



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) National Park Partnership Plan 2022 - 2027 (Updated May 2022)

Background

The National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) sets out how all those with a responsibility for the Park will co-ordinate their work to tackle the most important issues and deliver the four aims¹ of National Parks in Scotland collectively. In particular, the NPPP:

- Sets out the vision and overarching strategy for managing the Park.
- Guides the work of all public bodies and other partners to deliver the aims of the Park.
- Provides the strategic context for the Local Development Plan.
- Sets out the regional land use framework and regional spatial strategy for the Park.
- Sets out the economic and sustainable tourism strategy for the Park.

The NPPP is arranged in three sections: Nature, People and Place. In each section we set out long-term objectives up to 2045 (the year Scottish Government has committed to achieving net zero), followed by a set of policies and actions for the next five years. The Partnership Plan is in turn underpinned by a series of more targeted action plans and projects that deliver on the ground.

Scope

This equality impact assessment focuses on the potential impact of the NPPP in relation to the National Park's communities, residents, visitors as well as stakeholders, investors and the business community; visitors. Specifically, it focusses on groups with protected characteristics under Equality Act 2010. This impact assessment will cover:

- Legislative Responsibilities
- Evidence
- Consultation

¹ The Four Aims of Scottish National Parks are to be pursued collectively unless there is conflict between the first aim and any of the others, when greater weight must be given to the first aim (as set out in Section 9.6 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000).

1. To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area.
2. To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area.
3. To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public.
4. To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

- Impact
- Actions taken to date
- Future actions required.
- Recognised timeline for updates and review.

The draft NPPP will be consulted on in public, before being finalised and signed off by the Scottish Ministers. Further information on its potential impact on groups with protected characteristics may be gathered during the consultation and via individual actions or projects during its implementation.

Legislative Responsibilities

The Equality Act (2010) came into force in April 2010 and puts a general duty on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. In addition the specific duties for Scottish public authorities require that CNPA assesses the impact on equality groups of all proposed new or revised policy or practice against the needs of the general duty.

Under the Equality Act (2010) the following protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. While there is a legislative responsibility to assess the impact on these groups, CNPA intends to assess any groups where there is evidence of adverse impact for example socio-economic status and rurality.

Assessing impact is an effective way of improving policy development and service delivery, making sure we consider the needs of the National Park's communities and visitors; identify potential steps to advance equality and foster good relations; and do not discriminate unlawfully.

Evidence

In assessing the impact this EqlA has taken into account data from Census 2011, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 (SIMD) and Cairngorms Visitor Survey 2020.

Information from EqlAs carried out for current Cairngorms National Park Authority plans, policies and programmes that are closely related to the NPPP and other documents related to equalities have been taken into account:

- EqlAs carried out for the Local Development Plan 2021 and the National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022,
- EqlAs carried out for other plans produced for the Cairngorms National Park,
- Cairngorms National Park Authority Equality Outcomes 2021-2024,
- Generic EqlAs carried out for other publications (which provide evidence for the publication of the NPPP) and websites (which provide evidence for any web-based material associated with the NPPP), and
- National Standards for Community Engagement.

Consultation undertaken to date

- Meetings with key Stakeholders
- Discussion with Cairngorms Equality Advisory Forum

- Informal consultation using social media and Commonplace engagement platform: <https://cairngormsviews.commonplace.is/>
- Formal engagement on draft National Park Partnership Plan undertaken mainly through <https://cairngormsviews.commonplace.is/> and promoted via social media and CNPA news, supplemented by meetings with numerous stakeholder groups.
- Use of an independent market research agency (Scotinform) to conduct one to one interviews with audiences that were under-represented in the previous consultation exercise on the National Park Partnership Plan 5 years ago. This included ethnic minority groups and audiences with accessibility needs as well as land managers, local businesses, community groups and health providers.

Impact

The NPPP sets out strategic direction, objectives, policies and actions, identifying the things that will make the biggest contribution to a successful National Park over the coming years. However, it should be noted that the NPPP is a strategic document and many of its objectives, policies and actions are a signpost to future detailed projects, many of which will themselves require EqlA and bespoke audits or assessments to ensure projects follow best practice in their relevant fields.

The consultation on the draft NPPP reached a larger audience than ever before, including some minority groups at levels reflected in the Scottish population. There was a high degree of support for much of the direction and content of the draft plan as well as many specific comments on the content of the plan or on potential projects or future work. A range of comments were made in relation to equality groups or issues that affect them, often focused very on very specific issues that may be addressed by individual projects in future.

The NPPP was changed following the consultation in many areas, including the way it considered equalities. However, many of the practical measures that will make difference to equalities groups will be realised through the careful planning of individual projects during the life of the NPPP.

