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1. Introduction

The Forestry Commission is the Government Department responsible for the protection and expansion of Scotland and England's forests and woodlands, including increasing their value to society and the environment.

The Forestry Commission is committed to ensuring that the forests and woodlands we manage are accessible to and enjoyed by all communities, including those with protected characteristics (sex, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

The Forestry Commission:

- Welcomes millions of visitors every year to our woodlands, many of whom utilise and enjoy our visitor centres and thousands of way-marked walks and trails, cycle routes and bridle paths, including more than 140 accessible trails;
- Employs around 2,400 people (as from 1/4/13), most of whom live and work in rural areas;
- Plants many millions of trees every year;
- Sustainably harvests almost four million tonnes of timber every year, which equates to almost a third of the UK's total domestic timber production;
- Is custodian of 900,000 hectares of sustainably managed woods and forests, two thirds of which lie within National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Takes degraded land no one else wants and turns it into green space for the benefit of all, helping to regenerate blighted industrial landscapes such as former coalfield communities and bring new woodlands closer to urban areas;
- Provides grants, licences and advice to community and private woodland owners to encourage new tree planting and sustainable forest management;
- Provides research services relevant to UK and international forestry interests, providing an evidence base for UK forest practices and UK governmental policies; and
- Helped expand Britain's woodlands by an area more than three times the size of greater London in the last 20 years.

2. The Commission's Structure

The Forestry Commission is a statutory body and non-Ministerial Government Department with responsibility for forestry in England and Scotland. Until 31 March 2013, it had responsibility for forestry throughout Great Britain. Under the Devolution Settlement, the Forestry Commission was designated a cross-border public authority. Therefore, it exercised its powers and duties separately and received separate funding in England, Scotland and Wales. However, from 1 April 2013, a new body, [Natural Resources Wales](#), took over the functions previously carried out by the Forestry Commission in Wales.

The Forestry Commission has a statutorily appointed Board of Commissioners consisting of a Chair and up to ten other Forestry Commissioners, who are appointed by the Queen on the recommendation of Ministers.

The Forestry Commission is led by a Director in each country. The Directors are also members of the Board of Commissioners. Delivery of policy, as well as progress against strategy objectives, is overseen in each country by the Commission's National Committees.

The Forestry Commission also has an Executive Board which assists the Country Directors, Director of Central Services and Forest Research Chief Executive in the effective management of the Commission by providing leadership and setting direction for the organisation.

The Forestry Commission takes the lead, on behalf of the Westminster and Scottish Governments, in the development and promotion of sustainable forest management. We deliver the distinct forestry policies of England and Scotland through specific objectives drawn from the country forestry strategies.

We also have three executive agencies that work to targets set by Commissioners and Ministers. Forest Enterprise England and Forest Enterprise Scotland manage our public forests, woodlands and other land in England and Scotland respectively on behalf of the Forestry Commission. Forest Research aims to provide research services relevant to UK and international forestry interests and inform and support forestry's contribution to UK governmental policies. Forest Research provides the evidence base for UK forestry practices and to support innovation.

Further information on the Forestry Commission, including our aims and structure, can be found on our [website](#).

2.1 Our Values

We are an organisation that values:

- **Teamwork** - working as teams with colleagues and others out with the organisation to ensure that trees, woods and forests meet the needs of people in each part of Britain;
- **Professionalism** - enjoying and taking pride in our work, achieving high standards of quality, efficiency and sustainability;
- **Respect** - treating one another with consideration and trust, recognising each person's contribution;
- **Communication** - being open, honest and straightforward with colleagues and others, as willing to listen as to advise;
- **Learning** - always learning, from outside the Forestry Commission as well as from within; and
- **Creativity** - not being afraid to try new ways of doing things.

2.2 Our People Strategy and our Equality and Diversity Strategy

The corporate plans for each country and for Forest Research have common themes defining how the Forestry Commission wishes to work; these determine the key strategic drivers for how the organisation manages its people and services.

Our [People Strategy, 'Fit for our Future'](#), is a framework focused on staff to support the Forestry Commission through the five years from 2011 to 2016. Its vision is to ensure that staff are prepared, equipped and engaged to manage the changing work environment and to drive change in a positive and successful way.

This People Strategy focuses on five key themes, one of which is Equality and Diversity. Within that theme, we are committed to:

- Legal compliance;
- Improving the diversity of our workforce; and,
- Supporting our staff in engagement with communities to meet the General and Specific Duties placed on public bodies through the Equality Act 2010.

Our [Equality and Diversity Strategy](#) was published in April 2012. This is our framework to help embed the diversity elements of our People Strategy throughout the Forestry Commission until 2017. The vision of the Equality and Diversity Strategy is to have a diverse workforce that reflects the society that we serve and to continue to offer exemplar customer services to diverse communities.

The five goals of this Strategy are to ensure that we;

- Build on our successes and continue to work towards making our services and facilities available to all;
- Continue to ensure our departmental policies, organisational objectives and operational practices enable everyone to access our services and facilities;
- Continue to engage with communities to ensure our services and facilities are fit for purpose and tailored to meet their requirements;
- Continue to respect, support and value all our staff, treating them in accordance with our values; and,
- Recruit and employ people in order to make our workforce more representative of the GB population.

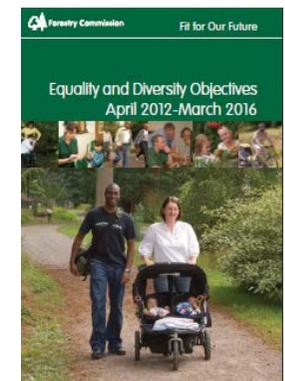
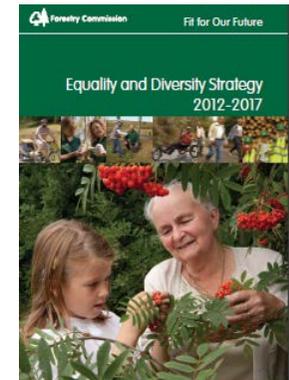
2.3 Our Equality and Diversity Objectives

In addition to the objectives set out in the People Strategy and the Equality and Diversity Strategy, we have also produced a series of [Equality and Diversity Objectives](#) which are specific and measurable for the four years from 2012 to 2016.

The Objectives have been selected to ensure that the Forestry Commission meets the three aims of the General Duty as outlined in the Equality Act. The three aims of the General Duty are:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- To advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and,
- To foster good relations between people from different groups.

We have classified the Objectives by each of the nine protected characteristics, and then split them between staff and customer focussed actions.



The Forestry Commission recognises that diversity of its staff group is intrinsically linked to the provision of valued services to diverse communities and vice versa. Diverse staff can provide insight into ways of working with diverse communities, suggesting appropriate customer services, and as role models can encourage a wider pool of potential applicants to apply to work for the Forestry Commission if they can see that the organisation takes a positive and proactive approach to equality and diversity.

A summary of progress against our Objectives by key business areas is given below:

Recreation & Leisure -

- Developed new or undertaken major refurbishment of key visitor facilities at locations across the National Forest Estate;
- Undertaken a Customer Experience Survey with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual communities; and,
- Increased the number of trails and visitor activities available at key locations, including increasing the number of accessible trails.

Workforce Development-

- Supported the development and recruitment process for the Graduate Development Scheme, ensuring the programme was available to people from all the protected characteristic groups, where they met the minimum criteria;
- Expanded our Apprenticeship Scheme, to encourage the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce for the future through the combined delivery of formal training, practical work experience, informal on-the-job training and studying towards vocational qualifications;
- Begun a review of our internal recruitment procedure in response to issues identified in our 2011 Staff Survey, including asking staff for their input and opinions; and,
- Provided workplace experience at some sites through the Shadow Ranger Volunteer Apprenticeship scheme.

Engagement -

- Worked with a range of partners, including the Fieldfare Trust and other disability organisations, to increase the number of and promote accessible trails in woodlands;
- Participated in a working group with other Environmental based Government Departments to share best practice and initiatives;
- Reviewed and redeveloped the Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES) Engagement Strategy;
- Engaged local stakeholders in the development and implementation of Strategic and Forest Plans.

Guidance &

- Delivered onsite training and support to operational staff delivering services to diverse groups; and

Support -

- Reviewed and amended our diversity related internal website, including publication of externally verified factsheets on different religions, faiths, and disabilities.

Detailed progress against achieving our Objectives can be viewed at [Appendix 1](#).

3. Our approach to the Equality and Diversity Agenda

Although forestry is devolved, the Forestry Commission adopts a cross border approach to equality and diversity. Responsibility for the implementation of the equality duties, as defined by the Westminster Government, is shared across the Forestry Commission, with guidance and support being provided from the central Diversity Team based in Edinburgh.

In developing our Monitoring Report we recognise that the Forestry Commission has made good progress in embedding equality and diversity into everyday business. However, we are not complacent and recognise that there is still much to achieve.

We have examined our relevant policies, functions, service planning and service delivery processes to ensure that no-one is in any way discriminated against or subject to unfair opportunity/adverse treatment. Further, as an employer we ensure that appropriate training is available to all staff to raise awareness of the equality and diversity agenda and ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities.

As a service provider the Forestry Commission ensures that working with community groups, other public bodies, voluntary organisations and private organisations and individuals is done in an inclusive manner, offering fairness of opportunity to all. We also endeavour to procure goods and services from organisations and individuals that have or subscribe to equality and diversity values and objectives, as set down in legislation.

3.1 Our approach to engagement

As a Government Department we comply with the current guidance on consultation and engagement. Therefore, regulatory consultations are conducted with key stakeholders when regulations change.

The provision of recreation is one of our principal objectives and we understand that recreation initiatives provide us with a major opportunity to meet the General Duties of the Equality Act. In our internal recreation guidance, we stress the importance and value of understanding the local community and being proactive in identifying and seeking views from those people who currently do not access our services, as well as those we are more used to working with and who are established visitors to our forests. The guidance includes checklists to assist field practitioners to include their whole community.

Through engagement we hope to improve our understanding of any barriers to visiting our forests and to work with different groups to identify and put in place solutions, events and facilities that will encourage more frequent visits from a more diverse range of the local and wider population.

3.2 Our approach to Equality Analysis

We have continued to mainstream the use of Equality Analysis (EqA), to ensure that our new policies or services, and any changes to existing policies or services, fully take into account any impact on our diverse customers and staff.

