

Forestry Commission Equality Analysis Form

1. What is the name of your service?

FOREST SERVICES

Forestry Commission England (FCE) – Impact on the services provided by Forest Services under the current change programme and review of the impact of services assessed under SR10.

Background: An Equality Analysis of changes proposed to FCE as a result of SR10, was undertaken in 2010¹. At the time, Forest Services (FS) was a new structure within Forestry Commission England and the impact of the following measures were assessed:

- A 25% reduction in 'Grant in Aid' on programme activities by 2014/15.
- A 26% reduction in designated administrative activities² by 2014/15.
- Changes to **what** the FC delivers and methods of delivery (to reflect emerging Government policy and approach at the time).

In addition, the proposed reforms were considered, based on:

- A review of activities that should be done (and what should be stopped or modified) by 2014/15 in light of the Corporate Plan 2011-14;
- A review of staff structures and numbers required to carry out these activities; and;
- Checks to ensure work could be delivered within a reduced budget.

The Equality Analysis (EqA) undertaken for SR10 only assessed the impact on FS service provision and the specific impacts on people from Protected Characteristic groups. The impact on staff was considered beyond scope and was covered by a separate EqA for the whole SR10 programme (Staff SR10 EqA). Three years on, this document presents a review and update on the EqA undertaken for SR10, (herein referred as SR10 EqA). Work to collate monitoring information and progress updates for the purpose of this review spanned June to November 2013.

This SR10 EqA assesses only the impact on FS service provision and the specific impacts on people from Protected Characteristic groups. It does not consider the impact on staff or the impact of changes under the Woodland Policy Enabling Programme (WPEP). The latter will be covered by a separate overarching EqA Framework which is scheduled to be submitted to the WPEP Programme Board in March 2014.

2. What are the main aims and objectives of the service?

Aims and Objectives of the Service: Current Brief

This review of the SR10 EqA updates work undertaken in 2010 by presenting progress to date, alongside opportunities for improvement. The analysis has been

¹ The EQA was signed off by members of the programme board in 2011.

² This included the areas of Regions, Grants & Regulation and National Office functions

undertaken in accordance with Forestry Commission Operational Guidance Booklet (OGB) 44 (2011).

This review then proceeds to assess the potential impact of current change programmes, as follows:

- Forest Services (FS) (FC SR10 Change Programme)
- Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) (Defra led programme)
- English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) (non-RDPE) (FC (FS) programme)
- Common Agricultural Policy Delivery Programme (CAP DP) (Defra led programme)
- New Environmental Land Management Scheme (NELMS) (Defra led programme)
- Selected Projects from the Planned work programme (relating to Plant Health and charging for services)

This analysis makes a series of recommendations to underpin our aspirations for continuous improvement.

Sustainable Forest Management

Incentives and Regulations,

The Incentives and Regulations National Team³ (I&R) have lead responsibility for the operation of forestry and woodland regulations, including the issue of Felling Licences, and the provision of grant support for woodlands other than the Public Forest Estate, delivered through the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) and other legacy schemes. The team support the Area I&R Teams (e.g. Field Managers, Woodland Officers) across England and lead the Admin Hubs, through guidance and support to deliver these functions and work closely with stakeholders.

Plant Health,

The Plant Health Team heads the strategic and operational response to protect England's trees, woods and forests from pest and disease threats, including quarantine organisms identified under EU Plant Health regulations. The team works closely with Forest Research, Area teams and other organisations to undertake and co-ordinate tree health surveillance, collate and record data for each pest and disease and monitor land managers' compliance with statutory requirements. The team also provides training and guidance to staff and engages with stakeholders to raise awareness of current disease threats.

³ Under SR10 the Grants and Regulations National Team were restructured to form Incentives and Regulations.

National Expertise Team,

The National Expertise Team⁴ (NEt) is working to develop a more resilient woodland resource by creating the conditions that enable landowners and managers, businesses, civil society organisations, and local communities (the forestry sector) to protect, improve and expand England's woodland resource. NEt is one of the main links between government departments, the Forestry Commission and many other organisations whose objectives are to support, sustain and/or use the woods, trees and forests of England.

The team channel expertise and experience from across Forest Services to:

- provide advice and policy support to Defra, other Government departments and their Ministers, other public bodies, and Forestry Commission England;
- Implement selected national scale initiatives to enable the sector to protect, improve and expand England's woodland; and
- further develop the evidence on how to achieve the greatest impact and value for money and, with the Strategic Development Team, feed this back into decisions about what Forest Services does.

The Team works with a network of experts from right across Forest Services, the wider Forestry Commission and the sector. NEt Advisors are responsible for channelling expertise on one of the four commonly used categories of ecosystem service. The Team play a key role in raising the profile of the Forestry Commission within government to ensure that the value of trees, woods, and forests in serving society is recognised. It has an important role in ensuring that the evidence is there to back the Forestry Commission's work.

Strategic Development Team,

The Strategic Development team use business intelligence and evidence to support decisions to move toward continuous improvement. The team support the business move toward an ever more refined way of working, they also undertake work to identify and prioritise key work areas. The team do this so that Forest Services staff are equipped with tools to serve Forest Services customers. The role of the Team involves driving new ways of working that are more efficient (for example, ensuring systems and business processes match business needs) and building evaluation into all Forest Services work to ensure changes are made that best deploy resources. Examples of what the Team do include: Management and Business efficiency innovations.

The Area Delivery Teams,

The Forest Services Delivery teams are organised into five Areas⁵, each covering one or more of the former English regions and Greater London, so that the Forestry Commission England's Advisory Committees can still be supported by Area teams.

⁴ Under SR10 the Policy and Programmes Group were restructured to form the National Expertise Team (NEt)

⁵ Areas cover: East and East Midlands, North West and West Midlands, South East and London, South West and Yorkshire and North East.

Each Area is lead by an Area Director, who ensures the development and delivery of the Area team's agreed business plan and service targets. The Area Directors ensure that Forestry Commission resources and expertise are deployed to facilitate civil society activity and economic opportunities that achieve priority protect, improve and expand outcomes for and from trees, woodlands and forests.

At the forefront of this part of the business are the Woodland Officers and Partnerships staff who work directly with the people who own and manage our woodland resource. They carry out the Forestry Commission's regulatory and grant support functions and connect national priorities to the distinctive needs of each area. As such, the Areas are involved in various people centred partnership projects at local and regional scale that reflect those led by NEt at national scale. They also lead the majority of our stakeholder engagement, working closely with the FWACs (formerly Regional Advisory Committees (RACS)). The Area teams play a key role in facilitating and influencing the delivery partnerships with external organisations at the sub-national level, and work closely with National Expertise colleagues on enabling some of the priority national partnerships and networks. Area incentives and regulations delivery work is undertaken in close collaboration with the Sustainable Forest Management team, and future change developments are planned in conjunction with Strategic Development colleagues.

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

In this section the impact (or potential impact) of changes on people originally set out in the SR10 EqA are reviewed. After which this section describes the impact (or potential impact) of changes set out in the 2014-2017 Business Plan (which is designed to deliver the Government's January 2013 Forestry and Woodland Policy Statement and subsequent policy developments in 2013/14. First, service changes assessed in 2010/11 are presented (Table 3a) accompanied by analysis relating to the current change programme. In Table 3b services which were considered out with the 2010/11 analysis or result from new changes are presented, in relation to the current programme.

3a. Review of Impact on People set out in the SR10 EqA and (where these are ongoing) Business Plan for 2014-2017

SR10 was primarily driven by the Government's commitment to reduce the size and scope of the public sector and the need to reduce the financial deficit. Under the Review, the (then) proposed budget reductions were assessed to consider their impact on the services that FC England's Forest Service would be able to deliver. The impact was significant, however there was limited impact on people from protected groups as the majority of services were:

- statutory or required by Government, therefore the impact was concerned with changing the way in which services were delivered rather than removing or reducing services; and
- focussed on land management rather than direct services to people in general.

The list below, presents a list of the services, the nature of the change under SR10, whether they were considered likely to have an impact on people and progress update.