Monitoring and Review

The delivery of the NPPP will be monitored throughout its life, with specific indicators and targets that are directly related to equalities. Its subsidiary action plans and projects will be subject to their own more specific EqlAs and have more specific monitoring on a project by project basis.

| Equality Group | Impact | Mitigation | Further actions |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|
| Age | <p>The NPPP will seek to increase accessibility to the Park and the ability of people of all ages, including under-represented groups such as young people, to experience and enjoy its special qualities. This impact is likely to be positive.</p> <p>The NPPP also acts as the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the National Park, which forms part of the suite of planning policy documents, including the Local Development Plan (LDP). While the NPPP will not itself identify development land and proposals for the provision of facilities and services, it will provide direction for the next LDP and does set out a settlement strategy. This impact is likely to be positive as the aim is to improve the social, economic and social sustainability of the area.</p> <p>Potential negative impacts may arise if young people do not participate in the consultation.</p> | <p>Due to the NPPP being a strategic document, many of the policies and objectives are too general to enable meaningful assessment to identify specific long term mitigation measures. Detailed action plans and projects will be subject to their own EqlA and other specific assessments/audits.</p> <p>Consultation materials were made as accessible as possible, including using plain English, social media, physical copies and the Commonplace engagement platform.</p> <p>The Cairngorms Youth Engagement Team were consulted explicitly.</p> <p>The CNPA contracted a market research company to provide advice on the targeting of communications and targeted interviews with groups that are harder to reach or underrepresented on society.</p> | <p>Use the Cairngorms Youth Action Team to inform development of relevant projects.</p> <p>Use the Cairngorms Equalities Advisory Forum and accessibility panels to inform development of relevant projects.</p> <p>Using EqlA of individual projects to develop their detail.</p> |

| Equality Group | Impact | Mitigation | Further actions |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|
| Disability | <p>The National Park Partnership Plan will seek to increase accessibility to the Park and the ability of all people to experience and enjoy its special qualities. This impact is likely to be positive. Furthermore, its role as an RSS means that it includes a 'settlement strategy' that promotes social, economic and environmental sustainability.</p> <p>Potential medium negative impacts may arise as documentation and consultation material may not be easily accessible to all groups.</p> | <p>Due to the NPPP being a strategic document, many of the policies and objectives are too general to enable meaningful assessment to identify specific long term mitigation measures. Detailed action plans and projects will be subject to their own EqIA and other specific assessments/audits.</p> <p>Consultation materials were made as accessible as possible, including using plain English, social media, physical copies and the Commonplace engagement platform.</p> <p>The Cairngorms Youth Engagement Team were consulted explicitly.</p> <p>The CNPA contracted a market research company to provide advice on the targeting of communications and targeted interviews with groups that are harder to reach or underrepresented on society.</p> | <p>Use the Cairngorms Equalities Advisory Forum and accessibility panels to inform development of relevant projects.</p> <p>Using EqIA of individual projects to develop their detail.</p> |

| Equality Group | Impact | Mitigation | Further actions |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Gender Reassignment | Neutral impact on this group. | N/A | Use the Cairngorms Equalities Advisory Forum and accessibility panels to inform development of relevant projects. Using EqlA of individual projects to develop their detail. |
| Marriage / Civil Partnership | Neutral impact on this group. | N/A | |
| Pregnancy / Maternity | Neutral impact on this group. | N/A | |

| Equality Group | Impact | Mitigation | Further actions |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| Race | <p>The NPPP will seek to increase accessibility to the Park and the ability of people of all ages, including under-represented groups such as young people, to experience and enjoy its special qualities. This impact is likely to be positive.</p> <p>Potential negative impacts may arise if documentation and consultation material may not be easily accessible and/or understood by non-English speakers. Furthermore, the National Park has a very low resident BAME population who may be hard to reach. BAME people also account for a low proportion of visitors again causing potential consultation issues.</p> | <p>Due to the NPPP being a strategic document, many of the policies and objectives are too general to enable meaningful assessment to identify specific long term mitigation measures. Detailed action plans and projects will be subject to their own EqIA and other specific assessments/audits.</p> <p>Consultation materials were made as accessible as possible, including using plain English, social media, physical copies and the Commonplace engagement platform.</p> <p>The Cairngorms Youth Engagement Team were consulted explicitly.</p> <p>The CNPA contracted a market research company to provide advice on the targeting of communications and targeted interviews with groups that are harder to reach or underrepresented on society.</p> | <p>Use the Cairngorms Equalities Advisory Forum and accessibility panels to inform development of relevant projects.</p> <p>Using EqIA of individual projects to develop their detail.</p> |
| Religion and Belief | Neutral impact on this group. | N/A | |
| Sex (gender) | Neutral impact on this group. | N/A | |
| Sexual Orientation | Neutral impact on this group. | N/A | |

Completed by: Dan Harris, Planning Manager
Gavin Miles, Head of Strategic Planning