

**1. What is the name of your policy, function or service?**

West Argyll Forest District - District Strategic Plan

**2. What are the main aims and objectives of the Policy function or service?**

This document summarise the direction of management in West Argyll Forest District for the period 2013-16. This seeks to build on the West Argyll Forest District Strategic Plan 2009-13 which focussed on defining the tasks that Forestry Enterprise Scotland (FES), as Estate managers would accomplish.

The revision of the Forest District Strategic Plan will provide a clear steer for the updating of local plans and the delivery of programmes of work.

Appendix 1 of the FD Strategic Plan captures the key actions contained in the West Argyll Forest District Strategic Plan 2009-13 which had the potential to impact on people with a brief summary of progress to date. Looking ahead the Strategic Direction for the National Forest Estate (NFE) whilst retaining the original 6 strategic aims (captured at 3. below) is providing clarity and fitness for purpose in the revised document.

**3. Briefly describe the impact (or potential impact) on people**

The Strategic Plan for West Argyll Forest District itself will not have a new impact on people as its main function is to explain existing policy. The NFE, on the other hand, is a major source of public benefits and impacts on a wide range of people both as workers, leisure users, neighbours and stakeholders.

The document lays out local delivery stemming from the six national goals for the NFE:

- Safeguarding 'national forestry treasures'
- Delivering forestry for people and rural development benefits
- Timber production for market stability and development
- Contributing to the Scottish Government's renewable energy targets
- Landscape-scale management for biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Supporting policy, R&D and exemplars of land use integration and best practice

Our management aims are described around a further six aspects:

- Treasured. Treasured by the nation as a truly multi-purpose resource sustaining livelihoods, improving the environment, and as a place for enjoyment and involvement.
- Healthy. Healthy ecosystems sustainably managed to provide ecosystem services in a changing climate.
- Productive. Managed to sustain and utilise the productive potential of the land.
- Accessible. Local woodlands and national treasures easily accessible, welcoming and open for all.
- Cared for. Well looked after countryside with natural and cultural heritage in good condition.
- Good value. Using the income-generating potential of the Estate to minimise the net cost of delivering public benefits.

These goals and aims can be mapped against the main people impacts:

Workers: The NFE in West Argyll Forest District is a major workplace for around 90 direct staff and over a hundred contractors engaged in delivering all six goals. We recognise that we cannot achieve our aims without a professional, motivated, diverse and dedicated workforce. FES is an equal opportunity employer and has a full suite of processes and guidance in place to encourage and ensure equality in the workplace for both direct employees and contractors. We recognise that there are equality challenges for workforce development, particularly in relation to a historically male-dominated industry and workforce, and also in relation to the limitations imposed by the outdoor/forest environment for those with some disabilities. It may also be the case that those in more urban-based cultural groups are less likely to consider employment in a land-based industry like forestry.

Leisure users: Some 0.6M visits are made each year to the NFE in West Argyll forest District, many using

designed recreation facilities, for example for mountain biking and wildlife viewing. (*FC Scotland All Forests Visitor Monitoring; Survey of visitors to Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) forests 2004-2007*)

Two principle equality issues have been our focus in recent years: i) how can we make our existing forests more accessible to a wider range of people; and ii) building on the FCS repositioning programme what opportunities are there for the NFE to provide in terms of closer access to where people live through our Woods In and Around Towns (WIAT) programme. In West Argyll FD the opportunity for purchase close to towns has not yet arisen, so our current work is restricted to two small WIAT sites.

In our efforts to make our existing forests more accessible to a wider range of people we recognise that there are both physical and psychological barriers to access. Physical barriers in relation to terrain and facility design can have a negative impact on those with some disabilities, and on the elderly or those with young children. There may be psychological barriers to accessing forests for those more familiar with the urban environment, for some ethnic groups with negative cultural associations with the countryside, and for those groups that might have a fear of crime in the secluded forest environment.

Our estate repositioning programme also recognises the locational barriers to access, particularly for those without private transport. Many people in Scotland are unable or unwilling to take part in enjoyable woodland activity due to factors such as disability, distance, low income, or fear of crime. Using or creating woodland nearer to people, and creating opportunities for group activity potentially can help to overcome these forms of social exclusion. Unfortunately in Argyll, most of our forests are relatively remote from settlements and the public transport network is limited, but where opportunities arise we shall consider them.

