



Update on Equality Outcomes 2021 - 2024

Introduction

This report aims to demonstrate what the Cairngorms National Park Authority has been doing to ensure that the delivery of equality is part of our daily work. It shows that the aims of the general duty of the Equality Act (2010) are being met as part of the natural thinking, planning, and delivery cycle. This report highlights where mainstreaming is well embedded, and where it is beginning to emerge. The report follows the interim reissue that was published in 2022, and therefore provides an update on mainstreaming activity over the last 12 months, as well as a comprehensive update on the last two years' work to deliver our four Equality Outcomes.

The report is divided into six chapters:

1. Key highlights over the last 12 months
2. About the Cairngorms National Park Authority
3. Mainstreaming the Equality Duty
4. Staff and leadership
5. Visitors and community
6. Consultation and partnership

Chapter 1: Key Highlights

There has been significant equalities activity across the organisation in the last 12 – 18 months, all of which is set out in this document, but the key highlights are as follows:

a) Gender pay gap

The gender pay gap for 2023 was 9.55%, which is lower than the most recently reported pay gap for Scotland (10.1% 2021). This is the lowest the gender pay gap has been for the Park Authority since we started reporting this data. The Park Authority's gender pay gap has been on the downward trajectory for the last six years. The full report is set out in Appendix 5.

b) Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Charter and action plan

The Park Authority signed up to the LGBT Charter last year. The Charter Action Plan was approved by our Management Team in January 2023, and we hope to achieve accreditation within the next 18 months. A lot of work has already been delivered, including a history month campaign this February. We are also in the process of drafting a Transgender and Non-Binary Inclusion policy. See Chapter 3 for more detail.



c) Internal equality group

The Park Authority developed an Internal Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Advocacy Group in winter 2021. This is an advisory group, comprising staff across the organisation and equality characteristics, tasked with commenting on the implementation and embedding of equalities actions. Specifically, the group ensures that equality and diversity requirements are suitably addressed within the organisation by continually raising awareness and reinforcing the message that equality and diversity is “everyone’s business”. They are tasked also with finding practical solutions to any barriers that may present themselves in delivering the Park Authority’s aspirations and obligations around equality and diversity. See chapter 3 for more detail.

d) External Equality Advisory Panel (EAP)

The Equality Advisory Panel has gone from strength to strength since it was established in September 2020. There are 11 members, all of whom volunteer their time and equalities expertise and enthusiasm to help our staff embed equalities and inclusion in all our work. They provide up to date, authoritative and evidence-based advice and guidance on equality and inclusive practice and approaches. They critically assess our policy and strategy from an equalities perspective and provide recommendations to support the Park Authority officers to deliver best practice approaches to equality and inclusion. The group met in person for the first time last September and had the opportunity to visit some of the key projects supported by the Park Authority, including the new Aviemore Community Hospital, and the Alzheimers Centre at Badaguish. All reported that spending time in the National Park, and physically meeting each other strengthened their resolve and commitment to support the Park Authority’s equalities work. See chapter 3 for more detail.

e) Alzheimer centre

Alzheimer Scotland’s first outdoor dementia resource centre at Badaguish Outdoor Centre near Aviemore, opened in April 2023. The unique centre enables people with dementia and their family and carers to experience the benefits of green health activities. Alzheimer Scotland believes that access to the outdoors is essential for people living with dementia and their carers. People living with dementia can be at risk of becoming socially isolated, lonely, and depressed, and as a result often develop an indoor lifestyle. Spending time outdoors can provide instant benefits, including reducing stress and distress associated with dementia, increasing, and improving physical activity, providing mentally engaging activities, and providing opportunities to learn new skills and hobbies or rediscover old ones. It also gives people with dementia and their family or carers a chance to connect in a different environment and have fun together. The project is part of the Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 programme which is supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund thanks to National Lottery players. The



team at Alzheimer Scotland are aware that not all people with dementia are able to travel to the new centre – and so to connect with more people, the project team took the project on tour throughout February and March 2023, pitching an Alzheimer Scotland tipi at five locations across the National Park. See chapters 2 and 3 for more information about the Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 programme.

f) National Park Partnership Plan consultation process

The new National Park Partnership Plan was formally approved by our Board in June 2022, following an extensive consultation period, during which 1,453 responses were received online, via email and by post, as compared with a total of 319 for the equivalent consultation five years ago. We also gathered equalities and demographic data of the respondents. Results were mixed, and when compared to previous consultation data gathered, showed increased engagement across some minority groups (sex, and disability age range), but poorer engagement across others (ethnicity). However, the key success is that we have good benchmark data against which to measure engagement going forward, where such data was very minimal previously. See Chapter 6 for more detail about the consultation process.

g) Inclusive imagery

Following feedback from the Equality Advisory Panel that our imagery on our social media and print channels was limited, we have commissioned over 1,000 people-based images over the past 12 months and well over 10% of these featured under-represented groups or communities. A photoshoot is scheduled this month (in collaboration with Able2Adventure) to secure a bank of images of people using hire-able adaptive equipment on accessible paths to increase the diversity of representation in our routine communications. This follows a specific photoshoot in the autumn of 2022 for ethnic minority visitors to the National Park.

h) Volunteer Cairngorms

Volunteer Cairngorms have partnered with Home Start East Highland, the Rape and Sexual Violence Centre in Perth and Kinross, and Searchlight Asylum Seekers. For the latter, we facilitate days out with a purpose for Asylum seekers, via the 'Volunteer Experience Programme'. This Programme aims to facilitate safe, positive, and memorable experiences in The Cairngorms National Park by exploring volunteering for nature. There are currently 112 men connected with the charity, and we take them out in groups of 12. So far we've taken down kilometres of deer fence, mended paths in the mountains, and ring barked invasive species to support native growth. There are a variety of languages and skill sets in the group, which make for a wonderful day of getting to know each other. The men love volunteering and helping out where they can in Scotland, and for many this is the first time they'll have been in Cairngorms National Park, and



for some, it's the only time they get out of the city where they are being hosted, and into the countryside. There have been wonderful times spend dancing in car parks, prayer times on the mountains and building confidence with tool use and language. See chapter 3 for more detail about volunteering.

