

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR INFORMATION

**Title: THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY'S ANNUAL
EQUALITY SCHEMES UPDATE**

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Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to update the Board on the progress that has been made on each of the three Equality Schemes (Disability, Gender and Race).

Recommendation

That the Board acknowledge the progress made on the action plans in the CNPA Equality Schemes.

Executive Summary

The CNPA has a statutory duty to develop, implement and monitor Equality Schemes on Disability, Gender and Race. Equality and inclusion underpin three of the guiding principles within the Park Plan, namely Social Justice – A National Park for All, People Participating in the Park, and Managing Change.

The CNPA Board endorsed the CNPA Equality Schemes on Disability, Gender and Race in 2007/2008. Under the duties, the CNPA must report annually on these schemes, including their action plans. Rather than bring three separate papers to the Board for consideration it was decided after liaising with the Equality and Human Rights Commission that we would conduct the annual report of all our Equality Schemes at the same time.

THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY'S EQUALITY SCHEMES UPDATE - INFORMATION

Background

1. The CNPA published three Equality Schemes through 2006/2007.
 - a) Disability Equality Scheme (DES)- Dec 06-approved by the Board April 07
 - b) Gender Equality Scheme (GES)- June 07- approved by the Board Aug 07
 - c) Race Equality Scheme (RES)- Nov 07-approved by the Board Jan 08

These Schemes set out how CNPA will promote equal opportunities in the delivery of its public functions and as an employer. They complement three of the guiding principles set out in the Park Plan, namely Social Justice – A National Park for All, People Participating in the Park and Managing Change. We are required to publish and report annually to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) an update on progress on each scheme. This was done for the DES in December 2007.

2. After negotiation with the EHRC, the CNPA Equality Schemes are now being presented as a single umbrella Equality scheme bringing together all three existing strands (Disability, Gender and Race) in one document and will incorporate others schemes (Faith, Sexual Orientation and Age) as they become a statutory requirement. This means that they will be updated annually at the same time and be comprehensively reviewed together in 2009. The full Joint Equality Scheme including the 2008 annual update for all three schemes is found at Annex 1.
3. To date the CNPA has worked closely with many organisations. Most significantly through Inclusive Cairngorms, a forum which seeks to promote social inclusion in the National Park, and represents a wide diversity of organisations and interests. Inclusive Cairngorms has grown from strength to strength in the last year and is developing a much more focussed role in advising the CNPA on equalities issues both from corporate and partner facing perspectives.
4. In progressing the Equality Schemes' action plans, the Equalities Working Group (responsible for overseeing the production and implementation of the Equality Schemes) have worked closely with both members of Inclusive Cairngorms and relevant CNPA staff. CNPA staff from each group, and members of the Inclusive Cairngorms, along side Scottish Natural Heritage staff will undertake impact

assessment training on 8/9 July in order to embed our equalities work within the every day working of the organisation.

Summary of progress on Equality Schemes

5. **There has been significant progress made on all three strands of the CNPA Equality Schemes. Below is a summary of some of the action points:**
6. **Disability**
 - a) Staff/Board training on disability awareness undertaken and on-going.
 - b) Guidelines and template developed for organising and evaluating accessible meetings.
 - c) Involvement with people with disabilities in advising the CNPA on policy development, e.g. Core Paths Planning, outdoor access provision, Joint Outreach Project with Loch Lomond and Trossachs NPA and Community Needs Initiative and development and implementation of Equality Schemes.
 - d) An accessibility audit of the CNPA office in Grantown and involvement of people with disabilities has fed into the re-design of the reception area and disabled access at the back of the building to improve their accessibility.
 - e) A new corporate typeface for CNPA has been adopted (Gill Sans 12 pt) with approval from the Scottish Accessible Information Forum.
 - f) Improvements to HR and employment policies resulting in recognition by the Job Centre Plus "Positive About Disability" Standard (Also known as the "Two Ticks" Standard).
7. **Gender**
 - a) Gender awareness training for staff/Park service providers, e.g. tourism businesses, outdoor recreation providers scheduled for 2008/2009.
 - b) Raised awareness on gender issues and transport at the Community Transport Conference 2007.
 - c) Ensuring that training, secondment opportunities and career development are equally available to male and female employees.
 - d) Continuing to provide flexibility in work practices to ensure that those with caring responsibilities are able to work effectively for CNPA.
8. **Race**