Just over three-fifths of our visitors travel to the forest by car (60.5%), 39% walk to the forest while much smaller proportions use other types of transport. Less than 1% of our visitors use public transport to reach the forest. (*FC Scotland All Forests Visitor Monitoring; Survey of visitors to FCS Forests 2004-2007*). This is due in part either to the seasonal nature of some public transport services to the forests or no public transport provision to the forests is in place.

Neighbours and stakeholders: We take stakeholder and neighbour consultation seriously in managing the NFE. This is evidenced through our FSC sustainable forestry certification which requires an appropriate level of ongoing stakeholder engagement (see <http://ukwas.org.uk/>). We recognise the ongoing challenge of engaging with as yet uninvolved people and groups, and how we need to target limited engagement resources to best effect. A significant proportion of the visitors to the forests of Argyll are those who are visiting the area on holiday (48% are tourists). This presents a particular challenge to engage with this transient community, which is not readily identifiable and whose views are not easily captured. We shall, however, take views, should these be provided, into account.

**4. What are the names and contact details of the initiative’s owner and the person who completed the Equality Analysis?**

David Jardine, Forest District Manager, david.jardine@forestry.gsi.gov.uk 01546 602518

**5. Is this a new Equality Analysis or a review of a previous Equality Analysis?**

<b>New.</b>	Yes – however it should be noted that there is no change to management priorities or approach, but in how we communicate the role of the NFE
<b>3 year review.</b>	
<b>Early review, explain why.</b>	
<b>Review due to end of the initiative.</b>	

**6. If this is a review, when was the previous Equality Analysis signed off?**

## 7. How will this initiative be put into practice?

The entire effort and focus of Forest Enterprise Scotland is devoted to the subject of this document, namely managing the NFE in West Argyll Forest District. The Forest District staff team are responsible for the delivery of the key commitments included within the FD Strategic Plan.

The West Argyll FD Strategic Plan will be communicated to staff through staff meetings. The delivery of the plan will be reinforced through the annual business planning processes where resource allocations will be aligned to strategic priorities.

In terms of external communication, the FD Strategic Plan will be publicly available on the Forestry Commission website, and we will align our district website to highlight key priorities and messages. National and local consultations on, for example, our forest plans and proposals for recreation facilities, will be guided by the national strategic directions and the West Argyll FD Strategic Plan.

The FD will contribute to the FES corporate plan and annual report cycle which shall define and report on priority actions arising from this document. This includes reporting against the FCS diversity commitments.

## 8. What evidence regarding the protected characteristics have you obtained to analyse this initiative? Quote sources including details of engagement.

The key sources of data used for the purposes of this Equality Analysis include:

### **Visitors to forests and woodlands in West Argyll Forest District:**

[FC Scotland All Forests Visitor Monitoring (AFS1); Survey of visitors to FCS forests 2004-2007. West Argyll and Lorne Forest Districts (currently being updated)]

**Numbers:** Estimated 589,000 visits to FCS forests per year.

#### **Ethnicity:**

White 100%

#### **Gender:**

Male 45.5%

Female 54.5%

#### **Age:**

0-15 yrs 16.5%

16-24yrs 3.5%

25-34 yrs 11.5%

35-44 yrs 23.5%

45-59 yrs 28.5%

60+ yrs 16.6%

43.5% were on a local day trip of less than 6 miles from home, and 48.5% were on an overnight visit to the area. 60.5% travelled to the forest by car; 39% walked and 0.5% arrived by bicycle

### ***Visitor Survey at Aros Park, Mull – 2011 – Sample size 56 Interviewees***

#### **Ethnicity:**

White 100%

#### **Gender:**

Female 70%

Male 29%

#### **Age:**

25-39 yrs 25%

40-59 yrs 41%  
60+ yrs 14%

**Disability:**

With disability or health condition 10%  
Without disability or health condition 90%

Nature of disability

Sight 14%  
Mobility 71%  
Other 14%

*The FD has a customer feedback register, where any issues raised, including diversity related, are investigated and actions taken to address, where appropriate. A number of our Public Events are now provided by a Third Party, and systems are in place to ensure that feedback is provided to gauge opinion to inform future events.*