3a Review of impact on people of the SR10 programme

Service	Situation at 2010/11 baseline	Change proposed in SR10 by 14/15	Potential impact on people relevant to the 2010 EqA?	Change proposed in 13/14 Change Programme / Current Business Plans (FY 14-15 - 16-17).	Potential impact on people relevant to this EqA?
Forest Services	See below. Budget: £14.1M	See below. Budget: £10.6M (25% cut)	Yes – see below	The FS plan for FY 2014/15 reflects a total net requirement of £14.492m against a total RDEL settlement of £10.792m. The £3.637m net variance comprises unfunded in-year pressures of delivering Big Tree Plant (BTP) and plant health, which are not included in the RDEL baseline.	Yes. However, as stated in 'Fit for our Future: Equality and Diversity Objectives 2012-2016' ^{6*} . There is a Government freeze on expenditure to publicise and promote Government services. Until this is lifted, many of the objectives to promote the range of services that the FC can offer to communities of those with protected characteristics, and therefore the opportunity to increase participation, will be limited."
English Woodland Grant Scheme Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) funded element.	Grants to woodland owners and managers for sustainable forest management, woodland improvement and woodland creation under RDPE. Woodland improvement/creation includes	No change in the round which lasts to December 2013. The next round is subject to revisions at European Union level so changes are uncertain. The assumption under SR10 was for a similar level of funding. It was correctly anticipated that the mechanism for grants would merge with Environmental	No – no change in the level, no known change in the nature of the service, not directly related to the general public. Focussed on delivery to landowners/managers, whose diversity is beyond our control.	The current RDPE for England will end December 2013 (FY 2013/2014) whereby forestry elements of the next programme will be developed to enable the delivery of our priorities. As RDPE is subject to revisions at EU level, changes are yet to be confirmed. However, there	No. The next round is subject to revisions at European Union level, although changes are uncertain, arrangements for the transition period have been confirmed with most grant types rolling over into 2014. The exception is WMG and WCG for which there are still some uncertainties. <u>Implications of</u>

6

*<http://alpacorn.forestry.gov.uk:7777/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/ECONNECT/PERSONNEL%20DEVELOPMENT/E%20AND%20D%20HOME%20PAGE/E%20%26%20D%20OBJECTIVES%202012-2016.PDF>

Forest Services Equality Assessment: Update of SR10 Impact on Forest Services and Review of Current Change Programmes

	public access requirements. RDPE: £33M (not part of Forest Services overall budget).	Stewardship. However, detail at the time was unknown and therefore this was ear-marked for further assessment in future iterations of this EqA.		will be a period of transition during 2014/15, key activities during transition will include: - Design and implementation of new integrated grants scheme (NELMS) with Natural England and other relevant new schemes with Defra and Rural Payments Agency. Future plans for 2015-16 and 2016-17 include: - Embedding NELMS and other new schemes.	<u>changes to funding will need to be assessed in due course.</u> It is likely that any changes in the level of service would predominantly impact our customers (land managers / owners) and are not directly related to general people or protected groups. The diversity of our customers is considered to be beyond our control.
Service	Situation at 2010/11 baseline	Change proposed in SR10 by 14/15	Potential impact on people relevant to the 2010 EqA?	Change proposed in 13/14 Change Programme or / Business Plans for 2015-16 and 2016-17.	Potential impact on people relevant to this EqA?
English Woodland Grant Scheme, non-RDPE	Grants for other elements of woodland management such as access and community involvement using non-RDPE money. Non-RDPE: £1.2M	Reduction in the non-RDPE budget. Most of this was considered to have little impact of relevance to EqA in 2010 because most of the non-RDPE budget was for re-stocking which was covered by RDPE. The two areas of support which were relevant to EqA included: Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) Forest Schools (for two Regions): which reduced from £126k in 10/11 to £0 in 13/14. Woodland Management for	Yes – WIG for Forest Schools, however this was in two Regions, and was project based. Therefore this was considered to be a small impact The reduction to the WIG Grant (WIG) Forest Schools (for two Regions): reduced by £126k to £0 in 13/14. Woodland Management for Access only: reduces	Yes. Reduction in the WIG to Forest Schools to £0 in FY 2013/2014. Yes. Woodland Management for Access reduced by £22k down to £219k in 13/14, assuming the scheme is closed to new applicants.	Yes. Impact on young people, as well as different genders, ethnic groups and children with disabilities from drawing the WIG for Forest Schools to a close. The move reflects the wider FCE approach presented in the National Learning Strategy: http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Forestry_Commission_Learning_Strategy.pdf Yes. Impact on Public Access resulting from a

		<p>Access only: reduced from £231k in 10/11 to £219k in 13/14.</p> <p>It was correctly assumed the scheme would close to new applicants. This was considered a relatively small impact, further minimised by the fact that what we used to fund under non-RDPE Woodland Management Grant could be funded under the Woodland Management Grant (biodiversity) which is EU co-financed.</p> <p>Budget £300k in 13/14 (75% reduction).</p>	<p>by £22k down to £219k in 13/14, assuming the scheme is closed to new applicants.</p>		<p>reduction in WMG Access Grant.</p>
<p>Engagement with stakeholders such as National Parks, local biodiversity partners and industry groups and support for forums to generate engagement.</p>	<p>Numerous national and sub-national processes, sub-national processes were organised in Regions.</p> <p>Approx 66 staff were directly engaged in this (P&PG Policy and Programme Managers and Officers and Regional Directors or Development officers).</p>	<p>There was little change envisaged and national scale forums were to continue to be supported. Sub-national forums will be organised into fewer areas. We are likely to be engaged in fewer, higher level processes. Ways of engaging to change, e.g.: more use of web-communications, more use of other organisations to engage on our behalf.</p> <p>Changes to Regional Advisory Committees (RACs).</p> <p>Approx. 50 staff directly engaged, 30% reduction. It was envisaged that Woodland</p>	<p>Yes – reduction in level of service and changes to engaging with stakeholders, including changes to RACs.</p>	<p>Yes. Change from Regional Advisory Committees to FWAC. Move to increased local focus.,</p> <p>Change in capacity to engage with stakeholders.</p> <p>More detail under 'NELMS', presented in table 3b.</p>	<p>Impact of changing from RAC to FWAC were considered and a proactive approach adopted.</p> <p>The overarching position is stated in 'Fit for our Future: Equality and Diversity Objectives 2012-2016*'. "Many of the Objectives dependent on recruiting staff into the Forestry Commission will not be able to be taken forward until the Government's recruitment freeze has been lifted and until we have completed the exercise to reduce headcount to meet the requirements of the 2010 Spending Review settlements. In the</p>

		Officers would start to use a wider variety of tools alongside more outside grants and regulations work. Whilst this did not happen, its likely it will in 14/15.			meantime, external recruitment has been greatly reduced". http://alpacorn.foresstry.gov.uk:7777/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/ECONNECT/PERSONNEL%20DEVELOPMENT/E%20AND%20D%20HOMEPAGE/E%20%26%20D%20OBJECTIVES%202012-2016.PDF
Service	Situation at 2010/11 baseline	Change proposed in SR10 by 14/15	Potential impact on people relevant to the 2010 EqA?	Change proposed in 13/14 Change Programme or / Business Plans for 2015-16 and 2016-17.	Potential impact on people relevant to this EqA?
Advice and guidance to landowners and managers.	46 Woodland Officers were employed to provide this advice.	Original SR10 change proposed a reduction to 44 Woodland Officers .	No – no reduction in service.	External factors (e.g. CAP Delivery Programme, EU Payments, NELMS and spending round requirements) may start to have significant and as yet unknown impacts both on what we plan to deliver and the resources available to deliver them. In Areas, total of 42 WO (14/15 business plan). However, Plant Health resources have been increased which is likely to continue to improve local engagement. E.g. OPM Manager.	No. The Forest Services Business Plan FY 14/15 presents options to address budget shortfall Any impact on capacity has potential to have a negative impact on the extent to which we can engage with everyone, including protected groups. There is no reason why any protected groups in particular would be impacted more than any others.
Service	Situation at 2010/11 baseline	Change proposed in SR10 by 14/15	Potential impact on people relevant to the 2010 EqA?	Change proposed in 2013/2014 Change Programme or / Future plans for	Potential impact on people relevant to this EqA?