We have reviewed and updated our existing guidance on Equality Analysis, in line with the Equality Act's General Duties for the public sector. This resulted in a more streamlined process and was announced via our all-staff communication bulletin. The revised guidance cross references to ['Public Engagement in Forestry: a toolbox for involving people'](#), intending to help those undertaking EqA to achieve effective consultation, capturing the views of all communities, at both local, Regional, Country and national levels. The EqA guidance is supported by training delivered by the Diversity Team to those responsible for creating policies or delivering large initiatives that may have an impact on our staff and/or the public.

All our HR policies, including Learning and Development strategies and initiatives, are subject to EqA, as well as our customer-facing projects.

A summary of completed [Equality Analysis \(and previous Equality Impact Assessments\)](#) is available on our website.

3.3 Our approach to our Customers

The Forestry Commission recognises that forests and woods contribute positively by providing opportunities for people to participate in and enjoy woodlands. We deliver an extensive range of practical programmes to ensure that communities and individuals can get the most from them.

There are a number of ways in which we can reach and engage with people, for example, we offer:

- Education and learning initiatives;
- Healthy living initiatives and activities;
- Play, recreation and sporting opportunities;
- Volunteering; and,
- Community forestry and woodland creation in and around towns and cities, to be closer to where people live.



As the needs of communities change and develop, we will continue to adapt to ensure that we offer equality of opportunity for all.

Case Study:

Forestry Commission Scotland held forestry art sessions for deaf families, teaching them about the local wildlife and encouraging their creativity in woodland themed art classes.

The project, dubbed 'Sign in the Woods', included a group of twenty children aged 5-11 years old, painting and carving wooden reliefs of animals and birds to form an instillation in the walled community wildlife garden, featuring pictures of creatures in sign language and braille carved into the wood.

Seven sessions were held at Hermitage of Braids woodlands near Morningside in Edinburgh, and are for deaf or hard of hearing families from Edinburgh and surrounding central belt area. The children were accompanied by their parents and specially trained Commission staff.

A ceremony to officially open the art instillation took place in the summer.

We proactively promote that all our services and facilities are open to anyone who wishes to use them. However, we also recognise that there may be perceived barriers and reasons why people may not be able to fully benefit from them. Therefore, we are actively seeking to address this by adapting infrastructure, providing a wider range of activities and events, engaging with communities and in some cases providing specialist equipment and/or tailored activities. To achieve our objectives the Forestry Commission is working closely with a range of partner organisations at a local, regional and/or national level.

A summary of how we develop, implement and deliver our customer services is given below:

Customer Initiatives & Accessibility -

- Working with partner organisations to encourage people to access forests and greenspace, including working with the NHS to revitalise hospital grounds for health and wellbeing purposes, and the Mosaic project building links between ethnic minority communities, the National Parks of England and the Youth Hostel Association;
- we have created pages on our website called “Our Forests in Your Home” to give people who are unable to visit, or are unsure of visiting our forests a taste of what we offer providing information and videos on wildlife, recreation options and climate change;
- Events encouraging people of different faiths to use forests as celebration venues, inviting other communities to come along and learn about different groups and share traditions, music, food and experiences; and,

Understanding Customer Needs -

- Increasing participation in cycling for people with disabilities, women, and children of all ages.
- We undertake a range of surveys to compare and test customer satisfaction and explore needs. These range from public opinion surveys, site questionnaires, focus groups, to feedback forms; and,
- Site managers use local demographic data to more strategically assess the potential demand for services and facilities and compare this with actual site usage.

Communications -

- Our website follows the AA accessibility standard, to meet the demands of a wide range of users, including woodland owners seeking information about regulation and grant aid, school teachers and parents looking to understand how to use the forests as a learning environment, people looking for jobs or volunteer opportunities, and those looking for recreation opportunities.

Case Study:

The Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation is a non-political, non-profit organisation with a spiritual core and base, founded under the guidance and inspiration of Sathya Sai Baba. It is a multi-faith organisation drawing people from all walks of life and all spiritual paths and religions. There is no distinction or separateness of any religion, race, nationality, caste, creed or sect. It has branches all over the world with local groups known as 'Sai Centres'.

Spiritual Co-ordinator, Rohit Tailor from Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation, arranged 'seva' (volunteer work) at Salcey Forest. A total of 14 youths and adults from Coventry, Leicester and Northampton attended.

On arriving, the group were met by an FC Forest Ranger from Central England Forest District, who took them to a designated area of the forest where they would help to clear the site. After a Health and Safety walkthrough and an explanation on how to use the tools the team got to work removing and cutting weeds from the damp ground, cutting and trimming bushes, clearing frontal areas and even sawing a few of the smaller trees.

The area the group helped to clear will be utilised for butterfly conservation. This site is significantly important in the UK as there are several different endangered species of butterflies and two thirds of these species are found at Salcey Forest. The butterflies feed on a plant found at Salcey forest and need it to survive and reproduce. However, overgrowth of weeds and other trees were hampering the butterflies from reaching their food source.

3.4 Our approach to Internet accessibility

Our external website has to meet the demands of a wide range of users, including woodland owners seeking information about regulation and grant aid, school teachers and parents looking to understand how to use the forests as a learning environment, people looking for jobs or volunteer opportunities, and those looking for recreation opportunities.

As a Government department we are committed to making our site accessible and easy to use. Over the last three years we have commissioned independent user audits and testing by people with total and partial vision impairments, physical disabilities and those with cognitive impairments.

3.5 Our forests in your home

In order to give people who are unable to visit, or are unsure of visiting our forests a taste of what we can offer, we have created pages on our web site called [Our Forests in Your Home](#). The site shows many of the activities that can be experienced by visitors, gives information and videos on wildlife, recreation options and climate change. The site also offers a link to the pages that let people search for details of the nearest forest to their home and discover what events and facilities are available there. In order to make these pages as useful and interesting as possible for our intended audience, we will add to them and refine them over time as new content becomes available.

3.6 Monitoring our visitor numbers

During 2011 we conducted [Public Opinion Surveys](#) in UK, Scotland and Wales. The Surveys indicate that people have a great interest in visiting forests and that around two thirds or more of all respondents said they had visited forests or woodlands in the last few years.

The Public Opinion Survey records positive responses from respondents in different categories. Those that responded “Yes” to the question ‘In the last few years, have you visited forests or woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation?’ also declared the following information in relation to their protected characteristics:

Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White		Age 44 or less	Age 45 or over
17%	83%		48%	52%		5%	95%		50%	50%

We are increasingly creating woodlands close to towns, to give more people and communities the opportunity to experience these rich green spaces. Those that responded “Yes” to the question ‘Types of woodlands visited - Woodlands in and around towns.’ also declared the following information in relation to their protected characteristics:

Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White		Age 44 or less	Age 45 or over
15%	85%		56%	44%		11%	89%		60%	40%

Those that responded “Yes” to the question ‘Types of woodlands visited – Woodlands in the countryside’ also declared the following information in relation to their protected characteristics:

Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White		Age 44 or less	Age 45 or over
19%	81%		50%	50%		4%	96%		43%	57%

The responses given by participants of the Public Opinion Survey highlighted that there are various reasons why people do not visit forests. These reasons include personal mobility problems (difficulty in walking, etc), not having a car or that woods were too far away.

Our initiative of creating and facilitating the creation of woods close to towns should, over time, mean that more people have access to woodlands that are closer to where they work and/or live. We also continually review our existing facilities to ensure they are available and accessed by as wide a range of people as possible. To ensure that these facilities meet the needs, where possible, of all our diverse customer groups we continue to work to understand the main barriers for people visiting our forests and are working with different groups and associations to identify and put in place solutions to barriers, and promote the services we offer.

The Public Opinion Survey is undertaken every two years. The results from the 2013 survey are currently being analysed and will be discussed in the monitoring report due in January 2015.

4. Our approach to our staff

4.1 Building and retaining a diverse workforce

A key theme of our People Strategy is to recruit and employ more people with as wide a range of protected characteristics as possible, in order to make the Forestry Commission more representative of the communities we serve. The introduction of a Government wide restrictions on marketing has meant that active advertising in media outlets specifically aimed at various protected characteristic groups had to be suspended in April 2010. Our external recruitment also reduced significantly from that date, due to the requirement to downsize the organisation and the wider public sector. Improving the diversity of our staff is difficult under these continuing restrictions, but it remains an aim.

Traditionally, employment in the forestry profession has been male dominated and perceived as a practical, outdoors, and physical role. In order to attract a wider range of applicants to our advertised vacancies we have been proactive in trying to dispel some of the myths surrounding forestry, including working with schools and careers services to promote the forestry sector as a career option, developing skills training in a forest environment for young people aged 16 to 24, and increasing the number of apprenticeships. Whilst one part of the forestry sector continues to manage trees and process timber, the contemporary forestry profession is far broader in the scope and the variety of roles on offer.

Jobs in forestry today include the development of policy, the management of grants and regulations, sales and retail, public education, recreation, conservation, teaching and lifelong learning, resource planning, development planning, science and research, civil engineering, and partnership brokerage, as well as support roles in Human Resources, administration, finance, marketing, communications and business development.

4.2 The Government's 2010 Spending Review (SR10)

As a public sector organisation, the Forestry Commission is continuing to embed the structural changes necessary as a result of the SR10 reductions. This particularly affected FC England, Forest Research and central services (Edinburgh). This required us to be aware of any impact on the diversity of our staff and to ensure fairness and appropriate adjustments were built in to all the processes we introduced to achieve our downsizing targets over the SR10 period.

Equality Analysis demonstrated that the SR10 staff reductions could potentially have had a larger impact on women than on men, because women provide the majority of the administrative support, which was being further streamlined to allow continuing and enhanced delivery of the Commission's core forestry functions. This was taken into consideration and action taken to maintain the gender balance of the FC's workforce. Equality Analysis and ongoing monitoring have not indicated any significant impact on other protected characteristics, including disabled or BAME staff. However, SR10 would not have a positive impact on our staff diversity because of the recruitment limitations which restricted our options to improve the diversity our staff profile.

The two year pay freeze halted progression from minimum to maximum of our short Pay Scales, which has an impact on our [Equal Pay figures](#). Although the pay freeze expired in September 2013 the Forestry Commission will continue to observe a Civil Service wide cap on pay. We carry out an annual pay review, which includes considerations of diversity related issues, and during 2013/14 we will also undertake a Review of Operational Pay. A full Equal Pay Audit will also be conducted during 2013/14, however any potential opportunities to address issues will be dependent on the availability of funds.