**Argyll & Bute population: 88,200 (Census 2011)**

**Ethnicity: (Census 2011)**

	Argyll & Bute	Scotland
White	98.8%	96.0%
White Scottish	78.9%	84.0%
White Other British	16.6%	7.9%
White Other	3.3%	4.1%
Mixed /multiple ethnic	0.3%	0.4%
Asian	0.6%	2.7%
African	0.1%	0.1%
Other	0.1%	0.3%

**Gender: (Census 2011)**

	Argyll & Bute	Scotland
male	48.9%	48.5%
female	51.1%	51.5%

**Age: (Census 2011)**

	Argyll & Bute	Scotland
0-15yrs	16.2 %	17.2%
16-29yrs	14.1 %	18.4%
30-44yrs	16.0 %	19.6%
45-59yrs	22.7 %	21.3%
60-74yrs	20.8 %	15.6%
75+ yrs	10.2 %	7.9%

**Disability: (Census 2011)**

	Argyll & Bute	Scotland
Day-to-day activities limited a lot	8.9%	9.6%
Day-to-day activities limited a little	11.3%	10.1%
Day-to-day activities not limited	79.8%	80.3%

**Religion (Census 2011)**

	Argyll & Bute	Scotland
Church of Scotland:	40.0%	32.4%
No religion	32.0%	36.7%
Roman Catholic	11.3%	15.9%
Religion not stated	8.0%	7.0%
Other Christian	7.7%	5.5%

Other religion	0.7%	1.1%
Islam	0.2%	1.4%

**FC West Argyll FD Workforce** - demographics as at 31 March 2013:

**Ethnicity**

White 100%

**Gender**

Female: 20%

Male: 80%

**Age Distribution**

16 - 24y 6%

25 – 34y 25%

35 – 44y 20%

45 – 54y 30%

55 – 64y 17%

Over 65y 2%

**Disability**

8 % of staff consider themselves to have a disability

92% of staff consider themselves to be non-disabled

The 2011 Staff Survey results for Scotland did not identify any issues for particular groups in our workforce.

	<b>Describe the gaps and what you have done to fill them, or why you cannot fill them.</b>
	<p>Data regarding visits to the NFE in West Argyll FD has been extracted from 3 key sources: All Forest Surveys (AFS) 1; sampling covered the period 2004-2007; Forest Visitor Surveys 2009 and FCS Annual Mystery Shopping Report 2010/11 which pre-dated the introduction of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>A 2<sup>nd</sup> All Forest Survey (AFS2) is currently underway and this will provide up to date and more robust data regarding our visitor demographics will be available in 2014.</p> <p>A further Staff Survey was conducted in 2013, which is expected to provide some updated workforce statistics in 2014.</p>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Evidence relating to age of our Visitors, Workforce and Argyll &amp; Bute population captured above</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<b>Evidence relating to overall numbers of our Visitors, Workforce and Scottish population who consider they have a disability captured above. Data relating to specific impairment groups within Scottish population captured above. Data for Argyll &amp; Bute awaited.</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Evidence relating to gender of our Visitors, Workforce and Argyll &amp; Bute population captured above.</b>

<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	No visitor data; No Argyll & Bute population data publicly available. Workforce: the 2011 Staff Survey showed around 0.5 % of in FC staff identified themselves as transgender. There were no particular issues highlighted and those who identified themselves as transgender were as content with the FC.
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	No visitor data; no workforce data;
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	No visitor data; no Argyll & Bute population data; Workforce: using data going back to 2005, for FC as a whole we have analysed our return to work after maternity leave. We are encouraged that, on average 84% of women return to work following their pregnancy and that this figure will increase if those who remain absent return to work in due course. Many women have more than one period of maternity leave and we offer unpaid leave and Career Break options to extend periods of absence and offer flexibility.
<b>Race</b>	Evidence relating to ethnic origin of our Visitors, Workforce and Argyll & Bute population captured above
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	Evidence captured relating to religion or belief of Argyll & Bute population; No visitor data; Workforce: the Staff Surveys of 2009 and 2011 indicate that around 46% of FC employees are Christian and 27% have no belief. However, Buddhism, Judaism, Hindu and Islam are also represented, though in low numbers.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	No visitor data; no comprehensive official statistics on sexual orientation for Argyll & Bute population; Workforce: the Staff Survey 2011 showed that between 1 and 3 % of FC staff identify themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual.