i) Scotinform community engagement report

The Park Authority commissioned a project to review the community engagement work undertaken across the National Park in the last five years, including the development stages of the Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 programme. This was delivered by Scotinform, who have just produced the draft report which also provides guidance on how to best evaluate the effectiveness of existing and future community engagement. The report identified that there is significant commitment to engaging with local and visitor communities, and the consultant was not aware of any other location ins Scotland with such a high volume of community engagement. The report was particularly helpful in terms of informing and shaping how we might approach future engagement activity to better engage with minoritized communities. See chapter 3 for more information on the Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 project engagement.

j) Cairngorms Nature Big Weekend

The Cairngorms Nature Big Weekend was on-line in 2021 and in-person over a weekend in 2022, but this year, it has evolved into a 10 day festival, which will give more people the opportunity to engage with it. We are working with refugee groups and Homestart Highland to establish their interests, barriers, and needs. The programme is still being finalised, but so far there are six events specifically for inclusion groups, including handcycling for disabled adults, inclusive canoeing for disabled families, adaptive biking and off-road wheelchair taster sessions, outdoor climbing for adults with disabilities and guided adaptive biking for disabled families. A new website has been created to support engagement with the festival and allows events to be easily searched using a range of criteria including wheelchair access, toilets, family friendly and free events. On the events page, public transport and full accessibility information is displayed, including any hidden costs like parking fees. See chapter 5 for more detail.

k) Cairngorms green recovery fund

This was a partnership between the Park Authority and The Cairngorms Trust and aimed to support the recovery of the Cairngorms economy from the widespread impacts of COVID-19, while protecting and enhancing the natural environment and seeking to address the ongoing impacts of climate change. Key highlights from the programme so far included a project to deliver two “Branching Out” outdoor mental health projects in Strathspey, run by the local charity Roots and Shoots, as well as a project by the Green Health Partnership to deliver green



health skills development and build the capacity of new health walk leaders and programmes. See Chapter 3 for more information.

l) Engagement - around the local elections of board members

We implemented a number of innovative activities to encourage people to put themselves forward for the board local elections, and also to encourage people to vote in these elections, including arranging a number of public meetings in settlements across the National Park, as well as developing videos which showcased a variety of resident voices from across the National Park, speaking in their own words about why it was important to stand, and later vote, in the elections. There was a door drop to every household in the National Park explaining the elections process and encouraging them to stand. This included a prominent headline saying, 'We are seeking people from a wide range of backgrounds to apply'. We included a full article on the elections process as part of Cairn magazine, which is a Park Authority designed and written magazine sent to every household in the National Park. This included a specific section of the article exploding myths about the 'type of person' who usually applies and why we're keen to broaden it out. Our press release used the same kind of language. We created a series of simple 'explainers' on social media to break down the process of standing and voting into plain English. See chapter 2 for more information.



Chapter 2: About the Cairngorms National Park

Authority

The Cairngorms National Park Authority was established in 2003. The Cairngorms National Park is the UK's largest national park and covers five local authority areas. It is home to 18,000 residents and welcomes two million visitors each year. Nearly half of the National Park is considered "wild land" and it contains one quarter of Scotland's native forest and a quarter of the rare and endangered species in the UK.

The Park Authority was set up to ensure the unique aspects of the Cairngorms, both the natural environment and local communities, are cared for, sustained, and enhanced for current and future generations to enjoy.

Our Purpose

The purpose of the Cairngorms National Park Authority is to promote partnership working and give leadership to all bodies and agencies involved in the sustainable growth and development of the Cairngorms National Park. Through coordinating development and collective agreement of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP), the Park Authority aims to ensure the "collective and co-ordinated delivery" of the four aims of the National Park, which are:

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

Our Vision

An outstanding national park, enjoyed and valued by everyone, where nature and people thrive together.

Our Mission

1. Bringing people together towards a common purpose
2. Enhancing the National Park for everyone
3. Inspiring new generations to be national park champions



Our Values

The Cairngorms National Park Authority is an open, inclusive, innovative, and professional organisation, that behaves with integrity.

National Park Partnership Plan 2022 - 2027

The National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) sets out how all those with a responsibility for the National Park will coordinate their work to tackle the most important issues. Following an extensive consultation, through which nearly 1,500 people responded to the consultation, the NPPP for the period 2022 - 2027 was approved by our Board in June 2022, and signed off by Ministers.

The full plan can be accessed in the following link:

[Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022-27](#)

The nature and climate crisis is at the core of the new Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan, which sets out how we will look after the National Park and how we develop and deliver a well-being economy that works for the people of the Cairngorms whilst also restoring nature and delivering net zero.

The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan focuses on the three core areas of nature, people and place.

1. **Nature:** The Cairngorms is the UK's largest national park, home to one quarter of the UK's rare and endangered species. We'll take action to protect and enhance the area's natural heritage. Priorities Include:
 - a) Going beyond net zero
 - b) Expanding woodland
 - c) Restoring peatland
 - d) Helping habitats thrive
 - e) Reducing deer Impacts
 - f) Managing land sustainably
 - g) Green Investment
2. **People:** We want people and nature to thrive together in the Cairngorms National Park. To achieve this, we will develop and support a local economy that works for all our communities. Priorities Include:
 - a) A thriving population
 - b) Focusing on wellbeing



- c) Developing green jobs
- d) Being a Park for All
- e) Empowering communities
- f) Improving people's health
- g) Supporting volunteers

3. **Place:** Anyone that wishes to live in, work in or visit the National Park should be able to do so, but we recognise that a number of barriers still exist. We will tackle them through:

- a) More affordable housing
- b) Transforming transport
- c) Connecting communities
- d) Reducing tourism impacts
- e) Welcoming visitors
- f) Helping communities thrive
- g) Celebrating cultural heritage

See Chapter 6 for detailed information about the consultation process and equalities data.

Corporate Plan for 2023 – 2027

The Corporate Plan was developed in the context of the Ministerial approved National Park Partnership Plan 2022 – 2027. The Corporate Plan sets out how the Park Authority will help to deliver the National Park Partnership Plan and will also continue to strive to be the best small public body in Scotland.

Our ambition is set out across three themes – nature, people and place. These are the themes of the National Park Partnership Plan and the Corporate Plan sets out the role of the National Park Authority in helping to deliver the objectives set out in that document. This is underpinned by our corporate functions and communications and engagement work.