4.3 Equality and Diversity training

The Forestry Commission has developed and delivers in-house equality and diversity training. We have different levels of training event, tailored to suit the needs of staff and depending upon their level of exposure to customers and/or their involvement in policy making. The training includes all aspects of equality and relates to the Forestry Commission's business. This year we have developed new on-line training modules for staff and managers and revamped our face-to-face training on the Equality Analysis process. The sessions run on our New Entrant (induction) courses have also been re-designed.

All new and existing training events managed by the Forestry Commission are reviewed to ensure appropriate equality and diversity messages and considerations are included. All our in-house Learning and Development trainers have attended learning sessions and have regular liaison with the Diversity Team to increase their understanding of equality and diversity and how it might impact upon their work.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Staff Forum

Membership of our Staff Forum is drawn from volunteers across the Forestry Commission, and includes people from a range of different protected characteristic groups. Formed in 2008, the Staff Forum meets regularly to provide advice and feedback on policies

and services that affect staff, to highlight any equality and diversity issues and support the Equality and Diversity Team in promoting equality and diversity throughout the organisation.

Over the last 12 months the Staff Forum has contributed to a number of policy developments and reviews, including:

- Reviewing the accessibility and usability of our internal and external diversity web pages;
- Engaging with our Diversity Champions to continue to embed diversity priorities across the organisation;
- Reported on diversity events in their business area, and shared best practice with others; and,
- Contributed to the review and refresh of policies and processes that impact on staff.

4.5 Staff Survey 2013 – Preliminary Results

We conduct a staff survey every two years to gauge satisfaction levels across the organisation and to identify areas for further investigation and improvement. The latest staff survey was undertaken in September 2013, and preliminary results are now available.

Overall, 56% (1410) of staff in post completed the survey, which although slightly lower than previous years, means the FC has a good robust set of results on which to make decisions and inform the development and implementation of the People Strategy for the future. The organisational strengths and improvements since 2011 all contribute to a continued high level of staff engagement with the index at 75% in 2013 compared to 69% in 2011, which is also 19 percentage points higher than the benchmark for other civil service organisations.

The Forestry Commission's 2013 Employer of Choice Score is 3.16, which is an improvement on the 2.98 score from 2011. Organisations with a score of 2.50 are considered a good employer whilst those with a score of 3.00 or above would be considered an Employer of Choice.

The staff survey asks staff to provide information on their protected characteristics, which enables us to gather and analyse data in relation to information not currently gathered on our HR system, including religion and belief, sexual orientation, and gender identity, as well as age, disability, ethnicity and gender.

Of those staff that completed the staff survey:



- 58% identified as female, 32% as male, and 10% preferred not to disclose their gender;
- 94% identified as White, and 6% preferred not to disclose their ethnicity (due to low participation from staff who consider themselves BAME we cannot include information as it would be disclosive);
- 85% identified as heterosexual, 1% as a gay man or woman or as bisexual, and 14% preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation;
- 3% identified as being aged 16 to 24, 16% as 25 to 34, 22% as 35 to 44, 30% as 45 to 54, 16% as 55 and over, 1% as 65 and over, and 12% preferred not to disclose their age;
- 1.6% identified as being transgender;
- 4% considered themselves to be disabled; and,
- 42% identified as Christian (all denominations), 37% as having no religion, 6% as Atheist, 3% as other religion, and 12% preferred not to disclose their religion or belief.

Under the section on “Inclusive and Fair Treatment”, the following results highlight that in response to the question:

- “My part of the organisation has a culture where discriminatory treatment, harassment and bullying are not tolerated” 82% of participants provided a positive response, an increase of 2% from 2011. In particular those aged 16 to 24 (92%) and 65 years and over (100%) responded positively to this question;
- “I would feel able to report bullying/harassment without worrying that it would have a negative impact on me” 76% of participants provided a positive response, an increase of 6% from 2011. In particular those aged 65 and over (100%) responded positively to this question; however people who consider themselves disabled were less positive (66%);
- “I am treated fairly at work” 85% of participants provided a positive response, an increase of 4% from 2011. In particular gay men or women or bisexuals (100%), those aged 16 to 24 (97%) and those aged 65 and over (100%) responded positively to this question;
- “I am treated with respect by the people I work with” 85% of participants provided a positive response, and increase of 2% from 2011. In particular those aged 65 and over (100%) responded positively to this question; and,
- “I think my part of the organisation respects individual differences e.g. cultures, working styles, backgrounds, ideas, etc. ” 82% of participants provided a positive response, and increase of 12% from 2011. In particular those aged 65 and over (100%) responded positively to this question.

The staff survey also seeks to identify where staff feel they are being bullied or harassed, or that they feel they are being discriminated against. The following results highlight that in response to the question:

- “Are you currently being harassed or bullied at work” 3% of participants stated yes, a decrease of 2% from 2011; and,
- “During the past 12 months have you personally experienced discrimination at work?” 6% of participants stated yes, a decrease of 1% from 2011.

A more detailed analysis of the staff survey results will be undertaken during Spring 2014, and details including any associated actions will be included in our Monitoring Report for 2013/14.

5. Monitoring data

We have completed a detailed monitoring process for employment data collected between April 2012 and March 2013. In the outcomes detailed in the following Tables, we have represented the total Forestry Commission figures, though breakdown for each management unit is available on request from the [Diversity Team](#). The information was based on a snapshot as of 31st March 2013 and includes staff delivering services in Wales, prior to their transfer to Natural Resources Wales as of 1st April 2013.

Please note that staffing data used to complete these tables covers those considered to be in paid employment by the Forestry Commission, including Public Appointments, office holders, and some apprentices. As such, figures may differ from other published reports, which only include people deemed as Forestry Commission staff.

5.1 Overview of our analysis

The following tables show the detail of our workforce and specific comments have been made against each table. In summary, the tables demonstrate that our workforce is predominantly male (67%), White British (96%), not disabled (98%), and aged 40 or over (67%).

Approximately 42% of our BAME staff are in administrative positions, 33% in forestry posts, 10% in IT and 15% in science posts. A total of 54% of our female staff are in administrative posts, compared to 15% of male staff and 32% of women are in forestry related posts compared to about 70% of our male staff. A total of 44% of our disabled staff are in administrative positions, and 45% of disabled staff in forestry posts.

In our internal post filling and promotion process, male applicants were more likely to be successful and promoted than their female colleagues. It should be noted that the current gender demographic of the organisation is male dominant (67%) therefore we are more likely to receive a higher volume of applicants from this group for our internal post. However, when considering the percentage of successful applicants and those promoted within each protected characteristic group, females and males were almost equal. Disabled applicants were less likely to be successful than people without disabilities, and also less likely to be promoted. We shall continue to monitor this, but the low numbers of disabled staff make it difficult to draw conclusions. There were no direct reports of discrimination by people with disabilities based on the recruitment and/or promotion procedures. BAME and White Other applicants were least likely to be successful or promoted during the year. Again, we shall continue to monitor this, but the low numbers of BAME and White Other staff employed overall and applying for vacancies make it difficult to draw conclusions.

As a result of the 2010 Spending Review, we have suspended the advertising programme which promoted our job opportunities in media outlets specifically targeted to women, people with disabilities and people from minority ethnic backgrounds. We took this action, as although a more limited recruitment programme remained, we did not want to raise expectations beyond our capacity to recruit while the organisation was downsizing. However, our [External Recruitment](#) data shows that there was an increase in the number of applications from people from Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) and White Other backgrounds, and those aged 40 and over this year than had been recorded in the previous year although the numbers remain low in comparison to the overall number of applications.

We provide a wide range of [internal training](#), to suit the requirements of the business and provide a Management Development Programme to provide our managers with the necessary skills to progress, or to improve their performance at their present level. This programme is targeted more towards managers' individual skill sets than our previous management training events. The Forestry Commission has its own in-house Learning and Development team, who design and deliver training in response to business needs. [External training](#) is also widely used to cover areas of particular expertise e.g. IT software. Our in-house Learning and Development team receives regular updates on equality and diversity issues and offer flexible training options to those who request them because they have a disability or caring responsibilities. This enables more people to access training by removing barriers created by the training materials, or by the need to travel to a training venue or commit whole days to training.

Our analysis allows us to identify and investigate any apparent discrepancies in the year, but the low numbers of disabled and BAME staff means that the data can be significantly changed by just one or two people being promoted, accessing training, receiving top

performance marks etc. We compare data gathered over the years to see whether any trends are developing, and whether discrepancies are repeated year on year.

5.2 Staff in post as at 31 March 2013

Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME*	White Other	White British		Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
71	2941		986	2026		21	88	2888		988	2024
2%	98%		33%	67%		1%	3%	96%		33%	67%

*0.2% of staff racial group "unknown"

The table shows that our workforce of 3012 people is predominantly male, not disabled, aged 40 or over and White British.

Our staff turnover was 22% in 2010/11; 23% for 2011/12; and, 24% for 2012/13.

The Forestry Commission has run Voluntary Exit Schemes during the last three years, which explains the continuation in staff turnover. In 2012/13 the data shows that 7% of the 952 people who left the organisation did so through the Voluntary Exit Schemes. Fifty percent of those who transferred out of the Forestry Commission, predominantly did so as Forestry Commission Wales transferred to the new Natural Resources Wales.

Our staff age data shows that our workforce is predominantly made up of staff aged 40 and over. Only 4% (126) of our staff are aged 24 or under and 63% of these are on Short Term Temporary Contracts, with the majority of these staff participating in our Apprenticeship Schemes.

Case Study:

Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) are developing a Talent Management Programme (TMP), with the objective of taking a planned and focused approach to identify existing staff in Scotland with the potential to achieve a more senior position in the next five years, and provide them with the best opportunities to prepare them for performing at a higher level.

The TMP is being developed as workforce demographics demonstrate that FCS has an ageing workforce with over 59% of their workforce aged 45 and over, and 42% of those occupying posts at Payband 2 are aged 55 and over. The aim of the programme is to provide career development opportunities to ensure that staff ready to compete for more senior positions in the future.

If successful, staff will have access to development opportunities that include:

- assignments/projects;
- sideways moves/ or job rotations/swaps;
- secondments;
- temporary promotion;
- job shadowing;
- coaching and mentoring; and,
- formal training and/or study as well as other personal development activities and tools.

5.3 Full/part time split at 31 March 2013

	Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White Other	White British		Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Full time	85%	84%		69%	94%		81%	88%	86%		87%	86%
Part time	15%	14%		31%	6%		19%	13%	14%		13%	14%

Overall, the percentage of staff that work part time has increased in comparison to 2011/12, with the exception of females and those aged 40 or over where there has been a slight decrease. Part time female workers reduced from 33% to 31% in 2012/13 and part time aged 40 or over decreased from 16% to 14%.