				2015-16 and 2016-17.	
Policy advice to Government, Forestry Commission and other stakeholder organisations.	20 P&PG staff were directly engaged in providing policy advice. 3 focussed on people issues.	14 National Experts, with staff with responsibility for expertise in other areas distributed across Forest Services. 2 national experts focussed on people issues but with a further staff member focussed on green infrastructure and urban forestry related issues in local delivery teams.	No – no reduction in service was anticipated. This service is focused on national stakeholder engagement and not directly related to the general public.	Unclear. Dependent on the scenarios presented in Forest Services Business Plan FY 14/15 .	No. However, were there to be a loss of national expertise there would be potential for a reduction in service. However, the service is not directly related to the general public or protected groups but focused on national stakeholder engagement.
Cash support for forestry related partnerships.	Funding was available for partnership projects of relevance to EqA of £739k in 38 projects.	Funding available for partnership projects (of relevance to EqA) increased to £1.3M*, an increase of 170%. However, at May 2011 this was encompassed in just 6 projects, of which 3 were for expenditure that was not defined, accounting for £1.27M of the funding. Cash funding for some relevant projects was expected to cease and the approach to funding for others was expected to change. * Assumed The Big Tree Plant grant was £1M in 2014/15, cash-flow forecast was for £1.7M but this was anticipated to artificially inflate the calculation and it was recommended to stick to the assumption that	Yes – service is increasing in cash-terms but change of approach may have impact - localism.	Unclear.	Unclear.

		there would be £1M per year.			
Regulating forestry	We regulate forestry via felling licences, Environmental Impact Assessment and setting and communicating standards contained in the UK Forestry Standard.	A slight increase in the number of woodland officers. Potentially significant reform of regulation arising from the Forest Regulation Task Force recommendations but such reforms are not a direct part of SR10. Assessment of any impact will be covered elsewhere.	No – no reduction in service and not directly related to people.	Unclear. Dependent on the scenarios presented in Forest Services Business Plan FY 14/15 .	No. If there is a loss of capacity there is a risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased illegal activity - reduced compliance - increased environmental impact from forestry and; - decrease in UKFS compliance. <p>However, it is not yet clear if /how reduction would be approached and therefore too early to consider in detail. It is unlikely that any protected groups would be impacted more than others.</p>

3b. Analysis of potential impact on people under the current programme

Service	Situation at the 2013 /14 Baseline.	Change proposed in 2013/2014 Change Programme or / Future plans for 2015-16 and 2016-17.	Potential impact on people relevant to this EqA?
CAP Delivery Programme: EU Payments analysis, planning and implementation; other strategic alignment activities (e.g. IT system Transition)	Assumed Situation at end 2013/14: We will continue to manage organisational change under the CAP Programme and our change programmes designed and being implemented.	IT transition planning/implementation. CAP Delivery staff and stakeholder engagement/training for transition to new CAP IT system.	Yes. Potential IT transition planning has potential to impact on those customers who are not IT literate. However, mechanisms are being considered through the CAP Programme to accommodate those who require support with IT (digital by default / assisted digital). The new IT system is being led by the Defra. We will continue to track progress in the development of new systems and engage with those responsible for its development to ensure the needs of our customers are met. At the time of writing there has been a recent submission to Defra Ministers on the subject of how to support CAP customers who cannot use

			the new online CAP Delivery IT system.
Charging for services: Project to review the potential to charge for our services.	A new project was given approval by the FS Board (October 2013) to assess if there is potential to charge for services we provide. The project is scheduled to feed in findings to the business plan concerning potential income streams for FY 16-17. The project is expected to conclude by April 2016.	Subject to findings of the project there may be charges added to the services we provide. Some services which are currently 'free of charge' may in the future, have costs associated.	No. Whilst there is potential for charging for services to impact protected groups (those associated with low income) and impact the degree to which they can access our services, it is too early to undertake detailed analysis until feasibility work scheduled as part of this project draws to completion. The project is currently in Discovery Phase with potential charging mechanisms for all services under review. Several services are likely to be shortlisted and potential charging mechanisms explored. Until feasibility work is undertaken it would be premature to undertake further analysis
NELMS: Woodland Protection. Communication with the sector to develop knowledge and understanding of the need for a wider range of species, restructuring and ecological adaptation; Planting stock assurance scheme; A review of Forestry Commission Adaptation Reporting Power and, Urban adaptation and green infrastructure.	Situation at end 13/14: Climate change adaptation will be built into NELMs (including woodland restructuring and the creation of habitat networks).	Future plans for 2015-16 and 2016-17: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued advice and support for woodland owners and the nursery sector. - Area teams' routine advice for the Ecological Resilience work programme. - Ongoing guidance and support for woodland condition monitoring to feed into woodland management planning. 	No – no reduction in service is anticipated. This service is focused on woodland protection through climate change adaptation via communication with the sector and not directly related to the general public.
NELMS (New Environmental Land Management Scheme).	New scheme under development. Transitional grants proposed for 2014. New scheme will include: Environmental Stewardship, English Woodland Grant Scheme and Parts of Catchment Sensitive	Future plans for 2015-16 and 2016-17: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued advice and support for woodland owners and the nursery sector. - Area teams' routine advice for the Ecological Resilience work 	Yes. However, whilst Woodland Management Planning will be required as a pre-requisite of all other support, the impact on our customers is as yet unclear. We continue to consult and engage with owner networks concerning development to ensure the

	<p>Farming.</p> <p>Key objectives will include Biodiversity 2020 and Water Framework Directive. The new scheme is being designed to be more targeted and competitive than previous scheme.</p>	<p>programme.</p> <p>- Ongoing guidance and support for woodland condition monitoring to feed into woodland management planning.</p> <p><u>Woodland Management Planning will be required as a pre-requisite of all other support.</u></p>	<p>needs of our customers are met. Overlaps with CAP DP.</p>
<p>Regulating to protect the woodland resource.</p>	<p>Licence applications / mapping can be completed using paper-based forms.</p>	<p>We plan to consider any further needs for digital standalone licence applications, particularly using iterative mapping in 2015/16 – 2016/17.</p>	<p>Yes. A move toward online applications and mapping has potential to impact on those customers and others who are not IT literate. However, mechanisms are being considered through the CAP Programme which will precede our work in this area and therefore any plans will be informed by experience in the CAPDP.</p>
<p>Plant Health</p>	<p>Assumed situation at end 13/14 is that there will be continued success in the deployment of our resources with corresponding sector response (i.e. reducing the spread rate of diseases such as OPM).</p> <p>Key activities for FY 14/15 will involve: Survey and monitoring and operational response to key diseases; Reprioritisation of resources to respond to any outbreaks; Reform of governance arrangements for plant health.</p> <p>The business case for additional plant health resources has been approved (at least in part) and new resources have been allocated to the relevant organisations.</p>	<p>The 2014/17 Business Plan suggests that the overall threat from tree diseases appears to be increasing. The Government's full response to the Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity Task Force presents new governance arrangements for plant health (including tree health) and these will improve decision making and operational control.</p>	<p>Yes– although no reduction in service is anticipated. This service is focused on plant health activities and strategic prioritisation; it is directly related to the general public.</p> <p>We have increased resources to increase service. We are engaged with Forest Research to increase our understanding of and ability to manage Oak Processionary Moth (which has associated health implications).</p> <p>We are working to ensure messages relating to plant health are communicated in an inclusive way and reach all communities. For example, we provide information on plant health on the website and in accordance with our accessibility statement, (http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/HCOU-4UBEHR)</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring it is accessible to a wide range of people.</p>

This Analysis assessed the potential impact of the following changes to the services

Forest Services Equality Assessment: Update of SR10 Impact on Forest Services and Review of Current Change Programmes

relevant to equality and diversity provided by Forest Services, (Table 3a. and 3b. above) which are:

3a. Review of impact under the SR10 Change Programme:

- Removal of Woodland Improvement Grant for Forest Schools.
- Reduction in level of direct engagement with stakeholders (mostly at the Regional level) and changes to approach to engaging with local stakeholders (localism agenda), including changes to RACs membership and terms of reference.
- Changes in approach to cash funding of partnership projects.