The detailed Corporate Plan can be accessed in the following link:

[233024 CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITYBdPaper2_Annex1DraftCorporatePlan.pdf \(cairngorms.co.uk\)](#)

Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 programme

If we're going to be successful in delivering the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan, we'll need to change the way we do things. Our Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms



2030 programme is central to this. Inspired by the Gaelic word Dùthchas, meaning the deep-rooted connection between people and nature, the programme puts the power to tackle the climate and nature crises in the hands of people who live, work, and visit here. Across 20 long-term projects, Heritage Horizons will bring about transformational and inclusive change in the Cairngorms, benefiting health and wellbeing, delivering on climate change, and enhancing nature across the National Park. Heritage Horizons is an unprecedented partnership of over 45 organisations and is supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

In particular, the £43m Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 programme will focus on:

- a) Putting residents at the heart of decision-making and giving them more say in future funding decisions.
- b) Working with land managers to explore new ways of managing land, as well as restoring and enhancing large areas of peatland and woodland.
- c) Working with communities and partners to improve public transport and better connect the National Park.
- d) Developing an economy that benefits people and nature, and providing green solutions to public health issues including Covid-19 recovery, social isolation and dementia.

The programme development phase started on 1 October 2021 and will run to 17 August 2023.

NLHF have six priority outcomes, of which the first one is “a wider range of people will be involved in heritage”. In the development phase projects have been trialling different models of engagement with communities and individuals, with a particular focus on connecting with ‘hard to reach’ groups, identifying barriers that will prevent people from being able to engage, and finding ways to overcome these barriers. Included in the programme are projects to develop new active and sustainable travel options in the National Park, with underlying design principles that every development will be accessible to all users. Other projects include developing NHS partnerships focused on green health referrals and supporting a new outdoor dementia resource centre to ensure that participation in nature activities is widened to be as inclusive as possible. The next stage application is for the delivery stage, which will be submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in August 2023.

Our Board

The role of the Park Authority Board is to agree long term objectives for the national park through the National Park Partnership Plan and to set the priorities of work for the Park Authority. In addition to approving the strategic direction of the organisation, the Board is also responsible for ensuring high standards of governance, monitoring and overseeing the delivery of agreed objectives and compliance with statutory



responsibilities.

Click the following link for details of our board members:

[Park Authority Board - Cairngorms National Park Authority](#)

19 Members make up the Cairngorms National Park Authority Board:

- Seven members appointed by Scottish Ministers, to bring a national perspective to the Board and specific expertise from a range of subjects relevant to the National Park
- Five members are elected locally, which brings to the Board the valuable perspective of the Park's local communities
- Seven members are nominated by the five councils in the Cairngorms National Park. These members are expected to cement the key strategic relationships between the Park Authority and its partner local authorities:
Highland (2), Aberdeenshire (2), Moray (1), Angus (1), Perth & Kinross (1)

For the last four years, the Board comprised 10 female and nine male members, achieving the 50:50 by 2020 gender equality target. However, 2023 brings change to the Board as a recruitment campaign is currently underway for six Ministerial appointments, and there were also elections for the five elected positions this March.

For the Ministerial appointments, the Park Authority has no direct influence over who is appointed, but we do have a role to play in identifying the skills gaps in the collective board. This is done through a skills survey that is self-populated by Board members, and which feeds into a collective skills matrix that is shared with the Scottish Government Appointments Committee who are responsible for recruiting and appointing the Ministerial appointments.

For the local elections, we arranged a number of public meetings in settlements across the National Park. In addition, we developed videos which showcased a variety of resident voices from across the National Park, speaking in their own words about why it was important to stand, and later vote, in the elections. The Highland Council (who were overseeing the elections) sent a Park Authority - designed door drop to every household in the National Park explaining the elections process and encouraging them to stand. This included a prominent headline saying, 'We are seeking people from a wide range of backgrounds to apply'. We included a full article on the elections process as part of Cairn magazine, which is a Park Authority designed and written magazine that is sent to every household in the National Park. This included a specific section of the article exploding myths about the 'type of person' who usually applies and why we're keen to broaden it out. Our press release used the same kind of language. We created a series of simple 'explainers' on social media to break down the process of standing and voting



into plain English. We also worked with the Highland Council to ensure the whole elections process was broadcast live on YouTube, helping demystify the process of voting / standing in elections of this type. There were a total of 20 candidates for these five places. Of the 20 candidates 60% were men and 40% were women (in comparison to 75% male and 25% female at the last elections in 2019). The final outcome was that of the five elected members, three were men and two were woman (in comparison to 2019 when two men and three women were elected).

Given the gap between Ministerial appointments departing and the new appointments starting, as of 1 April 2023, the Board comprised 17 members, of which nine are male and eight are female, with two vacancies. Four of these are coming to the end of their appointment this year, and therefore in terms of the underlying longer-term composition, we have eight male and five female board members prior to the impact of public appointments to be made.



Chapter 3: Mainstreaming the Public Sector Equality

Duty

This section of the report demonstrates what the Park Authority has been doing to mainstream the equality duty into our daily work. It details how we have integrated this into our natural thinking, planning and delivery cycle. We have split this in to three sections: Engagement and participation, Corporate function and processes, and Service provision.

Section 1 – Engagement and participation

Equality Advisory Panel (EAP)

The Park Authority established an External Equality Advisory Panel in 2020. The aim of the panel is to provide informed, evidence-based feedback, guidance, and advice to support the Cairngorms National Park Authority to:

- ensure statutory public sector equality duties are delivered in accordance with The Equality Act 2010 (and other relevant equality legislation);
- embed equality and inclusion in their strategies and corporate processes;
- critically assess and appropriately mitigate the impact of Cairngorms National Park Authority decisions on equality groups through robust equality impact assessment procedures;
- ensure best practice in equality and inclusion approaches to their work;
- promote equality and inclusion work of Cairngorms National Park Authority and partners within the National Park.

The panel is chaired by Fiona McLean, the Cairngorms National Park Authority's board equalities champion. It comprises of 11 members, representing expertise and enthusiasm across a variety of equalities specialisms. Members are volunteers and recruited through an open recruitment process. The panel meets virtually every month and had its first face to face meeting in September 2022. For details of the panel and its membership, see the following link:

[Equality Advisory Panel - Cairngorms National Park Authority](#)

Over the last 12 months, the panel has made significant contributions to:

- a) The National Park Partnership Plan. Following suggestions from the panel, hard copies of the draft National Park Partnership Plan were produced for the consultation, and plans were put in place to ensure those who did not have access to websites or the internet were able to access the consultation process.



The panel also submitted a formal response to the consultation, and changes were made to the plan as a result.