**10. What does all the evidence tell you about the actual or likely impact on different groups?**

	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>High, Medium or Low</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Age</b>	x		medium	<p><u>Workers:</u> West Argyll FD has a good representation across ages. Currently we have three places for Apprentices, and provide a place for mid-year student annually, thus ensuring continuing opportunities for younger staff.</p> <p><u>Leisure users:</u> older people benefit from provision of access designed with all abilities in mind, and from provision of information that makes level of difficulty clear. From our surveys we know that a wide range of people of all ages visit our forests and woodlands. We will continue to seek feedback through the use of questionnaires. Elderly people are well represented in Argyll and Bute and our efforts in West Argyll Forest District are concentrating on our short, easy access facilities which provide benefit to all ages.</p> <p>Use of the forests by younger age</p>

				<p>groups in Argyll &amp; Bute appears below the population average; this may be a reflection of the limited bespoke facilities which appeal to this age group and are expensive to maintain for small numbers of users. The FD provides a limited number of visitor events and a limited education programme which are targeted at younger people and children which are well supported and may not be represented in the All Forest Survey statistics.</p> <p><u>Neighbours and stakeholders:</u> A flexible approach to conducting consultation meetings such as offering opportunities outwith standard working times should be taken to ensure as many stakeholders are able to engage with us as possible.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	x		high	<p><u>Workers:</u> Whilst we currently have a small number of staff who consider themselves disabled, we recognise that manual work and the terrain could provide a barrier to future employees who do have a physical disability or to current members of staff who develop one. However as an equal opportunity employer we are committed to making reasonable adjustments to minimise or overcome barriers.</p> <p><u>Leisure users:</u> those with disabilities benefit from provision of access designed with all abilities in mind, and for provision of information that makes level of difficulty clear. We continue to engage with Fieldfare Trust on an ongoing basis across the FC Scotland estate to evaluate the facilities including trails to ensure these reach as diverse an audience as possible. Our efforts in West Argyll Forest District are concentrating on our short, easy access facilities which provide benefit to all.</p> <p><u>Stakeholders:</u> we will be flexible with neighbours and other stakeholders to meet with them where it suits their (indicated) needs. The main FD office has recently been upgraded to improve disabled access. As FCS moves to 'online planning' this will provide another opportunity for the disabled to engage with our work.</p>
<b>Gender</b>	x		medium	<p><u>Workers:</u> Traditionally, employment in the forestry profession has been male dominated and perceived as a practical, outdoors, and physical</p>

				<p>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. In April 2010 our recruitment decreased significantly due to the requirement to downsize the wider Civil Service. Improving the diversity of our staff is difficult under these continuing restrictions, but it remains an aim.</p> <p><u>Leisure users:</u> Analysis of our visitors to the FCS forests has indicated that the number of male and female visitors to FCS forests is slightly biased to female visitors, but is not greatly different from the Argyll &amp; Bute population, where there is a slightly higher female population.</p> <p><u>Stakeholders:</u> A broad range of stakeholders provide feedback on our wider work and are reflective of the gender of the wider population and the sectors they represent.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	x		low	<p>Workers: we are not aware of any staff in the district who identify as being transgender.</p> <p>Leisure users: There is limited knowledge of this user group locally, and there has been no registered complaints received.</p> <p>Neighbours &amp; Stakeholders: When setting up our Equalities Panel we will ascertain whether there is a local group representing the transgender community, and invite them to participate.</p> <p>We are not aware of any potential impacts on this group. However, we will review our plans if we receive any feedback that highlights issues.</p>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	x		low	<p>Leisure users; Not tested to date; no sites in West Argyll FD are licensed to provide weddings.</p> <p>Worker: All staff policies that could be impacted by marriage and civil partnerships are dealt with centrally, at a national level.</p> <p>Neighbours &amp; stakeholders: A range of people participate in our consultations and engagement, however we do not currently record their marital status.</p> <p>We are not aware of any potential</p>