- a) Race awareness training for staff/Park service providers, e.g. tourism businesses, outdoor recreation providers, scheduled for 2008/2009.
- b) Training/recruitment courses for CNPA staff.
- c) Held consultation event for minority ethnic group leaders to identify barriers in accessing the Park and ways to address them. Subsequent projects being developed in Inverness and Dundee to train leaders.
- d) Raising awareness of CNPA as a potential employer in media specifically for people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Recommendation

9. **That the Board note the progress made against the full set of actions in Annex 1.**

Policy Context

National Policy

10. The new Scottish Parliament administration (SNP 2007 manifesto) shows a commitment to pledging to “pull together the different strands of equality legislation under our control to deliver an integrated equality strategy based on the recognition that discrimination harms people and communities, undermines our economic competitiveness and damages our international reputation.” The CNPA Equality Schemes make a significant contribution to delivering five out of fifteen of the Scottish Government's outcomes in the National Performance Framework:
 - a) We live longer, healthier lives.
 - b) We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.
 - c) We live in well designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
 - d) We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.
 - e) Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

National Park Plan

11. The guiding principles and many of the outcomes and actions set out in the National Park Plan along side the development of a “Park for All” culture should ensure that an inclusive attitude is applied, as standard practice to the delivery of the Park Plan by the CNPA and its partners.
12. The guiding principles that set out how the CNPA and its Partners should address inequality within the Park Plan are:
 - a) **“Social Justice - a National Park for All”** the CNPA has established links with inclusion and equalities groups and interests and will continue to involve them in creating opportunities for

everyone to engage with the park. This includes groups that focus on Minority Ethnic, Disability and Gender interests.

- b) **“People Participating in the Park - A National Park for People”**
The CNPA has established links with inclusion groups and interests, and will continue to involve them in shaping the Park and its management.
- c) **“Managing Change - A National Park Open to Ideas”** The CNPA will seek to listen and work with equalities groups and interests to achieve best possible solutions to manage change within the Park.

13. Corporate Plan Outcomes

Implement internal equalities action plans	The Authority's policies and procedures address any potential inequality of access to this organisation or the Park, while our operations fit with and are complementary to development of a strong, fair and active society
Encourage others to deliver equality action plans and meet best practice standards.	All businesses, private, public and voluntary are actively encouraged to operate in a way that meets the highest equality standards to develop a strong, fair and inclusive society.

Delivering Sustainability

- 14. Developing and reviewing our Equality Schemes with clear action plans with monitoring built in will mean that resources can be dedicated in a more effective manner ensuring greater impact. Involving a wide range of Partners in the development of these schemes increases a sense of collective ownership.

Delivering Economy, Effectiveness and Efficiency

- 15. Producing Equality Schemes will encourage a wider range of visitors to the Park. It is important to build on the existing visitor demographic base and encourage the development (and marketing) of a diverse range of transport, accommodation and activities geared to a variety requirements. Addressing recruitment and employment barriers ensures that we get the very best talent working for the Park Authority.

Financial Implications

- 16. Developing, implementing and reviewing Equality Schemes will take time, resources and commitment from the CNPA and its key partners (particularly Inclusive Cairngorms.) We now have specific budget lines to resource actions within the Equality Schemes and to support Inclusive Cairngorms. We are also working closely with Scottish

National Heritage in the delivery of impact assessment training for staff and looking at other areas where we can share costs and resources.

Presentational Implications

17. Developing and reviewing our Equality Schemes ensures that the CNPA meets its statutory duties with regards to disability, gender and race. Working in partnership with under represented groups to build a more equal, fairer and diverse Scotland, specifically, in creating opportunities for a wider sense of ownership and access to its National Parks.

Implications for Stakeholders

18. Promoting equality of opportunity through the Equality Schemes will ensure a heightened priority on equality issues and help to realise the full benefit of the National Park to Park users and service providers, e.g. by increasing customer base, creating new business opportunities.
19. The Equality Schemes will create a clear benchmark for not only the Authority but its partners to work towards. As the CNPA does not deliver many public services directly to Park users, it will have a key role in influencing partners and service providers to be aware of equalities issues and to demonstrate good practice in meeting the needs of all users of the Park, including minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities.

Next Steps

20. Impact assessment, monitoring and evaluation of the Equality Schemes are vital to their success. CNPA staff representing all the internal groups are currently undertaking impact assessment training in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage.

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