- b) Advice on action plans, strategic plans and briefs. The panel have commented on multiple plans / briefs, including the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan, the E-Bike Consultancy Brief, and the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan. These contributions have encouraged officers to include equalities within the plans, as well as providing them with valuable connections and examples of good practice.
- c) Cairngorms National Park Authority communications strategy. The panel initially commented on the communications strategy when it was at draft stage, and identified several underrepresented groups they felt were missing from the document. The panel gave advice on designing equality focused consultations. As a result of their input, the communications team: reviewed the photography assets and researched into commissioning more diverse photograph; hired Scot Inform to help reach those who would not normally respond to consultations including equality and minority groups; tasked the digital accessibility centre with auditing Cairngorms National Park Authority systems to check the accessibility, feedback and provide potential recommendations which the communications team continue to work through.
- d) Cairngorms National Park Authority's new website. The panel took part in an activity with the consultants and suggested multiple examples of accessible websites which will help shape the new website that is currently being tendered and suggested "journey testing" to ensure it is accessible and easy to navigate.
- e) Heritage Horizons Project. The panel has given advice on most of the projects being delivered through the Heritage Horizons development stage, so that equalities has been included in all projects from inception. The panel have given examples of good practice, areas in plans that may need revision, groups that have been missed, and connections with organisations that may improve the project.
- f) Diversifying recruitment. The panel advised reviewing the language of job descriptions and person specifications, removing essential requirements for a driver's licence and degree qualifications unless the role cannot be delivered without them.
- g) Pronouns. The Panel gave advice on the process and language for inviting staff to display their pronouns.
- h) Advice to other organisations. The panel have given advice and fed into multiple projects for external speakers, including the Scottish Youth Hostelling Association, the Speyside Trust and Badaguish Project, Paratek (commenting on the suitability of the Trekker device), Backbone, Glenmore Corridor Sustainable Transport Plan, Aviemore to Carrbridge Non-Motorised User Route Study.
- i) Guidance and advice on the 2023 Cairngorms Nature Festival. The panel advised on the need for some low-cost free events, and also made several recommendations to make the festival more accessible, eg locating events near



changing places toilets where possible, coordinating the timings of events with public transport. The panel also advised on suggested partnerships.

Internal equality, diversity, and inclusion advocacy group

The Park Authority established an internal equality, diversity, and inclusion advocacy group in November 2021. The overarching purpose of this group is to champion the integration of equality, diversity and inclusivity principles into daily working life at Cairngorms National Park Authority at an organisational level, and give staff from minority groups a suitable environment to share their lived experience at the Cairngorms National Park Authority and inform any changes in culture or policy to facilitate improved diversity and integration. Specifically the group ensures that equality and diversity requirements are suitably addressed within the organisation by continually raising awareness and reinforcing the message that equality and diversity is “everyone’s business”. It facilitates communication, debate and dialogue relating to equality and diversity issues, and seeks to find practical solutions to any barriers that may present themselves in delivering the Park Authority’s aspirations and obligations around equality and diversity.

The group meets quarterly and comprises staff from across the organisation both with regards teams, grades, and minority groups. It is a very active and engaged group and has in the last 12 months carried out the following activities:

- a) Supported the development of the training brief for procuring equalities training for all staff, and informed the content of the management and Board sessions, as well as the communications approach to staff attending the equalities training.
- b) Recommended the organisation sign up to the LGBT Charter. This proposal was taken to the senior management team for consideration and approval.
- c) Informed the organisations approach to staff displaying their pronouns.
- d) Signed off the Park Authority’s formal response to the (Public Sector Equality Duty) PSED Consultation.
- e) Taken on the role of LGBT Charter champions to support the LGBT accreditation journey.
- f) Informed the questions to include in the 2023 staff equalities monitoring survey, around the principle that we wanted to do more than just what was required to be legally compliant.
- g) Developed the LGBT Charter Action Plan.
- h) Informed the revision of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form and supporting guidance.
- i) Recommended the development of a neurodiversity policy, which was subsequently drafted, consulted with staff and has now been adopted.
- j) Recommended the development of a reasonable adjustments passport policy which is currently being drafted.



- k) Supported the development of the transgender inclusion policy which is currently being drafted.

The group supported a staff drop-in session during history month in February. This was a positive and engaged event, that generated a number of new actions to support diversity in the organisation. Staff commented that they felt that the culture in the organisation had become noticeably more inclusive in the last 12 months.

Schools and young people

The Park Authority actively works with schools and young people both within and out with the National Park. Our engagement with young people has included the following:

Outdoor learning travel grants

The grant is a subsidy to support people both within and outwith the National Park. Over half the applicants would not be able to visit the National Park without the grant. Grants were awarded until 2019, but in 2020 no travel grants were awarded due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. Since restrictions were lifted we awarded 41 travel grants, of which 28 went to primary schools, eight to secondary schools and five to voluntary groups.

Youth employment strategy

The Park Authority is committed to supporting young people into employment and has formally adopted a youth employment strategy. In January 2022, we also signed up to the [Young Person's Guarantee](#), through which we have committed to creating and supporting a variety of opportunities for young people who are trying to establish their careers. The support we have provided in the last 12 months includes:

- a) We have hosted two graduate trainee accountant posts – both contracts last for a period of more than 12 months.
- b) We have hosted several internships, including a six month Cairngorms Nature Big Weekend intern and a four month digital content intern. We plan to support another two internships in the visitor experience team over the coming year.
- c) We have supported careers events at the local secondary schools, aimed at informing young peoples' subject choices for potential career options.
- d) We have hosted four young school students on work experience placements, one of them working with our information technology (IT) team one afternoon per week throughout term time.
- e) We have supported two young staff members to do the Young Scotland Programme, which is a residential, week-long course aimed at enhancing communication skills, inspiring confidence and broadening the intellectual horizons of people in the early years of their careers.



- f) We employed four trainee rangers in 2022. In addition to getting experience in rangering skills, they also get training on transferable skills to enhance their employability. One of last year's trainee rangers has been recruited into the one of the seasonal ranger posts this year. In 2021 we hosted four trainee rangers through the Kickstart programme. Two of the four returned in 2022 as seasonal rangers. The opportunity to be a trainee ranger is a key career pipeline to the ranger service.
- g) We recruited a number of volunteer rangers and from the 2022 intake there were a good number of applicants from and appointments of young people, in part seeking to gain experience before moving into a land based career.
- h) We have supported several university students with work shadowing opportunities, which give them a feel for the type of work the Park Authority carries out and appropriate career paths for this work; and supports mandatory work experience required to gain their qualifications.