				impacts on this group. However, we will review our plans if we receive any feedback that highlights issues.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	x		low	<p><u>Leisure users</u>: those with young children and pushchairs benefit from provision of access designed with all abilities in mind, and for provision of information that makes level of difficulty clear. Our efforts in West Argyll Forest District are concentrating on our short, easy access facilities which provide benefit to all.</p> <p>Workers; The FC offers a number of flexible working policies, and the district will try and accommodate any requests where possible, to meet the needs of individual staff.</p> <p>Neighbours &amp; Stakeholders: We are not aware of any potential impacts on this group. However, we will review our plans if we receive any feedback that highlights issues.</p>
<b>Race</b>	x		high	<p><u>Workers</u>: In West Argyll the percentage of ethnic groups is low and below the national average: in Scotland ethnic groups are concentrated in the central belt urban areas. In April 2010 the FCS recruitment decreased significantly due to the requirement to downsize the wider Civil Service. Improving the diversity of our staff is difficult under these continuing restrictions, but it remains an aim.</p> <p>The FD also provides employment for a larger contractor workforce in which we recognise that a proportion of the White: Other community (usually Eastern European) is engaged.</p> <p><u>Leisure users</u>: There is only a very small Ethnic community in Argyll and it is difficult to find a representative group in the area. A significant proportion of the visitors to the forests of Argyll are those who are visiting the area on holiday (48% are tourists). This presents a particular challenge to engage with this transient community, which is not readily identifiable and whose views are not easily captured</p> <p>We are not aware of any potential impacts on this group. However, we will review our plans if we receive any feedback that highlights issues.</p> <p><u>Neighbours and stakeholders</u>: There is</p>

				<p>only a very small Ethnic community in Argyll and it is difficult to find a representative group in the area. We endeavour to engage positively with all organisations and individuals that we can identify or who approach us.</p> <p>We are not aware of any potential impacts on this group. However, we will review our plans if we receive any feedback that highlights issues.</p>
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	x		low	<p><u>Leisure users:</u> We have had no approaches from faith groups to run special services or activities within our forests but would consider any requests in the future.</p> <p><u>Workers;</u> We do not currently hold data on the religion or belief of our staff at a local level, it is only collated at a national level via the staff survey.</p> <p><u>Neighbours and stakeholders:</u> We will continue to ensure all sectors of society have an opportunity to comment on the work we do, be it through surveys, compliments and complaints register, drop-in sessions or by direct contact with known and recognised groups.</p> <p>We are not aware of any potential impacts on this group. However, we will review our plans if we receive any feedback that highlights issues.</p> <p>We are not aware of any potential impacts on this group. However, we will review our plans if we receive any feedback that highlights issues.</p>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>		x	low	<p><u>Leisure users:</u> We have received no complaints with regards to sexual orientation in terms of access to our forests. As with all of the other protected characteristic groups we are open to any approaches by this group to organise specific events.</p> <p><u>Workers;</u> We do not currently hold data on the sexual orientation of our staff at a local level, it is only collated at a national level via the staff survey.</p> <p><u>Neighbours and stakeholders:</u> We will continue to ensure all sectors of society have an opportunity to comment on the work we do, be it through surveys, compliments and complaints register, drop-in sessions or by direct contact with known and recognised groups.</p> <p>We are not aware of any potential impacts on this group. However, we will review our plans if we receive any feedback that highlights issues.</p>

				review our plans if we receive any feedback that highlights issues.
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## 11. What have you changed in the initiative to reduce or eliminate any negative impact?

Workers: Our People Strategy 2011-16 Fit for the Future lays out how we will take positive action for equality in the workplace

(<http://alpacorn.forestry.gov.uk:7777/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/ECONNECT/PERSONNEL%20DEVELOPMENT/FIT%20FOR%20OUR%20FUTURE%20-%20PEOPLE%20STRATEGY%202011-2016.PDF>)

A key theme of our People Strategy is to recruit and employ more people with protected characteristics in order to make the Forestry Commission as representative of the population as possible. Spending restrictions meant that active advertising in media outlets specifically aimed at various protected characteristic groups ceased in April 2010. Our recruitment also decreased significantly from that date, due to the requirement to downsize the wider Civil Service. Improving the diversity of our staff is difficult under these continuing restrictions, but it remains an aim. Meantime, we shall do all that we can to understand and eliminate any issues of inequality towards our staff and to ensure our interviewing processes are not discriminatory.