The data highlights that women are more likely to be part time than others and that men are least likely to work part time. The reasons why women are more likely to work part time are generally well understood and the Forestry Commission has good family friendly policies, including a range of working pattern options, in place to support staff. To help staff with caring responsibilities learn about their rights and what the Forestry Commission can do to help support them, the Diversity Team published guidance on support for Carers.

We have also seen a significant increase in the percentage of BAME staff working part-time, increasing from 6% in 2011/12 to 19% in 2012/13. On further investigation the data highlights that although there has been a small increase (three people) in the number of BAME staff working part-time, the significant percentage change is due to the small numbers of BAME staff in the organisation overall.

5.4 Type of contract at 31 March 2013

	Disabled	Not disabled	Female	Male	BAME	White Other	White British	Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Perm	94%	90%	88%	92%	90%	84%	91%	82%	92%
Fixed term									
Temp	1%	3%	4%	3%	5%	6%	3%	7%	1%
Short term									
Temp	1%	5%	7%	3%	5%	8%	4%	9%	2%
Other	3%	2%	2%	2%	-	2%	2%	1%	3%

The table highlights that the majority of the Forestry Commission's staff are on permanent contracts. Of note this year is that those staff who identify as White Other background on permanent contracts has increased by 11%, from 73% in 2011/12.

Overall, fewer staff aged under 39 or from a White Other ethnic background are likely to be permanently employed. This is because staff from these groups are more likely to be employed as apprentices on a two year placement or are seasonal workers.

5.5 Pay Band at 31 March 2013

	Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White Other	White British		Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Senior Pay Bands*	1%	1%		<1%	<1%		-	-	<1%		<1%	1%
Middle Pay Bands**	6%	11%		9%	12%		10%	8%	11%		4%	14%
Other Pay Bands***	93%	87%		90%	85%		90%	91%	87%		95%	83%
Contractors and Office Holders	0%	1%		1%	1%		-	1%	1%		1%	2%

* Indicates staff who are Commissioners, or in paybands SSG1A, SSG1, and SSG2; ** Indicates staff who are in paybands PB1, PB2 and PB3; and *** Indicates staff who are in paybands PB4, PB5, PB5(Op), PB6A, PB6A(Op), PB6B and PB7.

The table shows that distribution of protected characteristics across the Pay Bands is quite even and has not changed significantly from the figures reported in 2011/12, with staff who are not disabled, age 40 or over and male staff slightly more likely to be in a higher pay band than disabled, younger and female staff.

The differential for age at Middle Management level can be explained by longer service and greater experience, which generally leads to increased application for higher graded posts. The most significant difference is for White Other staff, none of whom are in the Senior Pay Bands and who are less likely to be in the Middle Pay Bands than other staff. Detailed analysis shows that 16% of our White Other staff are employed on Part Year Appointments to work in our Tree Nurseries, where limited management positions are available.

Despite our staff turnover and limited recruitment, the distribution of staff across the Pay Bands has not changed significantly from those reported in 2011/12. Due to restructuring following SR10 the number of staff employed as a contractors or office holders remains low across all protected characteristic groups, remaining below 2% of staff in post and similar to 2011/12.

5.6 Internal post filling and promotion during 2012/2013

305	Disability			Gender			Ethnicity				Age		
	Disabled	Not disabled	Prefer not to disclose disability	Female	Male	Prefer not to disclose gender	BAME	White Other	White British	Prefer not to disclose race	39 or less	40 or over	Prefer not to disclose age
Number of Applicants	14	287	4	85	212	8	7	15	275	8	166	131	8
All applicants	5%	94%	1%	28%	69%	3%	2%	5%	90%	3%	54%	43%	3%
All Interviewed	6%	92%	2%	29%	68%	3%	2%	5%	90%	3%	56%	41%	3%
All Successful	6%	92%	2%	29%	67%	3%	1%	6%	90%	3%	57%	40%	3%
All Successful and Promoted	6%	94%	-	27%	72%	1%	-	10%	90%	-	54%	46%	-

With the exception of Forest Research, which holds traditional promotion boards for its scientific staff, the Forestry Commission holds open internal competition for many of its vacancies. Success in an internal competition will result in promotion when the job advertised is at a higher pay band than that of the successful applicant.

The data highlights that:

- applicants for internal vacancies are predominantly male, not disabled, White British and aged 39 or less;
- females, disabled, White Other, and aged 39 or less were slightly more likely to be successful in their application in comparison to overall numbers who applied; and
- that staff who were male, White Other and aged 40 and over were more likely to gain promotion following a successful application.

It was observed in previous monitoring reports that a number of candidates did not complete diversity monitoring information when applying for internal vacancies, which affected our data analysis. We therefore chose to introduce obligatory completion of diversity

information as part of our recruitment process. However, it should be noted that there still remains a small number of candidates who preferred not to disclose their information when applying for internal vacancies but this had a very minor potential impact on the statistics.

We shall continue to monitor this data and establish whether there is any trend or indication that staff from BAME or White Other backgrounds are less likely to apply for vacant posts than other staff. If so, we shall invite the [Equality and Diversity Staff Forum](#) to help us understand any barriers and identify solutions, to encourage more of our BAME staff to enter internal competitions.

The results of Staff Survey's have consistently highlighted that there was a significant proportion of staff who felt that the organisation's post-filling and promotion procedures were not fair or transparent. In response to this the Social and Economic Research Group (SERG) of Forest Research have been commissioned with designing and managing a survey open to all Forestry Commission staff with the objective of assessing levels of staff satisfaction with these and improving understanding of the reasons behind satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The results of this survey and any agreed actions will be included in our next Annual Monitoring report.

5.7 External recruitment during 2012/2013

11,569	Disability			Gender			Ethnicity				Age		
	Disabled	Not disabled	Prefer not to disclose disability	Female	Male	Prefer not to disclose gender	BAME	White Other	White British	Prefer not to disclose race	39 or less	40 or over	Prefer not to disclose age
Number of Applicants	527	10,919	123	3,125	8,246	198	408	671	10,289	201	8,108	3,174	287
All applicants	5%	94%	1%	27%	71%	2%	3%	6%	89%	2%	70%	27%	3%
All Interviewed	8%	91%	1%	36%	63%	1%	2%	5%	91%	1%	63%	35%	2%
All Successful	5%	94%	1%	37%	62%	1%	2%	5%	92%	1%	70%	27%	3%

Restrictions implemented as part of the Government spending review means we have also stopped promoting our job opportunities in targeted media outlets to avoid raising expectations beyond our current capacity to recruit.

In the last three years our data shows that in:

- 2010/11 we had 224 external vacancies, which attracted 1862 applications and gives an average applicant to vacancy ratio of 8:1;
- 2011/12 we had 284 external vacancies, which attracted 2151 applications and gives an average applicant to vacancy ratio of 8:1; and
- 2012/13 we had 337 external vacancies, which attracted 11,569 applications and gives an average applicant to vacancy ratio of 34:1.

As the data highlights in the past year we have seen a higher than average application rate per post, particularly in relation to our Apprenticeship Schemes in England and Scotland, where we received over 3,400 applications for 34 posts.

It was observed in previous monitoring reports that a number of candidates did not complete diversity monitoring information when applying for external vacancies, which affected our data analysis. We therefore chose to introduce obligatory completion of diversity information as part of our recruitment process. However, it should be noted that there still remains a small number of candidates who preferred not to disclose their information when applying for internal vacancies but this had a very minor potential impact on the statistics.

As a result of improving accuracy in our external recruitment data it is difficult to directly compare information with that reported in previous years, as there is a significant difference in results as the mandatory reporting process has reduced the number of people who failed to provide their diversity information or chose not to disclose details. Overall, this resulted in an increase in applications across all groups, with the exception of people who are BAME or White other which remains lower in comparison to the overall number of applicants.

There was a large difference in the percentage of applicants we appointed aged 39 or less to those who were aged 40 or over, although the total number of applicants aged 40 or over was much lower mainly due to the numbers of younger people applying for our Apprenticeship Schemes. Female applicants, those from a BAME or White Other backgrounds, or who considered themselves disabled were least likely to be successful, although it should be noted that these groups have the lowest numbers of applicants.

During 2012/13 we also held a recruitment exercise for our Graduate Development programme (GDP) for four positions. The GDP does not utilise our standard recruitment process, instead applicants successful at each stage progress through the following process:

- Application/Pre-screening;
- Online Aptitude tests;
- Short interview;
- Assessment Centre; and
- Final Interview.

903*	Disability			Gender		Ethnicity			
	Disabled	Not disabled	Prefer not to disclose disability	Female	Male	BAME	White Other	White British	Prefer not to disclose race
GDP Applicants	3%	96%	1%	41%	59%	8%	7%	83%	2%
Successful	-	100%	-	50%	50%	-	-	100%	-

*Data on age has not been included due the very small number of people applying who are aged 40 and over, as this could be disclosive.

Information regarding the protected characteristics of applicants to the GDP highlights similar trends to our main recruitment process, in that the majority of applicants are White British, not disabled and male.

As we have identified a trend in the low percentage of people with disabilities that apply for our external vacancies we have commissioned Forest Research to carry out research to gain a fuller understanding about what disabled people feel and understand about the Commission and the employment opportunities we offer, learn more about the barriers to recruitment experienced by disabled people, and identify potential means to improve application rates from this group. The results of this research and any agreed actions will be included in our next monitoring report.

5.8 Performance marking for the year ending 31 March 2013

	Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White Other	White British		Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Top Performer	21%	25%		28%	24%		13%	29%	25%		24%	25%
Good Performer	77%	75%		72%	76%		87%	71%	75%		76%	75%
Not Fully Effective – less than <1%, figures would be disclosive												

The data shows that females are more likely than males to be awarded a Top Performance and this mirrors last year's figures. The data also shows BAME staff are less likely to receive a Top Performance rating than any other racial group, but there has been a slight increase in the numbers of White Other and White British staff. However, the percentage of BAME staff who received a Top Performance rating has remained equal to 2011/12. Previous analysis shows the length of service has a significant impact on the probability of being regarded as a Top Performer; more than three quarters (79%) of all staff receiving a Top Performance rating had more than ten years service. Currently, none of our BAME staff has more than 10 years service.

Staff with a disability are also less likely to be awarded a Top Performance rating than those without a disability. However the number of disabled people achieving a Top Performance rating increased significantly from 8% in 2011/12 to 21% in 2012/13. A closer analysis of the data shows that the number of staff with disabilities who have achieved a Top Performance rating has risen from 5 people in 2011/12 to 10 people in 2012/13. As a result of the smaller number of disabled staff we employ overall, a small change in the number of people who achieve a rating can have a significant impact on the proportion of staff who achieve a particular rating.