Rural skills

The Park Authority's peatland team is supporting young people in schools across the National Park to help them understand the full range of opportunities that this important work can provide. These range from carrying out the groundworks themselves through to project managing works as a land manager or agent or specifying works as a consultant. This will be achieved by supporting the in-school 'Pathways to Rural Work' programme being facilitated by Countryside Learning Scotland. Members of our team will help produce information packages, provide presentations, and attend events throughout the year that will be targeted to school students approaching leaving ages (S4-S6). In addition, we aim to host field trips to see peat restoration work and will work to facilitate work placement opportunities.

Cairngorms Youth Action Team (CYAT)

The Park Authority supported the development of a Youth Council several years ago, after the Europarc Conference (2018). This has evolved and is now called the Cairngorms Youth Action Team (CYAT). The main aims of this team are to develop procedures and protocols for recruitment and management of a youth council; establish what areas of work the youth council will be involved in, develop an appropriate model for interaction with the National Park Authority's Board. There is a rolling recruitment of young people to the CYAT.

The CYAT also deliver the Cairngorms Youth Fund for the Cairngorms Trust. To do this they formed a subgroup, the Youth Local Action Group. The Youth Local Action Group drew up the terms of the grant scheme, including devising a set of aims, fund criteria, an application form and scoring system. In the last year, 22 members of the CYAT ran two successful rounds of the Youth Fund. The work of the Cairngorms Youth Local Action Group supported by the Cairngorms Trust is ground-breaking in Scotland, in engaging



young people directly in decision making and funding projects that young people see as important for the Cairngorms, its communities and people.

Feedback from project participants has been very positive and shows the range and scope of positive outcomes the project is having for young people across the Cairngorms National Park, including successfully engaging with equalities and protected characteristic groups (young people, low income, LGBTQ+, disability, race).

One of the projects was Paddling with Pride, which supports the LGBTQ+ community through monthly queer paddle meet-ups in the Cairngorms. They have received two grants for kit for their members. Feedback from one of their members:

“Honestly I could never have imagined what this group would mean to me in just a few months. It’s the best. I would love to see the group grow and welcome new members because I just would love for other folk to get out of it what I do: total queer joy, community and also the chance to get outside and actually learn how to paddle. Forever grateful for this group being set up and helping me find home in the highlands.”

Another project is the Cactus Book Club which supports individuals aged 16-26 who are isolated due to health problems (physical disabilities, chronic illness, mental health). They received a grant to send two care packages to 20 young people in Braemar, Ballater and Strathspey.

The CYAT has been very busy with other engagement activities as well over the past year with lots of activities and events taking place.

- a) Four residentials. Orkney - February 2023, Badaguish - November 2022, Badaguish - March 2022, Badaguish - November 2021. The residential in Orkney was part of a Scottish Government funded project to develop Youth Local Action Groups across Scotland. The CYAT and other young people got together to workshop ideas about how to develop these groups, members of the CYAT took the lead in presenting the work they had done to date on the Europarc Youth Manifesto, forming the CYAT and the Cairngorms Youth Fund. The residentials at Badaguish were to develop the skills and capacity of the CYAT to become more effective in their working, furthering the cause of young people in the Cairngorms and to plan the yearly programme of events including a Youth Climate Camp in August 2023.
- b) Three artist in residence online meetings. Each attended by three young people.
- c) One online training session (Climate Conscious Communities).
- d) One volunteer session in January 2023.
- e) Two general business online meetings in February 2023 and November 2022.



- f) Online meetings with the Park Authority's Governance Committee, Cairngorms National Park Authority Board, Cairngorms Trust Board and National Parks UK.

Junior ranger project

The Park Authority's Junior Ranger Programme is a scheme open to 11-18 year olds. Its purpose is to create young ambassadors for the National Park through a mixed programme of conservation, adventure and learning activities delivered by the Cairngorms Ranger Service.

After the hiatus of the Covid-19 pandemic the Junior Ranger Programme is now up and running again. The programme continues to run in partnership with the five local secondary schools, engaging 80 pupils in 2022.

The newly formed Cairngorms National Park Authority Ranger Service has also developed a monthly Junior Ranger Programme operating across the National Park. In 2022, 53 sessions were delivered engaging 141 young people.

John Muir Award

The John Muir Award is a national environmental awareness scheme, focussed on wild places that is open to all, regardless of ability, background, or circumstances. A large number of awards have been achieved over the years, but there was an obvious delay over Covid-19. The John Muir Award is now only managed within the boundary of the National Park, which has reduced the number of awards attained significantly but the awards are now more focussed on the special qualities of the Cairngorms.

Annual target for the John Muir Award has now been reduced to 500 and the inclusion target remains at 25%. The majority of awards are achieved by primary school aged pupils through local schools but also through outdoor activity centres operating in the National Park.

Volunteering

Volunteer rangers

Cairngorms National Park Authority has a volunteer ranger team, comprising 62 volunteer rangers. The team has grown significantly since 2021 when we had 38 volunteer rangers.

We successfully recruited and trained the new volunteer rangers for whom we have direct responsibility. They are passionate about connecting people to nature from a diverse range of backgrounds.

The volunteer rangers cover a variety of age ranges, as follows:



16 – 25 = 9
25 – 40 = 17
40 – 60 = 17
60 – 75 = 13

They also cover a variety of professions:

Student = 6
Retired = 15
Working = 32
Seeking employment = 3

During the recruitment stage, some applicants identified a disability which resulted in specific adjustments to support them both during the application and in fulfilling the role of volunteer ranger. The kind of adjustments we have made include flexible training models (giving a choice of participating in person or on-line); buddy system for patrols and building confidence; opportunity to repeat sessions on-line and within the home environment.

Volunteer rangers support the Volunteer Experience Programme, the Junior Ranger Programme, and a range of partners including Badaguish Dementia Outdoor Resource Centre.

Volunteer Experience Programme

Our Volunteer Experience Programme is designed to create safe and positive spaces in nature for third sector and charity groups. Our partners for this programme include Rape and Sexual Violence Survivors (RASAC) Perth and Kinross, Home Start East Highland, (families facing economic difficulties and challenging lifestyles), and Searchlight Asylum (Asylum seekers based in Aberdeen). Since June 2022, monthly experiences have been arranged for groups to enjoy a 'day with a purpose', from building paths, making bee hotels, fence line work and recording wildlife.