Leisure users: Our community and recreation work is directed by four existing policy documents for each of which equality and diversity are a core focus:

- Working with communities: our commitment (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7Q4J6R>)
- Forests for People Recreation Framework ([http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/fcfc114.pdf/\\$FILE/fcfc114.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/fcfc114.pdf/$FILE/fcfc114.pdf))
- Woods In and Around Towns ([http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/fcfc120.pdf/\\$FILE/fcfc120.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/fcfc120.pdf/$FILE/fcfc120.pdf))
- Woods for Health Strategy ([http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/fcfc011.pdf/\\$FILE/fcfc011.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/fcfc011.pdf/$FILE/fcfc011.pdf))

We have made investments in the accessibility of our buildings eg new disabled toilets at Aros Park (Mull), facilities at the Scottish Beaver Trial (Knapdale) and the new Mull Eagle Watch Hide. However, there are a small number of locations where practical barriers to access cannot be reasonably overcome. These are not sites used by the public, and are generally workshop type facilities that have a very limited number of staff/users.

Neighbours and stakeholders: Our approach to consultation and engagement is laid out in Working with communities: our commitment (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7Q4J6R>) and OGB 44 Equality and Diversity

([http://alpacorn.forestry.gov.uk:7777/portal/page?\\_pageid=33,1404557&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://alpacorn.forestry.gov.uk:7777/portal/page?_pageid=33,1404557&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL))

Equality messages and commitments are embedded through the National Strategic Directions document which directs the West Argyll Forest District Strategic Plan. Details of our proposed approach to consultation and engagement in West Argyll Forest District are included in the consultation draft of the Strategic Plan,

We have made investments in the accessibility of our buildings eg the Upgrade of the Whitegates office. However, there are a some number of locations where practical barriers to access cannot be reasonably overcome. These are not sites used by the public, and are generally workshop type facilities that have a very limited number of users.

Our analysis highlights that there is little statistical difference in the gender and age demographics of our visitors. However, there are clear differences in the level of participation in our services of people with disabilities and possibly also for the very small ethnic community (where engagement is proving difficult). Actions to take forward this commitment are captured in the 4 existing policy documents above and actions being taken forward at a local level will therefore concentrate our efforts in the provision of access for all to meet needs of disabled community

## 12. Where negative impact can not be reduced, give the reasons why.

The whole of West Argyll Forest District is open for responsible access but may not be suitable for less able user groups or those unfamiliar with using remote countryside. We work to achieve the right balance between facilities that facilitate access for all, and wider countryside where no specific facilities are provided but which is open for informal access. Due to the rugged topography of much of our land those

with some physical disabilities may be presented with particular challenges to accessing all of the Scotland's National Forest Estate in West Argyll FD; unfortunately resources are not available to provide suitable access for all to all parts of the estate, therefore we will concentrate our efforts and resources on key sites.

We work with the funding made available to us for Communities, Recreation and Tourism delivery – our current allocation is net £0.75M. We use the business plan process to focus resources where they will have the greatest positive impact on accessibility and local economic impact.

A significant proportion of the visitors to the forests of Argyll are those who are visiting the area on holiday (48% are tourists). This presents a particular challenge to engage with this transient community, which is not readily identifiable and whose views are not easily captured, but where opportunities arise we shall consider them.

The poor Public Transport infrastructure within Argyll challenges our ability to provide a greater service for those without access to their own transport; but where opportunities arise we shall consider them.