5.9 Internal training, events attended per person during 2012/13

	Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White Other	White British		Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Forest Man'ment and Operations	1.4	1.5		0.8	1.8		0.6	1.3	1.5		1.9	1.2
IT, Product Knowledge People Skills	1.0	0.7		0.8	0.4		0.9	0.6	0.8		0.9	0.7
Man'ment Dev'ment Prog	0.2	0.2		0.3	0.2		0.2	0.2	0.2		0.3	0.1
All training	2.6	2.4		1.8	2.5		1.7	2.1	2.4		3.1	2.0

The table shows that during the year, those aged 39 or less received more training than those aged 40 or over. This is to be expected, as we have a large proportion of staff aged 39 or less who have been recruited or moved in to new roles, including our Apprentices. Our BAME staff received the least training per individual and is most likely linked to the overall low BAME staff numbers employed. Men received more training than women. However, as operational training is all focussed in the Forest Management and Operations category, predominantly staffed by men, we would expect to see these results.

Staff with disabilities received more internal training than staff without disabilities. This is similar to last year, and an increase from earlier years where it was non-disabled staff who received more internal training.

5.10 External training, events attended per person during 2012/13

	Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White Other	White British		Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
IT	-	0.01		0.02	0.01		0.05	0.00	0.01		0.01	0.02
Interpersonal Skills	-	0.02		0.01	0.01		0.05	0.01	0.01		0.02	0.01
Man'ment training	0.07	0.07		0.09	0.06		0.05	0.03	0.08		0.09	0.07
Personal Dev'ment	0.11	0.15		0.13	0.16		0.05	0.14	0.15		0.14	0.15
Technical training	0.13	0.21		0.13	0.25		0.1	0.23	0.21		0.25	0.19
All training	0.31	0.46		0.39	0.49		0.29	0.49	0.46		0.51	0.43

External training covers Continuous Professional Development, specialist courses and conferences. The data shows that in comparison to 2011/12 participation in external training by staff across all groups has decreased. This is to be expected as we have reduced our overall headcount in response to SR10, and have less funding for training. However, we will use information gathered through the 2013 Staff Survey and re-examine this again next year to identify if this trend continues, and take appropriate action where necessary.

5.11 Leavers during 2012/2013

	Disabled	Not disabled	Female	Male	BAME	White Other	White British	Prefer not to disclose	Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
All leavers during 2012/2013*	2%	98%	38%	62%	<1%	3%	96%	1%	41%	59%
End of contract **	6%	30%	6%	5%	44%	41%	29%	-	45%	19%
Retirement ***	11%	4%	1%	4%			5%	-	0%	8%
Resignation	6%	7%	8%	4%	22%	30%	6%	-	10%	5%
Compulsory Early Leaver	-	1%	2%	-	-	-	1%	-	1%	1%
Transfer / Secondment	72%	50%	83%	86%	33%	30%	51%	100%	43%	56%
Voluntary Early Exit	5%	7%	-	1%	-	-	7%	-	1%	11%
Dismissal /death in service	-	1%	-	-	-	-	1%	-	1%	1%

* Total Leavers in 2012/2013 = 952; ** end of contract – end of casual STTA, FTA, PYA contracts; *** Retirement – Actuarial, Age, Medical, Re-employed Pensioner Retired.

One of the highest proportion of leavers from the FC was as a result of staff in Wales transferring to National Resources Wales as of 31ST March 2013. This accounted for 97% of the staff who transferred or were seconded out of the organisation.

As a result of the Government's Spending Review 2010, we are in the process of downsizing and are looking to reduce our overall staff headcount during the period 2012 to 2015. Therefore the data highlights that one of the reasons for leaving the Forestry Commission was through Voluntary Early Exit.

In preparation for reducing the overall Forestry Commission workforce we have utilised Short Term Temporary Appointment contracts (STTAs) that last up to three years to fill seasonal / short term jobs and to cover for staff absences i.e. maternity leave, long-term sick absence, etc. As a result 57% of all leavers during the year were as a result of STTA contracts ending.

Historically, it is younger people who apply for and are appointed to STTA contracts, and this accounts for the higher level of leavers aged 39 or less. We have a high proportion of White Other and BAME staff on temporary contracts, mainly in our seasonal positions based in nurseries, and that also accounts for the higher leaver rate as a result of termination of contract.

Disabled staff were least likely to leave because their contract had terminated, although the percentage of disabled staff on temporary contracts is comparable to other staff. The low disabled staff population means that one or two additional leavers will have had a significant impact on the proportions shown in the table.

Staff with disability were just as likely to resign as other staff. Other resignation levels are comparable and indicate no underlying issues that might prompt an increased turnover in some groups in comparison.

5.12 Discipline during 2012/13

Disabled	Not Disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White Other	White British		Age 39 or under	Age 40 or over
14%	86%		10%	90%		-	7%	93%		40%	60%

Fourteen staff were disciplined during the year, representing less than 1% of all staff in post, with all disciplinary proceedings resulting in a penalty.

All disciplinary cases are individually overseen by a HR Case Manager, to ensure that the Discipline Policy and Procedure is applied correctly and consistently across the Forestry Commission. There is no evidence from the table or from reasons for discipline (not shown) of any discrimination. This figure is lower than the number of disciplinary cases in 2011/12.

5.13 Grievances raised during 2012/13

Disabled	Not Disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White Other	White British		Age 39 or under	Age 40 or over
-	100%		-	100%		-	-	100%		25%	75%

The number of staff grievances raised during 2012/13 fell slightly from five in 2011/12 to four; this figure represents less than 1% of staff in post. There is no evidence from the table of any discrimination.

The reasons for raising the grievances are varied, with none citing any discrimination. Of the grievances, two were partially upheld and two were not upheld.

5.14 Work patterns at 31 March 2012

	Disabled	Not disabled		Female	Male		BAME	White Other	White British		Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Five weekdays	87%	87%		73%	93%		81%	88%	87%		84%	88%
1 – 4 weekdays	8%	5%		14%	2%		5%	7%	5%		6%	5%
Other	5%	8%		13%	5%		14%	5%	8%		10%	7%

Staff with disabilities, those that are female or White Other are more likely than others to work a one to four day week. This reflects what would be expected when considering traditional caring responsibilities and difficulties that some people with disabilities may have to sustain a five day week working regime.

Male staff are less likely to work one to four weekdays. The number of male staff who work a five day week has remained equal to those in 2011/12, remaining at 93%.

Other work patterns include Annualised Hours, which allow for attendance to vary through the year, and Rostered contracts, which generally include duty turns over weekends. This flexibility is important to the Forestry Commission, as it allows us to manage both recreation and forest management needs and accommodate seasonal peaks and troughs.

5.15 Return to Work after Maternity Leave

The Forestry Commission exceeds statutory legislation in relation to paid maternity leave, and also offers a range of family friendly policies to support parents in the workplace.

During 2012/13 we had 40 staff members on maternity leave, of which:

- 21 returned to work; 5 of whom commenced maternity leave in 2012/13, and 16 in 2011/12; and 7 had a period of unpaid maternity leave prior to returning to work;
- 9 staff are still absent; 6 are on paid maternity leave, 2 on unpaid maternity leave, and 1 staff member is on a career break following a period of unpaid maternity leave; and,
- 10 staff left the FC after a period of maternity leave; 5 transferred to Natural Resources Wales, 2 resigned, 2 left as a result of end of casual and fixed term appointments, and 1 left through voluntary exit.

Analysis from the 2012/13 data shows an average return rate of 81% (excluding staff who transferred to Natural Resources Wales) that compares favourably with the GB percentage of women who return to work after maternity leave, which the [Health and Safety Executive](#) calculated at 69% in 2002.

6. Equal Pay

The Forestry Commission is committed to equal opportunities in employment. We believe it is in the Commission's interest and makes good business sense that all aspects of pay are awarded fairly and equitably.

Below the Senior Staff Group there are 10 pay bands, reflecting 8 levels of job responsibility. Different pay bands apply to employees on operational and non-operational contracts, which reflect the difference in hours and eligibility for overtime / travelling time and on-call and stand-by allowances.

The Forestry Commission undertakes regular pay audits to review our policies, their application, and to identify any direct or indirect causes of pay inequality. For the past ten years, we have been actively re-structuring our pay system, shortening the length of pay scales and the time it takes to progress from entry point to pay band maximum. This approach is steadily reducing the gender pay gaps in our system.

The shortening of the pay scales means staff can theoretically reach the maximum of the Pay Band within four years, however a two year pay freeze halted progression from minimum to maximum of our short Pay Scales. Although the pay freeze expired in September 2013 the Forestry Commission will continue to observe a Civil Service wide cap on pay. An Equal Pay Audit and Review of Operational Pay will be conducted during 2013/14.

6.1 Average earnings at 31 March 2013

Average earnings for staff in post include full time equivalent Salary and Overtime. Protected characteristic earnings are compared to all-staff earnings by Pay Band. Details shown in red in the table below highlight where average earnings are below the all staff average earnings for the protected characteristic groups, and details show in blue highlight where it is equal to or above the staff average earnings.

	All staff average earnings	Disabled // All staff	Not disabled // All staff	Female // All staff	Male // All staff	BAME* // All staff	White Other // All staff	White British // All staff	Age 39 or under // All staff	Age 40 or over // All staff
SSG2	£108,888	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
SSG1A	£74,799	9.3%	-1.3%	2.5%	-0.9%	-	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
SSG1	£69,175	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	-	0.0%	-3.2%	0.8%
PB1	£63,159	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
PB2	£51,826	-	0.0%	-2.3%	0.7%	-9.7%	-9.7%	0.2%	-7.8%	0.7%
PB3	£41,346	3.2%	-0.1%	-2.7%	1.0%	0.4%	-1.9%	0.0%	-7.2%	1.0%
PB4	£33,950	4.6%	-0.1%	-3.6%	1.3%	-4.6%	-1.5%	0.1%	-6.4%	1.7%
PB5Op	£30,186	2.1%	-0.1%	-5.6%	0.9%	-4.2%	-6.6%	0.3%	-5.5%	2.6%
PB5	£26,299	2.4%	-0.1%	-1.1%	1.3%	3.3%	-3.4%	0.1%	-3.3%	1.9%
PB6AOp	£26,583	3.0%	-0.1%	-6.2%	1.6%	-8.6%	-1.7%	0.1%	-3.9%	2.1%
PB6A	£24,688	16.5%	-0.1%	-8.6%	2.4%	-11.9%	-11.9%	0.3%	-6.8%	3.4%
PB6B	£20,307	0.1%	0.0%	-1.4%	1.3%	-3.8%	-6.1%	0.2%	-2.3%	1.1%
PB7	£15,626	-3.7%	0.0%	-0.3%	0.2%	-3.8%	3.7%	-0.3%	-1.2%	3.0%
All Staff	£28,204	-0.2%	0.0%	-11.0%	4.5%	-6.0%	-6.1%	0.2%	-15.5%	5.9%

*Includes 0.2% of staff racial group "unknown"

The data indicates some significant differences (highlighted in bold) in average earnings per Pay Band between the different protected characteristics for which we capture data. Further investigation of the differences show that they occur as a direct result of staff length of service and payment of overtime.