General volunteering in the National Park

The Park Authority have a variety of opportunities available on the website that cater to a diverse group of people and communities. Under 30s event, 'Accessible' Opportunities (wheeler friendly), events for networking / reduction in isolation and events with direct public transport links have been offered, as well as events where transport costs are covered.

Community engagement

We actively use the national standards for community engagement and promote best practice. The Park Authority supports the Association of Cairngorms Communities,



several community development organisations (including Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey and the Marr Area Partnership) and facilitate a network of community development officers. We participate in the relevant community partnerships as part of the community planning process. We encourage each community to prepare a Community Action Plan in order to proactively plan what their priorities are over a five year period.

Significant effort is made to involve harder to reach groups in the process. We work with communities to improve their capacity. We have also undertaken a number of community engagement events over the last year to inform the Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 programme.

Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030. Equality, diversity and inclusion engagement

In July 2021 Cairngorms National Park Authority was awarded money from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) to run 20 long-term projects to bring about transformational change in the Cairngorms, benefitting people's health and wellbeing, delivering on climate change, and enhancing nature across the National Park. One of the NLHF mandatory outcomes for all their funded programmes is 'A wider range of people will be involved in heritage', and so the Cairngorms 2030 programme has a need to collect equality diversity and inclusion data in order to evidence the change that is made through the programme delivery.

In the initial one and a half years of the Cairngorms 2030 programme eight of the projects used an online platform to conduct 14 separate surveys of the views of residents and visitors. Each person who completed a survey was offered the opportunity to complete a second anonymous survey on their equality diversity and inclusion characteristics. In addition, most of the projects undertook in person engagement events, public meetings and drop-in sessions, and where possible the link to the online equality diversity and inclusion survey was made available and attendees were asked to complete it.

In total 5,000 people viewed at least one page of the online survey system; 400 people completed one (or more) of the surveys, and a further 500 people interacted or commented on a page.

The equality diversity and inclusion survey was completed by 315 people (287 on Commonplace, 26 on SurveyMonkey and two completed paper forms). The main points from the data are:

- There are only two respondents in the 16-24 age category.
- There are four respondents who identify as lesbian, gay or binary and one identified as transgender.
- There are three respondents from an ethnic minority background.

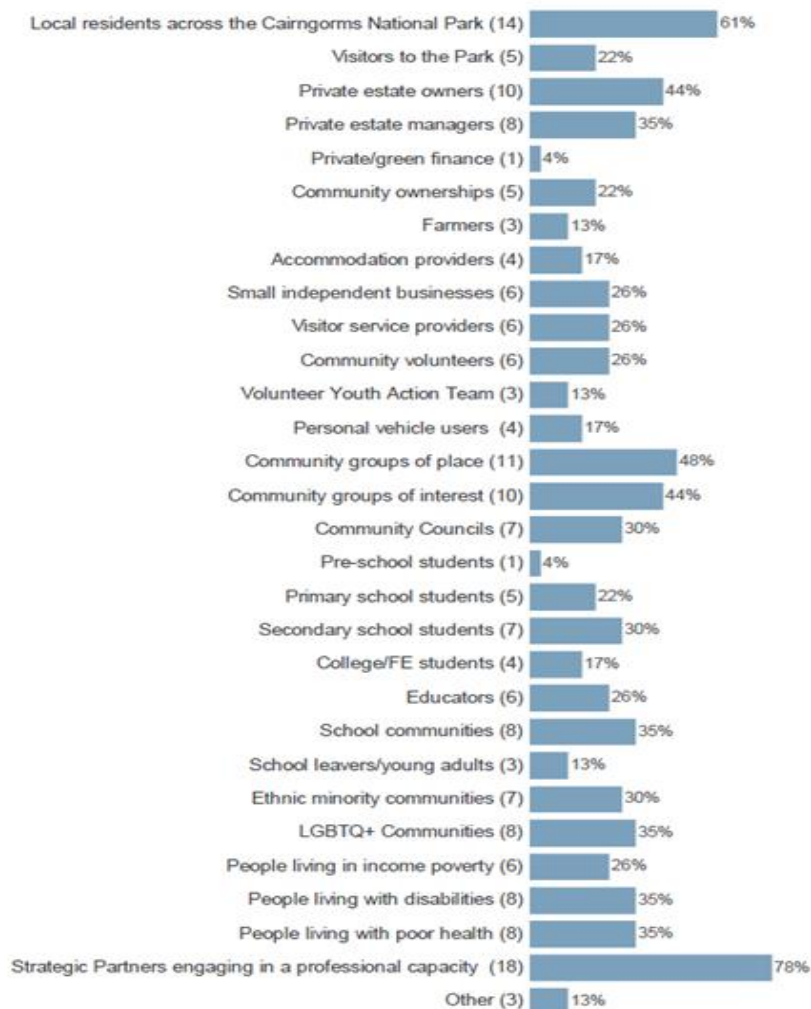


- Only 21 people responded as having attended an in-person event.
- There are a significant number of blanks, ranging from 20 people who didn't answer about their connection to the National Park to 230 who didn't respond about whether they consider themselves transgender.

This data is useful as a baseline, but we have significant work to do to widen participation.