3b. Analysis of potential impact under the Current Change Programme:

- CAP Delivery Programme - Move to 'Digital by Default' / 'Assisted Digital'.
- Regulating to protect the woodland resource –Consider needs for a digital licence application / interactive mapping.
- New Environmental Land Management Scheme – Aligning grants more closely with those provided by Natural England
- Plant Health - increased resources.

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

Owner

Richard Greenhous
Forestry Commission
620 Bristol Business Park | Bristol | BS16 1EJ
0117 906 6000

Authors

Gail Atkinson
Forestry Commission England,
620 Bristol Business Park,
Bristol, BS16 1EJ
gail.atkinson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
0117 906 6000

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

New.	
3 year review.	
Early review, explain why.	
Review due to end of the initiative.	Yes

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

2011

7. How will this initiative be put into practice?

Background: The changes assessed in the SR10 EqA were implemented as part of the Forestry Commission SR10 process, set out in "Shaping the Future of Forestry Commission England, Forestry Commission Spending Review 2010 Staff Consultation, February 2011". The document set out the proposed changes to our structures and ways of working. The final decisions were subject to further work, based on consultation and additional planning. The changes were put into practice through the following processes:

- **Removal of Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) for Forest Schools:** via business as usual amendments to EWGS grant criteria, following consultation with the Applicants Focus Group (described in section 8).
- **Reduction in level of direct engagement with stakeholders and changes to the approach taken to engage with stakeholders, i.e. change from Regional Advisory Committees (RAC) to Forestry and Woodland Advisory Committee (FWAC):** An Interim Transition Team undertook work in this area, predominantly via two workstreams in the Forest Service transition plan a) "New ways of working" and b) "New working relationships". This work influenced the final structures of the committees (described in section 8).
- **Changes in approach to cash funding of partnership projects:** A set of criteria based on the policy context for EQA were developed to inform decision making in relation to partnership projects (described in section 8).

Activity related to the initiatives continues to date (as detailed in section 8).

The changes in the current programme covered by this EqA will be implemented as part of the Business Plan 2014/15.

- **Changes in the CAP Delivery Programme - Move to 'Digital by Default'.** Those in the Strategic Development Team will continue to track work in this area to ensure that the needs of our customers who share protected characteristics are considered and represented.
- **Regulating to protect the woodland resource –Consider needs for a digital licence application / interactive mapping.** This will be considered subsequent to 'digital by default' in the CAP DP (noted above) and lessons learnt used to inform plans put together.
- **NELMS.** This is being considered through RDPE with input through consultation with stakeholder groups. Grant Development is being developed with expertise input from Area and Hubs (e.g. Business processes (architecture)).
- **Plant Health.** Increased provision in service and increased resources, implemented as part of the FS Business Processes.

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

The population of England is 53,012,456 and consists of a range of different groups. Annex 1. presents information taken from the 2011 Census showing the basic statistics concerning the England demographic.

SR 10 Review

Removal of Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) for Forest Schools.

The relevant protected characteristics are age, race, gender and disability. As discussed in the SR10 EqA, there is evidence that Forest Schools can benefit young people, including those otherwise at risk of exclusion from school, challenge gender stereotypes related to working in the forestry sector and provide opportunities for disabled young people to access woodland in new ways.

- The Forest School WIG operated as a pilot in two regions, West Midlands and East of England, with funding being directed at building capacity for the projects to run without further EWGS rather than acting as long-term core funding. The decision to remove WIGs supported the aims of the Big Society by reducing direct intervention by government, and resource constraints, budgetary and staffing, related to operating a bespoke scheme. The decision-making process involved informal consultation with a stakeholder group where the grants were operating. This included feedback from those involved. At the East of England RAC meeting (5- 6 July 2011), the closure of the grant was noted in response to SR10 budget cuts. The minutes discussion and the RAC were encouraged to make their views known to the Panel on the subject. This suggested that removal of the WIG would be low impact as projects could continue to operate using resources from other means.

Reduction in level of direct engagement with stakeholders and changes to approach to engaging with stakeholders, including changes to RACs.

In 2010 evidence (Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2009; Forest Research work on social benefits of the Public Forest Estate 2009; "Perceptions, attitudes and preferences in forest and woodlands", Forestry Commission technical paper; and work on indicators for quality of life benefits of woodland by Forest Research) suggested that the majority of people who engage in forestry are white, over 25 and are not disabled, although there is recognition of the benefits that participating in woodland activities can have, i.e. health benefits, social engagement, etc. However this research, and practical experience gathered from the work on the Public Forest Estate (PFE) and other countryside providers, has helped identify a range of barriers to participation and engagement which are being used to inform the services we provide and the design of new interventions. For more detail, refer to section 11.

We continue to monitor and review the situation. Since 2010 there has been more research to better understand and address these issues and to address these barriers. For example, the Public Opinion of Forestry Survey (2013) included additional questions specifically to gather information about protected groups (for example questions relating to trans-gender were added), the survey covers all woodland in the UK, not just those owned and managed by the FC. Refer to Supporting Evidence presented in the file (PoF 2013 Equality) from the Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013. Additional analysis specifically for the purpose of this EQA was undertaken by Shelia Ward (Statistician, Corporate and Forestry Support) in November 2013 and results subject to multivariate analysis specifically relating to protected groups.

- The UK survey included a number of questions (some for the first time in 2013) that are relevant when considering personal characteristics for the purposes of equality and diversity. These include: Gender, Age group, Disabilities or health problems, Ethnic group, Marital status, Trans community, Sexual orientation and Religion. Other socio-demographic variables that may be of interest include working status,

whether there are children in the household and the index of multiple deprivation (based on respondents' home postcodes).

- For those asked if they visited woodland, there was a significant difference for variables associated with younger age group, those with disabilities or health problems, ethnic group, working status, deprivation indicator, religion (Christian v others) and marital status. Meaning that those in younger age categories, those who are disabled or deprived or not-married were less likely to visit woodland.
- For those asked about involvement in woodland, the following variables are statistically significant: Age group (younger respondents versus others) and Ethnic group. Meaning that younger respondents and ethnic groups were less likely to be involved in woodland.
- Whilst outside the EQA, of note was the strong correlation between those who visit woodland and those involved in woodland, meaning that those who visited woodland were more likely to get involved in activities such as volunteering, consultation etc and vice versa.

In all cases these variables relating to personal characteristics were included in the analysis however the results should be approached with caution since the number of respondents in certain categories (such as Trans community) were low, which reduces the level of confidence. Research by Doick *et al*, (2013) looked at the barriers to use of woodland and design preferences which may address barriers.

We will work to draw attention to these research findings and ensure they are used to inform decision making. Although we have worked to reduce the level of direct engagement with stakeholders, and continue to do so, we will continue to explore and utilise better ways of reaching those people who will benefit most from interaction.

This will be taken forward through the initiatives described in section 11, in particular through the review of the Forest Services annual business plan and the previous year's EqA. This will involve improvements to how EqA is communicated internally as part of business planning.

The potential direct impacts on such individuals arise from the following possible changes:

Locality and proximity of face to face interaction with our office based staff:

Since the original EQA we reduced the overall number of staff and reduced the number of offices from which we operate, which has enabled us to reduce the amount of funding we receive from Government to run the services we provide. As noted in the original EQA (2011) there is little demand for the general public to visit Forest Services offices. However, we continue to ensure that we are in a position to facilitate access to our services. We will continue to do this by using different venues, more accessible and closer to public transport to minimise any potential impact on people (the impact on our staff is assessed on an ongoing basis).

The move to use more web based communication: As described in the original EQA, we are looking to improve our communication tools to assist more people to access our services, and while reducing resources (following wider Government practice on e-communication, a Government wide move to 'Digital by Default', planned move of FS webpages to 'DirectGov' and plans to consider standalone digital licence applications and interactive mapping). As noted in the last EQA "evidence shows the internet can be effective in accessing certain hard to reach groups, especially those with mobility problems and young people". However, we also recognise that web-

communications are currently less effective for some group's, particularly disadvantaged people and older people (Manifesto for a Network Nation, 2010, <http://raceonline2012.org/manifesto/2>). We have started to monitor electronic activity and use of e-communication, for example we report monthly on webforms in the Management Information Pack. We will continue to consider how to improve our communication within budget constraints to ensure we meet the needs of all stakeholders. We are also working with others through the CAP Deliver Programme to understand and minimise impact on our customers (refer to CAP Delivery Programme). For those who prefer electronic engagement, we have improved our website and continue to implement web forms where appropriate, to help those that do want to engage electronically.