### 13. Does this initiative fulfil the General Equality Duty?

	Comment
<b>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.</b>	<p>Yes - In our efforts to make our existing forests more accessible to a wider range of people we recognise that there are both physical and psychological barriers to access. Physical barriers in relation to terrain and facility design can have a negative impact on those with disabilities, and on the elderly or those with young children. There may be psychological barriers to accessing forests for those more familiar with the urban environment, for some ethnic groups with negative cultural associations with the countryside, and for those groups that might have a fear of crime in the secluded forest environment.</p> <p>Because of the rural nature of much of the population there are very limited opportunities for engaging with the Woodlands In and Around Towns Initiative. There are two sites, which on a national scale are relatively low priority, but the Forest District Strategic Plan has identified a key action which has the opportunity to improve the delivery at this site.</p>
<b>Advance equality of opportunity.</b>	<p>Yes - FES is an equal opportunity employer and has a full suite of processes and guidance in place to encourage and ensure equality in the workplace for both direct employees and contractors. Our People Strategy 2011-16 Fit for the Future lays out how we will take positive action for equality in the workplace</p>
<b>Foster good relations.</b>	<p>Yes - We take stakeholder and neighbour consultation seriously in managing the NFE. This is evidenced through our FSC sustainable forestry certification which requires an appropriate level of ongoing stakeholder engagement (see <a href="http://ukwas.org.uk/">http://ukwas.org.uk/</a>). We recognise the ongoing challenge of engaging with as yet uninvolved people and groups, and how we need to target limited engagement resources to best effect. A particular challenge is to engage with those in urban communities who may have less initial knowledge of the natural environment, including those cultural groups focused in the urban environment.</p>

### 14. Describe the arrangements to measure and monitor the actual impact of this initiative on people from the protected characteristic groups.

<p><b>How will you measure the effects of the initiative?</b></p>	<p>Equality monitoring commitments are embedded in the sectoral policy documents listed in section 11. These, in turn are linked to monitoring of a national set of indicators for forestry, including for Community development, and Access and Health at <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/SFSprogressindicators2011.pdf/\$FILE/SFSprogressindicators2011.pdf">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/SFSprogressindicators2011.pdf/\$FILE/SFSprogressindicators2011.pdf</a></p> <p>The diversity characteristics of forest visitors will be monitored through All Forest Surveys.</p> <p>A consultation framework is included in the FD Strategic Plan, which will be subject to public consultation. This will provide a locally agreed framework for local consultation on our land management plans and local activities. The consultation plans will include commitments to monitoring the effectiveness of our consultation, and this evidence will be collated at national level to inform national policy.</p>
<p><b>What type of information is needed for monitoring and how often will it be analysed?</b></p>	<p>WAFD conducts a variety of surveys to obtain feedback from our “customers” including the FCS Annual Mystery Shopping Report, which reports on the Mull Eagle Watch Partnership project. A 2<sup>nd</sup> All Forest Survey (AFS2) is currently underway and this will provide up to date and more robust data regarding our visitor demographics when these are available in 2014.</p>
<p><b>How will you engage stakeholders* in implementation, monitoring and review?</b></p>	<p>Our approach to consultation and engagement is laid out in Working with communities: our commitment (<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7Q4J6R">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7Q4J6R</a>) and OGB 44 Equality and Diversity (<a href="http://alpacorn.forestry.gov.uk:7777/portal/page?_pageid=33,1404557&amp;_dad=portal&amp;_schema=PORTAL">http://alpacorn.forestry.gov.uk:7777/portal/page?_pageid=33,1404557&amp;_dad=portal&amp;_schema=PORTAL</a>)</p> <p>Equality messages and commitments are embedded through the Strategic Directions document.</p>
<p><b>Who will be responsible for the monitoring and review?</b></p>	<p>The Forest District Manager will have a key role to play in monitoring and reviewing progress on the local initiatives laid out in the West Argyll FD Strategic Plan.</p>
<p><b>15. What is the review date for this Equality Analysis?</b></p>	
<p><b>Date of next review(s)</b></p>	<p>2016</p>
<p><b>What could trigger an early revision?</b></p>	<p>Change of strategic direction/policy</p>
<p><b>16. Senior manager sign off</b></p>	
<p><b>I agree with this Equality Analysis and its supporting evidence relating to this initiative and that it demonstrates that it advances or will advance, the three aims of the General Equality Duty.</b></p>	
<p><b>Name</b></p>	<p>JO ELLIS</p>
<p><b>Signature</b></p>	
<p><b>Job Title</b></p>	<p>Planning Manager</p>
<p><b>Date</b></p>	