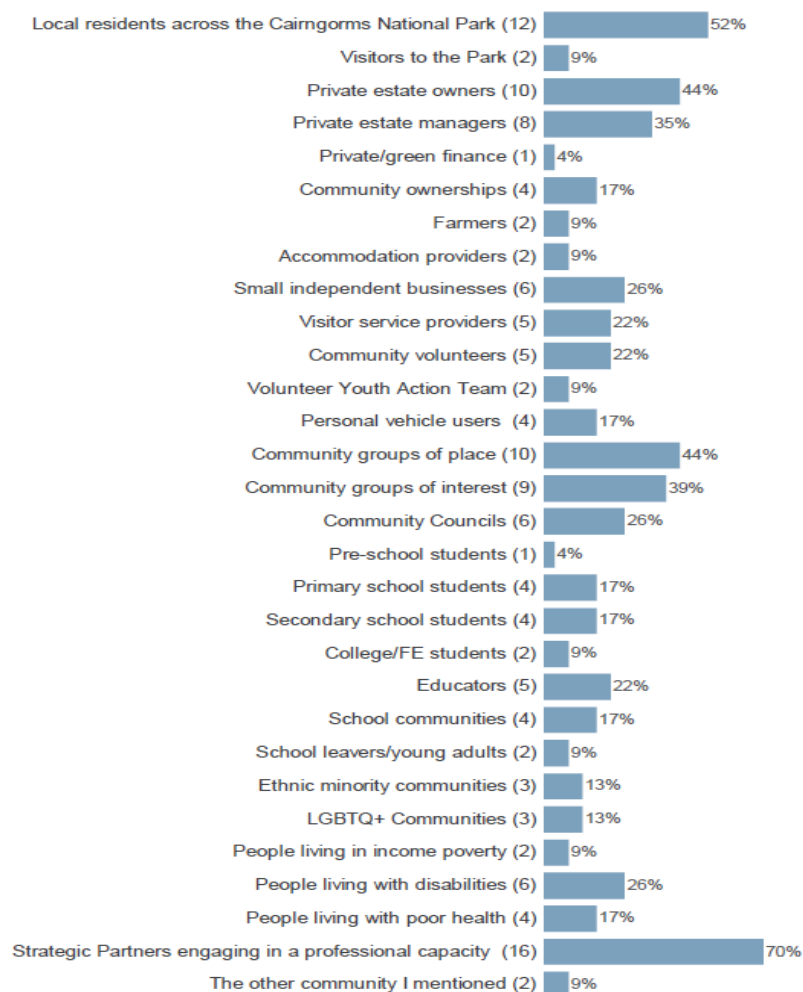
As part of ScotInform's Effective Community Engagement review of the development phase, we have asked our project managers across all 20 development phase projects whom they anticipated engaging with from our target audiences and those whom they have successfully engaged with and reasons around this. In total there were 195 planned "engagements" with different communities across the 20 projects. In reality a total of 146 project engagements took place, with all the anticipated communities, as below:

Please tell us which communities your project intended to engage with. Please tick all that apply.





Which of your target communities have you engaged with so far?



This broad overview highlights that as a programme we have struggled to engage with ethnic minority groups, LGBTQ+, those with disabilities, those in poor health and in income poverty.

Within the National Park we know the demographics of those who live, work and visit and we will have to work with some groups and audiences outwith our geographic boundary within the delivery phase to ensure we can engage meaningfully with groups with protected characteristics.

Active communities: Badenoch & Strathspey

As part of Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030, we are seeking to put active and sustainable transport at the heart of a greener future for the National Park. We are working with some of our local communities to make it easier and safer for people to get around their village without a vehicle. By improving infrastructure and public spaces, we aim to make it more enjoyable for people to walk, cycle or get around using a



wheelchair. A key part of this project has been community engagement, which involved online and hard copy engagement materials, online surveys, and in-person engagement via drop-in events, phone and e-mail. This engagement also included specific and targeted engagement with harder to reach communities, as follows:

- a) The team joined and took part in Health Walks in some of the communities, the demographic of which is older and more female participants. Mobility of attendees varied with a few people using mobility scooters.
- b) Schools - the team delivered lessons at local primary and secondary schools, using interactive presentations and survey questions, mapping and future visioning exercises. They also engaged with parents who have formed “bike busses” and parent councils.
- c) Working with disability partners - the team engaged with the Badenoch and Strathspey Access Panel, Community ConnXion, Strathspey Visually Impaired Group, local community councils, local community nurses, physios and social workers.
- d) A drop-in session specifically for over 65's or people with a disability supported by Able2Adventure, Community ConnXions and Highlife Highland.
- e) Meeting with Alzheimers Scotland local support group.

This engagement provided a clearer picture of community needs and specific barriers people face, which led to a shortlist of locations and proposed interventions that will provide benefit to local people. Initial concept designs have been drawn up and discussed at further drop-in sessions which were held in the key villages early in 2023. Concept design work is due to be completed by May 2023 and will be followed by stage three which will involve working up more detailed designs. This will involve details about material choice, required planning permissions, road construction and landowner consents. Throughout this stage there will still be opportunities for engagement with the public.

Cairngorms Capercaillie Project

The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project is enabling more people, and a wider range of people, to get involved in capercaillie conservation. To date, volunteers aged 16 to 60+ have donated over 3,330 hours of unskilled, skilled, and professional time to the project. The project's monitoring and evaluation plan includes measures for capturing demographics to help track and inform the project's work with people with disabilities, from a wide range of places and socioeconomic backgrounds. As part of the plan, the project is gathering insights from volunteers and staff about their levels of enjoyment working with the project, if there is anything the project could do better, or anything done particularly well. These insights are being used to continually develop the project's activities and approaches.



Local Development Plan (LDP)

Following extensive consultation, including a proactive social media campaign our five year Local Development Plan was adopted in 2020. Unfortunately, equalities data from that consultation was small (a sample size of just 15%). We are currently in the process of creating an evidence report, which is a new requirement involving the collation of baseline evidence that informs the creation of the next draft plan. Work on this will be tied into the community action planning process. We recognise that we need to engage specifically with young people (under 25); disability groups, gypsy and traveller groups and are preparing a participation statement to set out how we will engage those priority groups as well as ensure that consultation opportunities are accessible to as many people as possible.

Staff engagement

The equality considerations of staff are identified and delivered through a number of means outlined below:

Annual equality monitoring survey

The Park Authority invites staff to participate in an annual equality monitoring survey. Previously this anonymous survey was delivered via SurveyMonkey, but we recently changed our HR database, upgrading to an electronic one that allows staff to update their equality data directly on the database, and at any time. We have noticed the number and accuracy of reporting has increased since we implemented this electronic database.

In consultation with the Equality Advisory Panel and internal equality group, we also added additional equality monitoring categories to increase representation eg we added “bi, pan or polysexual” as a separate category from “gay, lesbian and bisexual”. Whilst we could align directly with the census equality monitoring questionnaire, we have chosen to provide more options, as we recognise that the purpose of our equality monitoring is different to that of the Census. We use the data to ensure our policies and procedures are as inclusive for all our staff as they can be, and therefore the more we know about our minority staff population, the more we can do to remove barriers to their inclusion. For example, recent data showed that some colleagues were not fully comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation with colleagues, their line managers and at work in general. As a result of this, we set up the Internal equality, diversity, and inclusion advocacy group, and signed up to the LGBT Charter. Another example of how we have used the extended data gathered is that in recognition of the number of staff who identified as carers, we developed a Carer’s Policy. We also developed a menopause policy and menopause support group, as approx. 28% of our total staff complement are women in the perimenopause, menopause, and post-menopause age range. Undeniably the data gathered through the staff equality monitoring survey has been used to establish inclusive policies and procedures.