The move to using other organisations to communicate on our behalf: In the last EQA, we set out our intention to work in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver joint communications. The plan was to take forward experience in the East Midlands where we worked in partnership with the RSPB and communicated on the availability of a WIG for Woodland Birds with a new group of woodland owners. In another example 'The Big Tree Plant' we used the DirectGov web-site as our route of communication to disseminate key messages about the funding scheme. We will continue to ensure that our partnerships work to agreed government communication standards, including accessibility. This will be taken forward through the initiatives described in section 11, in particular through the review of the Forest Services annual business plan and the previous year's EqA. This will involve improvements to how EqA is communicated internally as part of business planning. In relation to Digital communications we will continue to work with others on assisted digital for the CAP Delivery Programme.

Changing from 'Regional Advisory Committees' to 'Forestry and Woodland Advisory Committees': changes to the RACs described in the original EQA are nearing completion. The term of office for the FWAC Chairs and Committees will begin on 1st December 2013 and run for three years. The number of committees we service has not been reduced (as originally planned) and there has been no change to the areas across which they operate. However, the membership of these groups has expanded and their remit has been revised to include advocacy and representation. The groups are now referred to as FWACs. This change has given us the opportunity to promote the membership of the Committees to wider protected characteristic communities and encourage more people, both as individuals and stakeholders to consider joining. This has had some success.

FWAC Chair Recruitment:

In July 2013 the recruitment of the FWAC Chairs was undertaken by HR and 15 of the 17 applicants submitted an Equal Opportunities form which encompassed questions for all protected groups (refer to spreadsheet 'FWAC Chairs' in supporting evidence file). Six new chairs have been appointed and three existing chairs reappointed. The ratio of male to female Chairs has changed. In 2010 two of the nine RAC Chairs were female and seven were male. From December 2013, four out of nine chairs are female and five are male. While we have no historic records of other personal characteristics of the RAC Chairs, of the new chairs, one mixed race representative has been appointed.

FWAC Members Recruitment:

Fifty six new members will be appointed from 1st December 2013. To date 30 have submitted equal opportunities forms, at the time of writing these forms are still being submitted. England National Committee (ENC) have approved new members and the reappointment of others. For those committee members who were reappointed, there is no data (they were first appointed up to six years ago).

Area Directors used their existing networks to proactively approach people, they also advertised in newsletters and through lists of contacts, enhanced via additional contact groups obtained from the Diversity Manager⁷. Those who are being appointed fall into similar categories as the RAC groups (as far as is known) and (at the time of writing), there is limited representation from groups with protected characteristics.

From December 2013 - 2016 the FWAC Committee will include 10 female members and 20 male, however none of these (as yet) declared themselves to have characteristics from protected groups (i.e., those from under represented groups such as ethnicity, or those who consider themselves disabled etc). The remaining twenty six responses will be monitored in due course.

The remit for the committees has been revised to provide insight into local needs and priorities, and facilitate engagement with priority communities where more people having protected characteristics would benefit. The current terms of reference for the Chairs and Committees require working knowledge of forestry and associated environmental issues
([http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FWAC_guide_and_role2013.pdf/\\$file/FWAC_guide_and_role2013.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FWAC_guide_and_role2013.pdf/$file/FWAC_guide_and_role2013.pdf)).

In a field where practitioners are predominantly white and male, opportunities to continue to increase the diversity of the FWAC may be limited. The pool of people in a position to apply for these positions is limited because of the nature of experience required. Although there is no financial incentive offered it is unlikely to make a difference because of the nature of experience required.

We will continue to follow Government guidance (Government Equalities Office) in relation to public appointments and civic participation. As part of this we will continue to monitor and report on progress against the 1st December 2013 baseline. We will proceed to review the arrangements and undertake interim reporting on proactive engagement activity in December 2015 (subject to confirmation from the Senior Managers Board) and review the situation at the end of the three year term for FWAC members and ahead of subsequent public appointments in December 2016.

Recommended Action: Area Directors to continue proactive engagement over the next three years ahead of the next round of recruitment.

Cessation of other regional scale support structures and reduction in number

⁷ There is a list of organisations providing access to people from protected groups. See "Consultation Database" at http://alpacorn.forestry.gov.uk:7777/portal/page?_pageid=33,1794524&_dad=portal&schema=PORTAL .

of other sub-national forums supported:

As well as RACs, we once supported regional forestry framework forums (or equivalent) in some regions and other local forums, such as county woodland forums. As anticipated, we have ceased to support most of the regional scale forestry forums as part of the removal of the regional tier of government. We have also withdrawn from direct support to local forums. However, other processes for supporting local engagement have arisen since the original EQA. Through our Partnership and Expertise Managers and Local Partnership Advisers we have moved toward an increased focus on local partnerships which have enabled us to retain/rebuild our relationship with local authorities, hence utilising their expertise and contacts with key groups. For example, we work with Community Woodland Groups, with 'generic communities' (e.g. communities of place, interest, faith, etc) focused on getting local people involved in the management of local woodland. Our involvement is to support civil society to set up a network for those groups.

- **Changes in approach to cash funding of partnership projects:**

In the original EQA the changes to our partnership funding between 10/11 baseline and 14/15 were presented. The changes were accompanied by a method of prioritising decisions which involved informal local consultation. There was an overall increase in the amount of funding available but a decrease in the total number of projects.

The impact of these changes has been reviewed and findings are noted in an additional column. Overall, this has highlighted an apparent paucity of monitoring information related to the impact of reduced funding as a result of SR10. However, there is evidence of increased activity amongst the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). For example we are working with the Forestry Forum and woodland initiatives in the North West (with one of our 'slice of pie' projects). This has enabled sector engagement with the five Local Enterprise Partnerships in the North West. We will continue to work with each woodland initiative and LEP as well as our local colleagues in NE, EA and Defra to ensure forestry and woodland sector priorities are included in their investment and growth plans.

Table to show proposed changes to our partnership funding.

Scale	Project supported in 2010/11	Change proposed during SR10	Review of Change
National	Forest Education Initiative	End of direct support from a Forest Education Initiative Project Officer post, increase in cash-funding.	End support for FEI / FEN in FY 14/15. See below for further detail.
National	Visit Woods - support for a web-facility to encourage woodland access	No change	Still funding but will end FY 14/15. Current funding is relatively small (£5k).
National	Indicators - Quality of Life - Forest Research	Project finished, support transferred to general indicator framework.	Now absorbed into a single project (value of £8k). This will end FY 14/15.
National	The Big Tree Plant funding scheme -	0 in 10/11, increase to £1M per year.	Still funding £1.035m (Admin is funded via

	grants to local groups to plant trees		Groundwork £95k). Funding will end FY 14/15 in current planning.
National	Indicators - measuring progress towards key priorities	New indicator framework in place, includes several people related ones.	No change from 2010.
National	Funding a Public Opinion of Forestry Survey	Retain but decrease frequency from 2 to 3 years to reduce costs.	No change from 2010. 2013 survey available.
National	Ensuring that enabling frameworks are accessible to people who need to work with them	New unspecified fund to respond to emerging needs due to changing ways of working	No further cash support
East of England	Green Arc	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
East of England	Forest School Green Light Trust	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
East Midlands	National Forest Company	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
East Midlands	Greenwood Community Forest	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
East Midlands	Green Infrastructure (3 Cities	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
London	Trees and Woodland Spatial Framework/ London Block Grant/ Capital Woodlands Project 2/ Advocacy and Seminars /London Tree and Woodland Awards	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	Absorbed into Mayor's Street Trees Project / funded by GLA.
North East	Northwoods	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
North East	Green Infrastructure Growth Points (Groundwork)	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
North West	Mersey Belt	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	Evolved into new project with similar aims in similar area.
North West	Newlands	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	Funding will end 14/15. Current funding for Newlands (£1.423m/year) but 0 net.
North West	Lake District World Heritage	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
South West	Green Infrastructure	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
South West	Green Infrastructure	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support