Many of our roles, and associated Pay Bands, are operational and specifically forest-based roles such as forest crafts, machine operators, etc which are historically and predominantly roles held by males, not disabled, White British and aged over 40. Details below of average length of service highlights that this dominance is still apparent in the structure of the workforce today, however highlights that people who consider themselves disabled are more likely to have longer service:

- 22.6 years for staff with who consider themselves disabled, and 15.3 years for staff who are not disabled;
- 17.8 years for males, and 10.6 years for females;
- 15.8 years for White British, 5.6 years for BAME, and 6.0 years for White Other; and,
- 5.3 years for those aged 39 or less, and 20.2 years for those aged 40 and over.

As our longer-serving staff are male, White and over 40 years of age proportionately we have more of these groups of staff at the maximum of the pay scales than women, who are BAME or White Other and those aged 39 or less which gives rise to 'natural' pay gaps.

Many of these roles also have a greater business need to work additional hours, resulting in payment of overtime and this continues, although to a lesser extent than in previous years. For example, in the year 2012/13 women accounted for 13% and men for 87% of the total amount of overtime paid.

As previously indicated an Equal Pay Audit and Review of Operational Pay will be conducted in 2013/14 to ensure the continued suitability of our current pay bands and pay scales by pay and its application within the organisation. We will report progress on this review and any action taken as a result in our next Diversity Monitoring report.

7. Our approach to monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is a key priority for the Forestry Commission and will form the basis, along with Equality Analysis, of future action. Comprehensive and meaningful data, information and research will be collected and used to build an evidence base to help

us assess our progress in meeting our objectives for equality. The Forestry Commission will continue to monitor the required areas under the Equality Act and will report and benchmark progress on an annual basis. This information will be used to identify gaps in representation. Where gaps are identified, action will be taken to investigate reasons and to address discrepancies appropriately.

We will ensure that monitoring information in relation to employment and service provision offers:

- Comprehensive benchmarks against which we can monitor progress against achieving our [Equality Objectives](#) (see [Section 2.3](#) and [Appendix 1](#))
- A quantitative basis for Equality Analysis with which we can highlight areas of required action.

8. Conclusion

We continue to be encouraged with the progress we are making as an organisation to provide our customer services to communities of those with protected characteristics. However, we are also very aware that we still have a challenge ahead of us and know that there is more to do. This will not be an easy challenge, many of the issues will take time, but work is underway and we are committed to making a real difference to our customers and our staff.

Thank you for reading our annual monitoring report. If you have any views, please write to us at:

The Diversity Team,
Forestry Commission,
Sivan House,
231 Corstorphine Road,
Edinburgh,
EH12 7AT.

Or e-mail us at diversity@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

If you would like a paper copy of this document or to receive it in an alternative format, please contact us at the address or email above or phone us on 0300 067 5046.

Equality and Diversity Objectives – Summary

This document is a summary of our specific equality and diversity objectives.

These have been split into three tables of responsibility as follows: the Diversity Team, FC England, and FC Scotland. Although the FC is a cross border organisation, responsibility for forestry is devolved and the FC exercises its powers and duties separately, and receives separate funding in England and Scotland. This has led to different FC business models in each country and as a result, some objectives cannot be taken forward in all countries, and the pace of progress will depend on the resources available.

As of April 2013 a new body, Natural Resources Wales has taken over the functions previously carried out by Forestry Commission Wales, and details of their approach to diversity can be found on their [website](#).

Summary Table of Objectives – Diversity Team Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
Develop a new Diversity Communications Strategy	Diversity Team & the Communications Team	December 2012	Diversity Team to check via next staff survey whether staff understand this agenda	A new Communications Strategy has been drafted and discussed with the Communications Team. Progress has been made on increasing the tools used internally to convey diversity messages to all staff, and externally for customers.
Review and re-launch suite of diversity training	Diversity Team	December 2012	Diversity Team to review course feedback from staff	New on-line training modules have been developed and launched both for all staff and managers. We have also re-developed the training course to support staff completing equality analysis. A training session was delivered in September to the senior staff group about their legal responsibilities. The standard diversity session delivered on every FC New Entrants' course has also been redeveloped. This objective is now complete.
Ensure that staff over 55 have an Individual Learning Plan and are developed appropriately	Diversity Team with Learning and Development Team	On-going	Diversity Team to analyse future staff survey returns about this issue	Diversity Team engaged L&D team and messages have been delivered to managers that all staff should have an Individual Learning Plan and must be engaged about development needs. We will monitor

Summary Table of Objectives – Diversity Team Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				progress against the results of the 2013 Staff Survey, and detail in our next monitoring report.
Monitor the age distribution of FC staff	Diversity Team	January 2013	Results will be published in the annual Monitoring Report	This information and analysis is included in section 5.2 of the annual Monitoring Report and also considered and reviewed within the analysis of the biennial Staff Survey.
Improve the level of staff declaration of disability by providing easier and better systems and more supporting guidance for managers and staff	Diversity Team	Ongoing	Review numbers of disabled staff during annual monitoring exercise	In order to increase the number of staff telling us of their disabilities we have reviewed and amended the guidance and support materials available to staff and managers on the implementation of reasonable adjustments. We will continue to monitor staffing data to ascertain any improvements.
Investigate the Two Ticks Standard	Diversity Team	During 2014	A review and report will be made on the options from discussion by the HR Management Board	We will examine the suitability of this Standard in 2014, once we have embedded the new guidance, etc outlined above.
Increase the number of job applicants with a disability	Diversity Team	On-going (when external recruitment begins again)	Monitor number of applicants to declare a disability and report in annual Monitoring Report	This information and analysis is included in section 5.7 of the annual Monitoring Report. This year we had 527 disabled applicants, of which 14% were interviewed and 3% offered the job.

Summary Table of Objectives – Diversity Team Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
We will prepare and publish guidance on FC interaction with the Gypsy and Traveller Communities	Diversity Team	December 2012	We will have this guidance externally assessed by contacts within the gypsy and traveller communities	This guidance has been externally assessed and published on our Intranet. Staff were informed via our weekly all-staff news bulletin.
We will prepare and publish factsheets on specific religions	Diversity Team	On-going throughout 2012-13	We will monitor staff feedback on these	Factsheets have been externally assessed and published on our Intranet throughout the year.
We will review and consider launching another Graduate Recruitment Programme at the appropriate time	Learning and Development Team	When recruitment freeze ends	Diversity Team will monitor diversity of successful candidates	The Diversity Team supported the development of the 2012/13 Graduate Recruitment Programme which offered 4 placements. Details of applicants to this programme are included at section 5.7 . Another programme will be launched for 2013/14 for 2 placements in Scotland.
We will review and consider launching another Leadership Development Programme at the appropriate time	Learning and Development Team	Date to be confirmed	Diversity Team will monitor diversity of successful candidates	There are no current plans to launch another Leadership Programme.
We will consider mentoring and	Learning and Development Team	March 2016	Progress will be measured via the	There are no current plans to undertake this exercise at the current time, as the

Summary Table of Objectives – Diversity Team Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
coaching of women by women in higher pay bands with the aim of increasing the number of women in the middle management group by 5%			annual diversity monitoring of staff and published in the Monitoring Report each January	organisation is downsizing and being restructured.
We will re-commence events to highlight and promote the range of career opportunities that the Forestry Commission can offer	Diversity Team and wider HR	When recruitment freeze ends	Diversity Team will monitor diversity of successful candidates	Not commenced while a Government-wide recruitment freeze is in place.
Canvas views of LGB community on FC services through a short survey	Diversity Team	Summer 2013	Diversity Team and Stonewall monitor quantity and quality of responses	A survey was completed in partnership with Stonewall Scotland. No significant barriers to FC services were identified. We are also working with Stonewall on a UK wide survey, and details will be published in the next monitoring report.
Participate in the Stonewall Good Practice Programme	Diversity Team	On-going	Diversity Team monitor views of LGB staff via the biennial Staff Survey	The Diversity Team continues to engage in this Programme.

