p>Delivery Plan will accompany a submission to Ministers for approval.</p>
<p><b>Senior Manager's Signature</b></p>	
<p><b>Date</b></p>	<p><b>11 June 2008</b></p>