	(other)		
West Midlands	Brownfield to Greenspace	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
West Midlands	National Forest	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
West Midlands	Stoke Greenspace project	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
West Midlands	SWA Social Forestry	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
Yorkshire and the Humber	Yorwoods	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
Yorkshire and the Humber	Kirkless MDC (White Rose FD)	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
Yorkshire and the Humber	S Yorks Forest Partnership	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
Yorkshire and the Humber	Heywoods	Cease by 14/15 or use the "localism" budget.	No further cash support
Regional	Localism: promoting local engagement and other locally driven projects	£250k per year budget currently unspecified	No further cash support

Potential risks to people from the Protected Characteristic Groups we currently or potentially deliver to are likely to come from:

- Reduced capacity, and less policy emphasis on direct support and delivery of the full range of people focussed initiatives, e.g. less emphasis on direct support for health, education, inclusion of young people and disabled people. However there continues to be more emphasis on empowering communities to take local action.
- Changes (continued reductions planned) to the funding we currently provide that help civil society organisations to keep running their day to day business. We support core-funding relationships only in exceptional circumstances and have started to taper support to those in receipt of funding so that they have time and capacity to find other means of support.

In most cases, our 10/11 baseline projects are complete or were for small sums of money (compared to the overall turnover of the organisations in receipt of our support). On this basis it was predicted there would be little impact. On a national scale, the key change is in our support for the Forest Education Initiative (FEI) was removing the funding which employed the FEI Co-ordinator and transferred this resource into cash funding, albeit on an annually decreasing basis. We informally consulted the FEI network on how best to implement this proposal and adopted a graduated reduction in involvement, anticipated to end in 15 months time.

On a regional scale ceasing funding for initiatives such as Yorwoods and Heywoods, South Yorks Partnership, Northwoods and Newlands was predicted to make continued operation of these organisations more difficult. Following gradual reduction since 2010

funding for these projects will cease. However, initial indications are that most will carry on using alternative resources or other ways of delivering that require less cash from us. We will continue to monitor and report back to the FS Board on the impact of this approach.

For example, the Visit Woods project, funded by lottery funding and a range of other sources, including £10k pa from us, is now coming to an end. The project has surpassed expectations and provides a great resource for the general public to identify accessible woodlands. Discussions took place to consider the future of the project. The Woodland Trust will be taking the project in-house but the principle of providing a one stop shop to the public to information on accessible woodland will continue.

A number of new cash projects have evolved for 2014/15 under the "Slice of pie to PIE" funding process. These are a set of fewer, larger projects with more impact. Many of the groups above will benefit from these projects but it is not yet possible to assess which in detail.

Since the last EQA the work of the National Association of AONBs (NAAONB) Social Forestry project has moved forward, highlighting where AONBs have been working with community groups using a number of enterprising approaches such as developing community wood fuel groups and community share offers. A report published in October 2013 (<http://www.landscapesforlifeconference.org.uk/productive-woodland-enterprise-workshop/>) suggests that woodland social enterprises could help bring under-managed woodlands back into active management. In addition, by mobilising local community volunteers and trainees, such social enterprises can create an appreciation in the value of woodlands, rather than focussing on maximising financial return from woodlands. It outlines the 8 projects supported. It includes information on the roles and structures of woodland based social enterprises compared to other organisational forms, financing options including an example.

Failure to adequately consider equality when making decisions about new projects funded via the unspecified projects: the enabling projects proposed for 14/15 have been allocated to specific projects (as part of standard business planning) using "Questions to structure decisions on the activities we undertake" (our framework for decision making). Annual Business Plans are subject to EqA, signed off by the FS Board. Further developing the evidence available and the skills of our staff to make reasonable decisions, including consideration of equality and diversity, was part of the SR10 implementation programme and activity continues to date. As described in section 11, a review of the FS annual business plan and the previous year's EqA will be undertaken in future, this will identify improvements to how EqA is communicated internally as part of business planning. We will ask Learning and Development to set up a bespoke training course on EqA for all those likely to initiate significant projects and programmes. We will check all FS staff are up to date on EqA training and ensure those who are not build training into their individual learning plans. For more detail concerning other specific actions arising from the new EqA, refer to section 11.

The Big Tree Plant funding scheme was ear marked in the last review as a project that could potentially promote benefits for people with protected characteristics. The Big Tree Plant is part of a partnership led by Defra, and covered the EQA previously. The scheme was open to all community groups at a local level and is targeted at disadvantaged areas. Research by the Silvanus Trust for Defra and FC into 'Characterising Community Groups involved in BTP and identifying benefits and

challenges of involvement for Participants' was published in November 2013. <http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&Completed=0&ProjectID=18468>. The report highlights the benefits and challenges of involvement for participants', to explore and understand the successes and challenges of participation within a scheme of this nature and aspiration. It also aims to inform possible future environmental community grant schemes. We will use the findings of the report to inform future 'localism and enabling projects'.

Changes under the current change Programme (Table 3b)

- **CAP Delivery Programme – Move to 'Digital By Default'**

The relevant protected characteristics are age and disability. Whilst there is no specific evidence that people in the forestry sector are less digitally aware than other parts of the land-use sector or other sectors, we are keen to ensure that a move to 'digital by default' and increased access to digital means of communication⁸ does not lead to more discrimination against people in the forestry sector. It has been suggested that a move toward increased service delivery using IT / computer systems can exclude older people, and those who are unable to use digital systems, to access our services, and that a move toward increased online provision may impact these groups.

Recent progress has been presented to all bodies involved in the CAP DP, including FS. In September 2013 a submission to Defra Ministers on the subject of how to support CAP Customers who cannot use the new IT system (which is currently being developed). A copy of the statement is included in the supporting evidence file, refer to: 'DIGITAL ONLY' APPROACH TO THE NEW CAP DELIVERY SYSTEM.

One of the aims of going 'Digital by default' is to 'provide our customers with digital services that are so straight-forward and convenient to use that all those who can use them choose to do so, while those who can't are not excluded'. The statement sets out the legal position and principles underpinning the proposed approach. Whilst this approach is considered by Government as satisfactory in principle, we have been directed to consider: precisely what we offer those who are unable to use the system; where liability would lie in the event of an error, and whether they are being dealt with equitably with others. We are committed to doing more work with those involved in the CAP DP, Natural England, RDPE Delivery teams to design the specifics of the Assisted Digital offer.

A survey of Forestry Commission staff on understanding and use of social media (Stewart and Ambrose-Oji, 2013) highlighted that 71% of the sample use social media. Although the sample size was small and the survey was undertaken amongst FC staff, it found that it is more likely to be those in the older age categories who are not using social media. There were, however, no major differences in which tools are being used and how they are being used by age category, other than the amount of time spent on a weekly basis – engagement is greater in the younger age categories 16-35.

The study demonstrated that social media is useful because it allows information to be provided to the public quickly and to be rapidly spread with minimal effort – in some

⁸ as requested by the Forest Regulations Task Force

cases it can therefore be more cost effective than other forms of communication or advertising. It is also valuable in terms of gathering feedback, opinions, information and data from customers, stakeholders, forest visitors and other relevant actors. Social media was reported to be useful for sharing knowledge and best practice with those outside the organisation. We will use the findings of the survey to inform future work on the use of social media in relation to older people and in relation to the services we provide and 'localism and enabling projects'.