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
Continue to offer disabled viewing platforms and free carer tickets for people with disabilities who need assistance attending live music events	Box Office Manager/ Local Managers	2013-14	Events Manager to monitor and report annually to Diversity Team the number of disabled/carers tickets issued	<p>National Concert Programme – Forest Live</p> <p>Viewing platform available at all 23 concerts, access not limited to wheelchair users but made available to anyone who would benefit from using the platform, depending on availability of space.</p> <p>During the 2013 Forest Live programme, 349 free carer tickets were issued (126,302 total saleable tickets). A free carer/companion ticket is issued if a customer meets specific criteria and needs someone to accompany them to be able to attend the event.</p> <p>In addition, there are also customers with disabilities who attended our concerts, but who do not require a carer companion to be able to attend.</p> <p>For the 2013/14 concert ticket sales period the free carer ticket policy is being updated to take into account the new Personal Impedence Payments scheme being rolled</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>out to some parts of the country.</p> <p>South Forest District (FD) South FD report that while they do not have concerts in the FD where they do have viewing platforms they endeavour to make these as accessible as possible i.e. the deer viewing platform at Bolderwood and The Lookout at Moors Valley Country Park.</p>
Promote local accessible trails and facilities and improve information available	Local staff	On-going	Local teams to analyse and record feedback from customers with disabilities and take action where necessary. Annual report to Diversity Team	<p>Yorkshire FD Ellerburn Accessible/sensory trail started construction in October 2013 and is due to be completed for a launch in April 2014 for cyclists and walkers. FC is supporting the National Cycling Charity (CTC) in a bid to secure funding to assist disadvantaged groups visit the site and utilise the trail. CTC through Dalby Bike Barn have adapted bikes available to hire by people wishing to use this trail.</p> <p>Developments of the play area at Dalby with the £225k Yorventure bid will see the construction of an accessible path into and around the play area and also the installation of inclusive equipment that can</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>be used by all. This development is due to be completed by April 2014.</p> <p>Swinton and Pendlebury Anglers have won the Queens award for volunteer service. Forestry Commission have been working with the volunteers for 5-6 years to help them improve and manage Queensmere Dam on the recently restored colliery, power station and two sewage works of Livia. The volunteers are an asset to the site and local community. The strong core of 10 and 50 affiliated members have engaged with over 1000 young people over the last few years engaging them and teaching them fishing, litter picking, site maintenance and are already planning for future projects.</p> <p>Gateway to Nature Gateway to Nature is a service that helps socially excluded people overcome the barriers that prevent them from accessing green spaces and nature by offering opportunities and experiences in North Nottinghamshire. Getting out into nature is proven to be of benefit in reducing</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>depression and anxiety and helping people to progress in their recovery. The service is open to people over the age of 18, who are disadvantaged by lack of information, social isolation, and loss of confidence or health and transport problems.</p> <p>Updating disabled Parking bays As part of renovations in the Visitor Centre area, Delamere have relocated and widened Disabled Parking bays to ensure better access and provision for our customers and so FC are beginning to upgrade their facilities to fit in with new guidelines. Sherwood Pines are working with the design team to better demarcate the Disabled Parking bays at the main visitors centre too enhance the visitor experience for our disabled customer and reduce confusion and conflict with other forest users.</p> <p>Working with design team to produce interpretation.</p> <p>Natural Rehabilitation Rangers across Central District provide a range of opportunities for individuals to</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>engage in practical conservation and site management. Group specific sessions are tailored for individuals with mental health illnesses, learning disabilities and physical limitations to ensure work is paced and tailored to interest and ability. Where possible and with assistance groups are trained to be able to self lead their own sessions, following detailed management plans and checked for safety and quality regularly.</p> <p>Central district now have several groups who are independent; offering natural rehabilitation opportunities to a range of individuals outside of their care environment. Examples include Norsaca (adults with autism), Cheswold Park Hospital (Low and medium secure mental illness), Phoenix Futures (drug and alcohol rehabilitation) and the Adventure Service (Young Adults with learning difficulties). Alongside working with a great range of additional hospices, groups and trusts who still need direct input and involvement from the FC.</p> <p>Continue to engage, support and train groups of varying abilities to manage the PFE independently taking ownership for their woodland. Work with groups of</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>varying abilities to manage the estate, in conjunction with FC.</p> <p>Moors Valley The new play structure on the Play Trail at Moors Valley is now open. The house of Baba Yaga is a fully inclusive and robust play house that offers full access to both the upper and lower deck areas to enable children with mobility impairments to share in all aspects of the co-operative play. A bridge offers wheelchair access to the upper level.</p> <p>Alice Holt The new visitor centre at Alice Holt has now been completed and is open to the public. The new interpretation and new centre staff when appointed will provide information for all visitors including those with disabilities.</p> <p>The new centre itself is accessible for people with disabilities. A new planting/seating area is being constructed with the senses in mind so that people with visual impairments can enjoy the scents, sounds and textures.</p> <p>A drop-in forum for families with disabled</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>children was held at Alice Holt in November in association with the local Gateway Forum for providers of activities for children with disabilities and the Easy Access Discovery Trail which has a special supporting booklet for people with limited speech was promoted.</p> <p>Caterpillar Crafts who run activities for children with disabilities of all kinds and their families in the forest, thereby widening access to the forest, have also been working in partnership at Alice Holt.</p> <p>A specialist Company will be appointed to design and build two new accessible play structures at Alice Holt that will be joint-funded with Hampshire County Council. This will be a wheelchair friendly roundabout and an accessible basket swing. Both will be located adjacent to the new visitor centre in 'Playwood'.</p> <p>The new visitor centre has a number of disabled facilities incorporated into the building, including a 'Changing Places' room equipped with hoist and changing bed. This facility has been registered with Changing Places and is recorded on their website for</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>all to see</p> <p>New Forest Access improvements The bridge on the Ober Water Trail in the New Forest has been repaired and resurfacing to improve its accessibility. The New Forest has also invested in disabled toilets at four of the NF toilet blocks, including installation of new grab rails.</p> <p>The cycle route markers in the New Forest have also been replaced, with a lower design. The colouring and font size of the indicator numbers have been updated to make them stand out better.</p> <p>The ongoing project to replace the main access point gate handles with all ability access Trombone style gate latches continues.</p> <p>Jeskyns The new café and toilet facilities will open at Jeskyns Community Woodland in January 2014. These new facilities will increase the attractiveness of Jeskyns to a wider audience, particularly those who have</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>to date been detracted by lack of services (such as toilets). The new facilities are accessible from the car park and from the existing network of accessible trails. The café will act as a visitor information hub and provide information on Jeskyns and the wider greenspace network.</p> <p>Little Gerpins An additional 150 metre accessible trail and access gate will be constructed at Little Gerpins by spring 2014 (as highlighted in April 2013 return).</p> <p>Lynford Arboretum Lynford Arboretum already has an existing easy access trail, and we've recently provided a new disabled toilet and added seats every 100 yards around the trail.</p> <p>Hodgemoor Working with local disabled ramblers & Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) officers, in Hodgemoor, a new easy access trail will be built in the next 6</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>months.</p> <p>Wendover Working with Visit England a new Wendover accessibility statement has been produced and is shortly to be uploaded onto the web pages.</p> <p>Bedgebury Bedgebury Café Development Project aims to increase indoor covers to enhance the visitor experience and increase turnover. Development will begin on site in Nov13. Works include providing easy-access for a wide range of users including wheel-chairs and pushchairs. Interpretation within the building will also enhance access to knowledge about the site to a wider audience.</p>
Use Visitor Experience Toolkit developed with the Sensory Trust to audit facilities at our Forest Centres	Local staff	2016	Recreation Managers to record audit findings and report progress to Diversity Team annually	Ongoing

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
Improve information available about accessible trails	Local staff and Communications Teams	2016	Recreation Managers to advise Diversity Team of progress by 1 March each year	<p>New Forest Sensory Trails A bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund has been successful, which will provide funding for a variety of sensory interpretation across key visitor sites in the New Forest. There will also be partnership development of a NF Connects project which will make information about trails and interpretation widely available, and accessible, using innovative and new media.</p> <p>Route to Health Birches Valley boasts a flat and interpreted trail accessed by a multitude of users from Birmingham, Walsall and Derby of all diversities, ages and abilities. Of particular mention are the Walking to Health Group, Bench to bench group (those who have limited mobility) and a customer who uses the trail weekly to use a specially adapted trike. As funding permits, continue to update the trail to modernise and keep fresh advertising to new users and ensuring stakeholders are aware of the facility.</p> <p>Accessible resources Central District has launched the new 'Ranger in a Box' resources providing more</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>accessible and cheaper learning tools for all who visit the forest. Well-advertised, easy to use and full equipped these boxes provide groups of all ages, abilities and understanding an educational session tailored to their needs.</p> <p>Continue to engage with hard to reach audiences, groups and build on feedback provided by users.</p>
Promoting Cycling to deprived and disabled communities	Local Community/Recreation staff	Ongoing engagement & involvement	Local monitoring and evaluation	<p>Yorkshire FD</p> <p>FC has lent support to CTC in a bid to secure funding to assist disabled groups visit the site and utilise the trail. CTC through Dalby Bike Barn have adapted bikes available to hire by individuals and groups wishing to use the Ellerburn trail.</p> <p>Cycle Recycling Scheme are gearing up for another Season of 'Summer Cycle School'. In partnership with the Forestry Commission the National Cycling Academy take in old bikes, strip them of their parts to build new bikes for deprived youngsters. The team then use the traffic-free routes of Livia, Bury and Hurst Community Woodlands (Red Rose Forest) for</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>skills training, teaching cycle hockey and mastering speedway for 600+ children per summer! http://www.ncagb.co.uk/</p> <p>Volunteers muck in for accessible access Friends of Scence Valley, National Forest, have raised £6,000 from selling Christmas trees on site to make access improvement to the bird hide. With the groups hard earned funding now pushchairs and mobility scooters can gain access to the hide and enjoy the wildlife too. Along with a repaint and interpretation the group have also drilled binocular viewing holes to encourage children too!</p> <p>Following the improvements the group contacted a local college and asked a student who uses a wheelchair to come and test the hide and audit the site for future improvements!</p> <p>Efforts are being made at Alice Holt to ensure that cycling for people with disabilities continues in the absence of cycle hire facilities whilst construction work continues on the cycle hire facility. - CTC</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>working with volunteers.</p> <p>East England FD update: Thames Beat The production of new site leaflets promoting accessible trails in Thames Beat was identified through the April 2013 return. This work package has not been fully completed and will instead be concluded by summer 2014. Works to date have included the production of new orientation boards at the recently completed Little Gerpins site.</p> <p>Lynford The easy access trails at Lynford have been promoted through Friends of Thetford Forest.</p> <p>High Lodge High Lodge web page has been updated with improved information on accessible trails.</p>
Skills Training for those with disabilities and from different ethnicities	Local Community/Recreation staff	Ongoing engagement & involvement	Local monitoring and evaluation	Community Rangers have sourced funding, in partnership with the Land Trust, to employ an interpreter for the Deaf community in South Yorkshire. The signer

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>will involve the Sue Ryder Care group in conservation tasks within the Community Woodlands. Individuals were involved in shrub clearance, coppicing and site management for a 6-week programme, improving skills sets, communication, team work and providing work experience for individuals new to the sector.</p> <p>Central FD Helping alcohol and drugs users rebuild their lives through the power of volunteering in action. Phoenix Futures have been using a range of practical conservation tasks to help their clients learn new skills, meet new people and gain Recovery through Nature qualification (John Muir Award). http://www.phoenix-futures.org.uk/keep-up-to-date-with-service-users-in-barnsley/</p> <p>Notts Refugee Forum Notts Refugee Forum brought 2 coach loads of refugee families to join the Learning Team at Sherwood Pines for shelter building, environmental art & cycling through the forest. FC will continue to forge</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities

Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				<p>links with the Refugee forum/staff to provide a training package for those wanting to gain skills in the countryside sector.</p> <p>St.Giles school of Retford utilises Sherwood Pines for their weekly P.E. session undertaking orienteering throughout the forest. To reduce the impact and stress for their students, of varying abilities and disabilities, FC staff guide the group directly into the forest rather than them having to tackle the busy Forest Visitors Centre. FC will continue to encourage self-led, regular use of the forest with limited input from staff, allowing maximum enjoyment and experience of the woodland.</p> <p>Bedfordshire</p> <p>In Bedfordshire we have been working with local communities encouraging hard to reach groups, and particularly faith groups to get out into the woodlands. The FC was invited to attend an informal session with key individuals from these groups. The session provided an insight into the real and perceived barriers to engaging with these groups and how we can encourage</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
				them out into the woodlands. It was a very useful day.
Investigate the possibility of providing free car-parking for people with disabilities	Local staff	2015	Recreation Managers to discuss this issue and report back to Diversity Team of decisions made	Ongoing
We will continue to work with disabled mountain bike users to develop assessable trails where appropriate	Local recreation teams	On-going, as and when new trails are proposed	Recreation Managers to report progress to Diversity Team by 1 March each year	<p>Ellerburn Accessible trail was completed and launched in April 2013. The new trail was promoted via CTC members magazine, local media and publications, radar and the FC website.</p> <p>East England FD update: Thames Chase In partnership with London Borough of Havering the Thames Chase Community Ranger organised a number of cycling events during August 2013 at Ingrebourne Hill (communities local to the site are in bottom 10% for multiple-deprivation). Over 50 children (aged 8 – 13) participated and bikes were provided free of charge during the event.</p>
We will identify two or three locations to specifically target	Business Partners	When actively recruiting again	Progress will be measured by annual analysis of job	Ongoing

Summary Table of Objectives – FC England Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress as at December 2013
BAME groups with publicity about employment (and recreation)			applicants which will be published in the annual monitoring report and by analysing customer feedback to check if the number of BAME respondents to the Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys increases	

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities

Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
<p>We will create local office databases of local disability organisations to develop an identifiable Forestry Commission profile, offer services and share information about our facilities and services</p>	<p>Local teams – use Best Practice contacts</p>	<p>2012-14</p>	<p>Review Annually (by December)</p>	<p>A database of disability organisations in Scotland is available on the HR E & D Intranet pages under Equality Analysis and Consultation. Additional research into local disability organisations will be undertaken as required in relation to projects for the purposes of engaging and consulting with local disability contacts/providers.</p> <p>When undertaking projects which require local engagement and consultation FDMs may wish to extend database to capture local organisations representing range of diversity interests and not restrict this to disability contacts.</p>
<p>We will continue to provide educational support to children with additional needs and/or disabilities where resources allow</p>	<p>Local staff</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Review Annually (by December)</p>	<p>The Forest Education Initiative continue to provide 'Forest Schools' sessions and training to teaching staff across Scotland at schools supporting children with additional support needs and/or disabilities.</p> <p>FCS acknowledges that the best way to</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
				<p>enable schools to work in their local woods and forests on a regular basis is for the schools to do it themselves. There is therefore a push in the education sector to train school staff to take learning outdoors.</p> <p>Looking ahead it will take time and resources to develop and deliver a realistic plan for Scotland.</p>
We will raise awareness of local accessible trails, etc. through advertising and promotion through local networks and our Internet site.	Local staff	On-going	Review Annually (by December)	<p>The (Communities, Recreation and Tourism) (CRT) Team is already engaged in a programme of improving the Visitor Experience generally which includes developing plans for various CRT sites across Scotland including improving signage, visitor information, and corporate branding.</p> <p>FCS have already begun an ongoing programme of reviewing trails with Fieldfare Trust (FT) to prioritise a programme of improvement subject to resources being available. The first</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
				<p>phase of surveys is complete and initial improvements have been actioned. Follow up snagging has also been undertaken by FT and improvements are in hand. A second round of improvement work will be assessed shortly.</p> <p>Initial programme of works has been largely completed with small programme of FD works continuing within CRT Business Plans (BP). Scope to undertake a more substantial programme have been curtailed by 13/14 BP cash reductions. A 'shovel ready' bid has been tabled to seek additional cash for further works.</p> <p>In addition the Phototrails website will provide an additional online tool that enables stakeholders to obtain up to date information regarding trails.</p> <p>The redevelopment of the FCS internet site is underway. It has been determined that all recreation content covering facilities will be replaced and contractors</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
				<p>have been appointed to take this forward in a consistent and professional manner taking account of diversity requirements. CRT Managers will work with the Website Project Manager to ensure up to date information is available in variety of formats.</p> <p>We are reworking all of the recreation content of the website – this will in conjunction with the commissioning of the new web tool allow more flexibility in presentation of facilities and search facility will also be much improved. New content being added and ported from old system.</p> <p>In addition publicity material such as leaflets promoting FCS sites as well as accessible trails is available in a variety of formats on request via the Diversity Team. Other work on publications is ongoing on a routine basis.</p> <p>The CRT Team will undertake an</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
				evaluation of new website and All Forest Survey 2/Mystery Shopper Reports to review user feedback re available information about accessible trails
We will audit by 2016, and then continually monitor all built facilities including visitor centres, toilets and parking facilities to ensure these are accessible and meet the needs of all users.	Local staff	2016	Review Annually (by December)	<p>All visitor services buildings have been prioritised by public visitor numbers.</p> <p>Access Audits and follow up visits to have been undertaken (by a qualified external consultant) to those Forestry Commission buildings in Scotland that have public access.</p> <p>A project board comprising representatives from FES Estates and the FCS Diversity Team meet regularly and evaluate the access audits. The project board decide and record where reasonable adjustments to the buildings should be made.</p> <p>To date 31 buildings have had works carried out at a cost of £670,000. This number and costs excludes a further 4</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
				<p>buildings that have been improved during major refurbishment works.</p> <p>A further 4 buildings are due to have works carried out in 2012/13 at a cost of £140,000. This number and cost excludes a further 3 buildings that will be improved during planned major refurbishment.</p> <p>Access audits have also been carried out to a sample of 4 wildlife viewing hides and the Project board are considering how alternative provision can be made, particularly where access improvements are not feasible due to topography, natural habitat sensitivity, etc. using webcams, increased website information.</p> <p>Where the number of visitors to a building is very low (less than 10 per week) work has not been progressed but consideration may be given to these if funding becomes available in the future. FCS offered to carry out audits at NRS</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
				<p>but they undertook their own in house audits.</p> <p>Accessible design for new build projects and refurbishments will be informed by stakeholder (customer/staff) engagement, with Building Standards defining the minimum criteria required.</p> <p>Where car parks are associated with buildings FCS has improved disabled parking and the access routes to the building. All car parks not associated with a building and all trail improvements are dealt with by the FD.</p> <p>Staff disabilities are dealt with on an as needs arise basis.</p>
Improve information available about accessible trails	Local staff and Communications Teams	2016	Recreation Managers to advise Diversity Team of progress by 1 March each year	Ongoing.
We will investigate the possibility of	Local staff	Complete		This has already been dealt with in FES via an Equality Impact Assessment

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
providing free car parking for disabled people by 2015.				(EQIA) screening of the car parking charging scheme – Car parking charges will not be made to those with the disabled blue badge.
We will explore opportunities to support marketing with partners e.g. RADAR accessibility holiday guide.	Recreation Managers and Communications Team	2013	Review Annually (by December)	This is an ongoing role of the FES Marketing Manager and is covered by a marketing strategy which was the subject of an EQA. Ongoing – website will be a major opportunity for marketing.
Develop a database of volunteers/staff who can conduct guided tours of forests for different groups	Local staff	2014	Local Office Managers to report progress to Diversity Team by 1 March each year	Ongoing.
We will continue to work with disabled mountain bike users to develop accessible trails where appropriate. This	Local recreation teams	On-going, as and when new trails are proposed	Review Annually (by December)	As part of ongoing programme as appropriate seek to improve accessibility on a case by case basis. As part of major projects e.g. where opportunity arises redevelop trail head

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
work will be on-going, as and when new trails are proposed over the next four years. The local recreation teams will take this forward building on the working relationships already built up with relevant groups.				facilities as a priority for all users e.g. Glentress, Galloway, etc. No new opportunities at present as no new trails are being planned or built.
We will identify two or three locations to specifically target BAME groups with publicity about employment (and recreation)	Business Partners	When actively recruiting again	Progress will be measured by annual analysis of job applicants which will be published in the annual monitoring report and by analysing customer feedback to check if the number of BAME respondents to the Public Opinion of	No action as yet due to recruitment freeze.

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
			Forestry Surveys increases	
We will liaise with local public transport providers to improve transport links where possible and appropriate. We have done this at one of our sites but the costs may prove prohibitive.		Review Annually (by December)		On an ongoing basis as appropriate and as part of the Equality Analysis (EqA) for major development (e.g. Glentress, David Marshal Lodge, etc.), investigate opportunities with public transport providers to improve transport links where possible. For example as part of the Glentress Visitor Centre Project FCS met the costs of building a lay-by on the public transport route for a bus stop to facilitate opportunities for visitors to travel to Glentress via public transport. Ongoing with major projects.
Maintain a log of actions taken and improvement required / completed.		Beginning January 2013		Under discussion by CRT managers group building on FC England toolbox. Nothing to report from CRT at present other than as stated above. We are considering how we can improve monitoring at a practical level for smaller facilities and routine services at FD level.

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
Objective	Suggested Responsibility	Suggested Deadline	Suggested Measure	Progress at December 2013
All major projects to have a current Equality Analysis (EqA)		Ongoing		<p>Starter Farm Initiatives – new programme is being set up but no EqA's have yet been done.</p> <p>An EqA has been done for Land Regeneration at Cuningar Loop but not at Bothwell Park or Greenoak Hill.</p> <p>Apprenticeship Manager to complete combined EqA for all the skill sector projects.</p> <p>There are no EqA's required for any of the steep ground management programmes (e.g. A82).</p> <p>In terms of projects, EqA's have been done for Galloway Visitor Centres, Car Park Charging, and Wildlife Viewing. An EqA for David Marshall Lodge has been published, and one for Queens View redevelopment is underway.</p> <p>EqA's haven't been done for the following projects: Great Trossachs</p>

Summary Table of Objectives – FC Scotland Business Responsibilities				
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				Forest; Glenmore Sewage Works; Demolitions; and Freshwater Pearl Mussels.
When actively recruiting externally again promote employment opportunities to disabled communities		Currently unknown – at present recruitment freeze been extended indefinitely.		When the recruitment freeze is lifted we will continue to promote the FC as an employer to disabled communities in response to the research feedback we have had. This includes advertising in the disabled lifestyle press and profiling existing staff with disabilities in these magazines.