9. What gaps are there in the available evidence?

	Describe the gaps and what you have done to fill them, or why you cannot fill them.
Age	<p>Impact of more web-based communication on older people. Evidence differs in whether this will have a positive or negative impact; however amongst our own staff social media is less likely to be used by older people. This may increase costs of communication for those in this category and isolate them from contributing their feedback and opinions using media based surveys. Furthermore, where social media is used to share knowledge and best practice with those outside the organisation, older people may be isolated from dialogue more than others, which may limit the potential benefit from their input and engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>We will seek to identify if the use of social media by older people is reflected in the wider forestry sector and across other digital / web based activities.</u> <p>Digital Assistance Insight. Research is being conducted on behalf of RPA and for submission to Defra, NE, Forestry Commission & others involved in the CAP Delivery Programme, based on a telephone survey carried out in 2013. At the time of writing, the findings are protected; however they are expected in 2014 and will quantify offline customer segments to support CAP Delivery Programme Assisted Digital planning. This may help us to quantify the size of 'offline' customer segments and identify those customers who exhibit the characteristics the RPA has ascribed to various segments in order to address barriers, inform campaign planning and effective targeting of scarce resources.</p> <p>Impact of FEI changes to children and young adults. Very little baseline data from direct beneficiaries is available, as FEI not sought to capture this data previously. <u>As one of the FEI partners, FC committed to encouraging activity to collect better data. However, if we have undertaken this encouragement, it is unclear if progress has been made. FEI finished in England and transferred to a new body 'Forest Education Network' (FEN). Our Governance role in FEN will continue for a further 15 months and we will actively look for opportunities to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <u>capture data on the changes on children and young adults and;</u> b) <u>encourage more regular reporting on the beneficiaries of the cluster activity / Council for Learning outside the Classroom.</u> <p>Through the Forestry Skills Initiative we offer support to colleges for Forestry apprenticeships. We have undertaken a retrospective analysis of the ages of</p>

	<p>these individuals (the average age is 21) highlighting the benefit of our funding to young people. From 2013 we will start to collect data relating to a wider range of personal characteristics to benchmark participation by those with protected characteristics. <u>This will enable us to monitor the change in participation and thus assess whether we need to be more proactive amongst the colleges in terms of wider recruitment activity amongst forestry apprentices to seek more diverse representation.</u></p> <p>Although we had baseline representation of RAC membership in 2010, it lacked detail regarding personal characteristics, thus limiting our ability to benchmark membership and thus monitor change of membership of people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>As noted in Section 8 we have since sought to resolve this and collected benchmark membership of the new FWACs. This will enable us to monitor the change of membership of people with protected characteristics. However, as previously noted, technical prerequisites for membership, in relation to forestry, exist and may constrain the potential pool of members due to wider issues regarding the sector's diversity profile.</p>
Disability	<p>Impact of more web-based communication on people with disabilities. Very little evidence exists to demonstrate impact of our services and therefore any changes on this Group will be difficult to monitor. Whilst questions related to disability are included in the Public Opinion of Forestry Survey (2013) noted above, low numbers of respondents with these characteristics limits the degree to which we can draw meaningful data. However, in seeking to ensure the main characteristics of age, gender, disability, race and ethnicity are monitored and reported, we will seek to address any impacts from these wider Groups.</p> <p>We have the baseline representation of the FWAC membership and so will be able to monitor the change of membership of people with protected characteristics. However, technical prerequisites for membership, in relation to forestry, exist and may constrain the potential pool of members due to wider issues regarding the sector's diversity profile.</p> <p>From 2013 we will start to collect data relating to a wider range of personal characteristics to benchmark participation in the Forestry Skills Initiative, by those with protected characteristics. <u>This will enable us to monitor the change in participation and thus assess whether we need to be more proactive amongst the colleges in terms of wider recruitment activity amongst forestry apprentices to seek more diverse representation.</u></p>
Gender	<p>We have baseline representation of the FWAC membership and so will be able to monitor the change of membership of people with protected characteristics. However, technical prerequisites for membership, in relation to forestry, exist and may constrain the potential pool of members due to wider issues regarding the sector's diversity profile.</p> <p>From 2013 we will start to collect data relating to a wider range of personal characteristics to benchmark participation in the Forestry Skills Initiative, by those with protected characteristics. <u>This will enable us to monitor the change in participation and thus assess whether we need to be more proactive amongst the colleges in terms of wider recruitment activity amongst forestry apprentices to seek more diverse representation.</u></p>

Gender Reassignment	Very little evidence exists to demonstrate impact of our services and therefore any changes on this Group will be difficult to monitor. Whilst we have added related questions to the Public Opinion of Forestry Survey (2013) noted above, low numbers of respondents with these characteristics limits the degree to which we can draw meaningful data. However, in seeking to ensure the main characteristics of age, gender, disability, race and ethnicity are monitored and reported, we will seek to address any impacts from these wider Groups.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Very little evidence exists to demonstrate impact of our services and therefore any changes on this Group will be difficult to monitor. In seeking to ensure the main characteristics of age, gender, disability, race and ethnicity are monitored and reported, we will seek to address any impacts from these wider Groups.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Very little evidence exists to demonstrate impact of our services and therefore any changes on this Group will be difficult to monitor. In seeking to ensure the main characteristics of age, gender, disability, race and ethnicity are monitored and reported, we will seek to address any impacts from these wider Groups.
Race	<p>We have baseline representation of the FWAC membership and so will be able to monitor the change of membership of people with protected characteristics. However, technical prerequisites for membership, in relation to forestry, exist and may constrain the potential pool of members due to wider issues regarding the sector's diversity profile.</p> <p>In the 2010 EQA we committed to developing a better understanding of the extent to which groups in receipt of new funding streams (such as the Big Tree Plant) represent people with protected characteristics. We have now done this⁹ and <u>will use the findings of this research:</u></p> <p><u>a) to direct future projects (i.e. planning and set up);</u></p> <p><u>b) for comparison purposes with other projects, and;</u></p> <p><u>c) continue to raise awareness of the report findings, both internally and externally, to inform projects going forward.</u></p> <p>From 2013 we will start to collect data relating to a wider range of personal characteristics to benchmark participation in the Forestry Skills Initiative, by those with protected characteristics. <u>This will enable us to monitor the change in participation and thus assess whether we need to be more proactive amongst the colleges in terms of wider recruitment activity amongst forestry apprentices to seek more diverse representation.</u></p>

⁹ Monitoring work reported by Silvanus Trust for Defra and FC looked into 'Characterising Community Groups involved in the Big Tree Plant and identifying benefits and challenges of involvement for Participants' (published in November 2013.

<http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&Completed=0&ProjectID=18468>). The report highlights the benefits and challenges of involvement for participants'. As an example of a project that considers how the groups in receipt of our funding represent people with protected characteristics.

<p>Religion and Belief</p>	<p>We have the baseline representation of the FWAC membership and so will be able to monitor the change of membership of people with protected characteristics. However, technical prerequisites for membership, in relation to forestry, exist and may constrain the potential pool of members due to wider issues regarding the sector's diversity profile.</p> <p>In the 2010 EQA we committed to developing a better understanding of the extent to which groups in receipt of new funding streams (such as the Big Tree Plant) represent people with protected characteristics. We have now done this and <u>will use the findings of this research, as noted above.</u></p> <p>From 2013 we will start to collect data relating to a wider range of personal characteristics to benchmark participation in the Forestry Skills Initiative, by those with protected characteristics. <u>This will enable us to monitor the change in participation and thus assess whether we need to be more proactive amongst the colleges in terms of wider recruitment activity amongst forestry apprentices to seek more diverse representation.</u></p>
-----------------------------------	--

<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Very little evidence exists to demonstrate impact of our services and therefore any changes on this Group will be difficult to monitor. Whilst we have added related questions to the Public Opinion of Forestry Survey (2013) noted above, low numbers of respondents with these characteristics limits the degree to which we can draw meaningful data. However, in seeking to ensure the main characteristics of age, gender, disability, race and ethnicity are monitored and reported, we will seek to address any impacts from these wider Groups.</p>
----------------------------------	---

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

	Positive Impact	Negative impact	High, Medium or Low	Comments
<p>Age</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Evidence unclear on whether move to more e-communication, e.g. digital by default will be positive or negative, however there may be some impact on older people and the extent to which they may engage as fully as those in other age categories.</p> <p>Forestry Skills Initiative (FSI) has a positive impact on young people (average age 21).</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Current FWAC membership does not reflect the disabled community.</p>
<p>Gender</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Current FSI ratio does have good gender diversification</p>

Gender reassignment	x		Low	Unknown
Marriage and Civil Partnership	x		Low	Unknown
Pregnancy and Maternity	x		Low	Unknown
Race	x	X	Low	Current FWAC membership does not reflect racial diversity
Religion and Belief	x		Low	Unknown
Sexual Orientation	x		Low	Unknown

11. What have you changed in the initiative to reduce or eliminate any negative impact?

Strategic approach: EqA Forest Services annual business plan and review the previous year's EqA each year.

Improvements to how EqA is approached:

- Communicate the new EqA internally as part of business planning.
- Build the actions arising from the EqA into the business plan and task the relevant programme lead to promote delivery, monitoring and evaluation and building the results of the evaluation back into our work. We propose it goes into Programme 7: Managing organisational change.
- Routinely require consideration of the EqA of the business plan and explicit reference to this conclusion at initiation stage of all significant (e.g.: Board level) projects or programmes.
- Ask Learning and Development (L&D) to set up a bespoke training course on EqA for all those likely to initiate significant projects and programmes. Course to use of the EqA of the business plan in its training material.
- Check all Forest Services staff are up to date on EqA training and ensure those who are not build training into their individual learning plans.

Other specific actions arising from the new EqA:

- Digital communications: Continue to work with others on assisted digital for the CAP Delivery Programme (led by the CAP Delivery Programme).
- Forestry and Woodland Advisory Committee (FWAC) representation: monitor progress on diversity against the 1st December 2013 baseline for FWAC members and chairs and be more active on generating applications for membership from people who share protected characteristics.
- Forestry Skills Initiative: Collate data on characteristics of applicants and entrants to the apprenticeship elements of the forestry skills initiative and assess by July 2014 whether more activity is needed to enhance diversity.
- Utilise data collected on the grant allocation (by projects such as The Big Tree Plant funding scheme) to ensure we monitor groups receiving grants fairly represent the diversity of England.

12. Where negative impact can not be reduced, give the reasons why.	
We have to reduce our overall resource budget and staff complement by the targets required. The government's over-arching policy context also requires us to reduce the scale of central government direct intervention.	
13. Does this initiative fulfil the General Equality Duty?	
	Comment
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.	<p>There is no evidence of potential unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.</p> <p>When facilitating groups to communicate on our behalf we will ensure they have equality and diversity policies that prevent unlawful impacts.</p> <p>We will refresh the equality and diversity skills of our staff as part of the ongoing business planning.</p>
Advance equality of opportunity.	<p>We applied guidance on equality of opportunity when reappointing committee members and will monitor changes in the composition of FWAC members in respect of people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>We will monitor recruitment of apprentices and monitor changes in the composition in respect of people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>We will need to assess evidence and best practice on increased use of digital / electronic and web-communications.</p> <p>We will refresh the equality and diversity skills of our staff as part of the ongoing change programme through our business planning.</p>
Foster good relations.	We will refresh the equality and diversity skills of our staff as part of the business planning for future change programmes (such as NELMS and CAP DP).
14. Describe the arrangements to measure and monitor the actual impact of this initiative on people from the protected characteristic groups.	
How will you measure the effects of the initiative?	The effects of SR10 as a whole were monitored by progress towards our financial and headcount reduction targets and achieving milestones along the implementation plan. The effect of the current change programme will be monitored on a programme basis as we will align EqA with our business planning cycle, undertaking an EqA of each business plan as part of the process of producing the plan, building on the previous year's plan. This will underpin the appropriate balance of detail and strategic information to cover all activities in year and fits with our upgraded approach to business planning.

	<p>We will understand any impacts on key stakeholders from the protected characteristics and groups through continued national and local liaison and relationship management. We will report to the Forest Services Board on an annual basis in line with business planning.</p> <p>Feedback from refresher equality and diversity training.</p>
<p>What type of information is needed for monitoring and how often will it be analysed?</p>	<p>As a national partner to Forest Education Network (FEN) for a further 15 months we will encourage FEN to monitor the effects of any changes in its delivery, through its annual reporting to the national partnership, especially in relation to delivery with target groups and areas.</p> <p>We will continue to use the Public Opinion of Forestry Survey – as the only national data source to demonstrate any trends in engagement in local woodland, which will allow us to monitor changes/impacts to the protected characteristics of age, gender, disability and ethnicity.</p> <p>Presence of people with protected characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity, disability) in FWAC membership.</p> <p>Retain knowledge on use in England of web based communication and awareness of those it is less likely to reach –liaise with others concerning progress and adjust communications methods appropriately.</p> <p>Utilise data collected on the grant allocation (by projects such as The Big Tree Plant funding scheme) to ensure we monitor groups receiving grants fairly represent the diversity of England.</p>
<p>How will you engage stakeholders* in implementation, monitoring and review?</p>	<p>We will use a variety of local and national forums in implementation, monitoring and review as part of our normal business practice. A key part of this will be through the FWACs and national cross-cutting forums.</p>
<p>Who will be responsible for the monitoring and review?</p>	<p>Programme Manager of Programme 7 of the business plan, currently Strategic Development Team Manager.</p>
<p>15. What is the review date for this Equality Analysis?</p>	
<p>Date of next review(s)</p>	<p>November 2014, early in next business planning cycle.</p>
<p>What could trigger an early revision?</p>	<p>Rejection of our proposed changes in the Business Plan by the FS Senior Management Board.</p> <p>If (during the process of detailed implementation) it becomes apparent that the reforms are not feasible and need radical change, or key stakeholders face unsustainable major impacts from the changes.</p> <p>Under the Woodland Enabling Programme, Forest Services is going through a series of complex organisational changes</p>

	the outcomes of which are not yet clear. Each of a number of change drivers, namely Cap Delivery, EU Payments, Review of Forestry Functions, Plant Health Review and other parts of the WPEP Programme such as the creation of a new Public Forest Estate Management organisation may have an impact upon this Equality Assessment.
--	---

16. Senior manager sign off

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.

Name	Richard Greenhous
Signature	
Job Title	Director, Forest Services
Date	05 December 2013

List of Supporting Evidence (refer to accompanying file)

- Big Tree Plant Executive Summary (pdf) (November 2013)
- England Public Opinion of Forestry - Diversity Analysis (word) (Nov 2013)
- Final Ministerial Statement on Digital Support (word.) (September 2013)
- FWAC Members Acceptance and Code of Conduct (excel) (20 11 2013)
- FWAC Chairs – Summary (excel) (28 11 2013)
- Social media staff survey (May 2013) (pdf)
- Social Forestry Pilot Report (October 2013) (pdf)

References

Doick, K., Atkinson, G., Cordle, P. & Giupponi., G. (2013) Investigating design and provision of access facilities as a barrier to woodland use. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 12.

Stewart, A and Ambrose-Oji, B., 2013, A survey of Forestry Commission staff on understanding and use of social media, Forest Research, Northern Research Station, Edinburgh

Annex 1. Census 2011

Population of England – 53,012,456

Age

- The median age was 39.
- 10,022,836 people (18.9%) are 15 and under
- 34,329,091 people (64.8%) are of working age (age 16 to 64)
- 8,660,529 people (16.4%) are 65

Gender

- 26,069,148 men (49.18%)
- 26,943,308 women (50.82%)

Race

White: English/Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish /British	42,279,236	79.8%
White: Irish	517,001	1.0%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller *	54,895	0.1%
White: Other White	2,430,010	4.6%
Total White	45,281,142	85.5 %
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean	415,616	0.8%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African	161,550	0.3%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	332,708	0.6%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed	283,005	0.5%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	1,395,702	2.6%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	1,112,282	2.1%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	436,514	0.8%
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	379,503	0.7%
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	819,402	1.5%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	977,741	1.8%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	591,016	1.1%

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	277,857	0.5 %
Other ethnic group: Arab *	220,985	0.4%
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	327,433	0.6%
Total non-white	7,731,314	14.3 %

1.1.1 Religion or belief

Christian	31,479,876	59.4%
Total Christian	31,479,876	59.4 %
Buddhist	238,626	0.5 %
Hindu	806,199	1.5 %
Jewish	261,282	0.5 %
Muslim	2,660,116	5.0 %
Sikh	420,196	0.8 %
Other religion	227,825	0.4 %
All non-Christian	4,614,244	8.7 %
No religion	13,114,232	24.7 %
Religion not stated	3,804,104	7.2 %
Total no or not stated	16,918,336	31.9 %

1.1.2 Disability

Day-to-day activities limited	9,352,586	17.6%
Day-to-day activities not limited	43,659,870	82.4%