Staff Consultative Forum (SCF)

The SCF is the mechanism through which the Park Authority engages and consults with staff. It comprises five staff representatives, one of whom represents those staff who are members of the Prospect Trade Union. It is chaired by the Corporate Services Director and attended also by two board members and the external Prospect official. The terms of reference specify that staff across teams, and grades are represented, and that there is a gender balance of staff reps. Currently, three of the staff reps are female, and two are male. The SCF meets quarterly to undertake provision of information, consultation, and negotiation. Equality, leadership and health & safety are standing items on the agenda, and one of several mechanisms for staff to input their views, suggestions, or concerns about the Park Authority's approach to these matters. Over the last year, the SCF has discussed and informed the following:

- a) Staff survey results and the emerging action plan
- b) Staff pay awards.
- c) The right to disconnect policy.
- d) Surveys and actions around the trial hybrid working approach, and the new, post-covid office configurations about desking.
- e) The contractual reduction of the working week from 37.5 to 36 hours / week.
- f) The new, electronic staff sign-in system.
- g) The neurodiversity policy.

Performance management approach

The Park Authority recently revised its approach to performance management (appraisals), replacing the lengthy, biannual form filling exercise to a lighter touch, but more effective “real time” feedback approach. This approach involves the line manager and staff member collaboratively developing an annual Job plan, and then having four to six weekly performance development conversations, which may, but do not have to be recorded. The focus of these conversations has therefore shifted from what is captured in writing to the actual, meaningful conversations about how people are doing, and providing regular and more natural opportunities for two-way feedback. These conversations are more flexible and approachable than the somewhat prescriptive approach we adopted previously and afford staff the opportunity to reflect on wellbeing and equalities matters as well as actual delivery of outputs.

Staff surveys

a) Best Companies survey

The Park Authority engages in the biennial Best Companies staff survey, which assesses staff engagement across eight “factors”; leadership, my manager, my company, personal growth, giving something back, fair deal, wellbeing, my team. The analysis of the survey results informs the evolving organisational



development strategy. Wellbeing has consistently been identified as a “shadow” area requiring improvement, and a number of interventions have been implemented as a result, eg. implementation of mental health first aid policy; two-weekly “wellbeing e-mails”; promotion to staff to use their three paid days to engage in volunteering activities. The survey was most recently done in October 2021 and the Park Authority achieved “One to Watch” status. Through discussion with staff and management, it was considered that many of the shadow areas were as a result of the impact of the Covid pandemic and lockdown eg. isolation of working from home and impacts on relationships and workload. We will run the survey again this October and are hopeful that the combination of the altered working environment (hybrid working, flexible working patterns and hot desking) with more opportunities for more people to be physically present in the office will have had a positive impact on staff engagement generally.

b) New normal survey

Following the Covid-19 lockdown, like many organisations the Park Authority revised the working environment to be more flexible; include opportunities for more home working and re-configured the office to facilitate hot desking. Given this significant change to pre-Covid working we are still at the stage of trialling the “new normal” and are therefore surveying staff every three months to establish how they are coping with this new environment, and to seek views on what we could change to make it even better. We did an equalities impact assessment on this new working approach, and feedback from staff is that they greatly appreciate the organisation’s willingness to allow them to work flexibly, and at times that best meet their personal (and sometimes caring) responsibilities.

Non-departmental public body (NDPB) equality forum

We have been participating in this forum since 2009. This specialist group which meets regularly enables the transfer of best practice and knowledge across the public sector. In addition, it has been engaged with a wide range of stakeholders and has provided information and support to member organisations across a variety of topics, including approaches to engagement / consultation of service users and employees, general and specific duties, challenges, and benefits of mainstreaming etc. Most recently, members of the group have helped us to draft a guidance note on language and terminology.

Section 2: Corporate functions and processes

Equality impact assessment

Using equality impact assessments (EqIA) remains our principal way of identifying any potential for impact or detriment to minority groups. EqIAs are undertaken on new projects and activities, and the Equality Advisory Panel and internal equality group have sight of all EqIAs. In January this year, we completely overhauled and updated our EqIA template and guidance, which has made the process clearer and easier to undertake.



Project planning and development

Our existing project planning document is a large overarching excel spreadsheet, which includes a number of tabs to focus thinking on narrative. The process requires project managers to capture equalities considerations in project planning and development processes.

Grant funding

We promote equalities through our grants programme and partnership funding to third parties and in keeping with fair work principles, we promote the importance of recipients paying the real living wage.

Rangers

The Park Authority provide grant funding to nine out of the 12 ranger services operating across the National Park. A requirement of their funding is to prepare and review an equality and diversity statement. Setting out how they are promoting equality through their service.

Third party

Funding is also granted to third parties for projects where the Park Authority is not necessarily the lead partner. We have incorporated equality considerations into the standard terms and conditions of letters of offer.

Community-Led Grants Programme 2022 / 23 (CLV)

This is delivered through the Cairngorms Local Action Group Trust (LAG) between August 2022 and March 2023. Equality is embedded in CLV funding awards as crosscutting themes used in assessing the merits of all project proposals for CLV grant funding. All projects must demonstrate consideration and delivery of equalities outcomes and are scored using the criterion of how well the project addressed the cross-cutting themes of inclusion, equality, diversity. Guidance for the fund includes the following statement:

“Equality is about removing barriers, and diversity is about supporting and reflecting different cultures in Scotland, enabling all voices to be heard. Inclusion is about creating opportunities for people to work in, engage with, participate in, and experience the Cairngorms National Park”.



Equality monitoring

The LAG proactively targets a broad range of fund applicants and recipients through delivery of CLV funding. Monitoring and evaluation criteria advise the LAG if any groups are not being engaged, which in turn informs any further LAG commissioned activity to target these groups.

Equality champion

The LAG have an identified equality 'champion', whose role is to keep the Cairngorms Trust Local Action Group up to date on equalities matters, and also to have oversight of equalities matters with regards funding decisions.

Cairngorms Trust

The CLAG formally incorporated as a registered charity, known as The Cairngorms Local Action Group Trust (The Cairngorms Trust) with a range of public benefits set out in its constitution. The Cairngorms Trust has an equalities representative nominated by our board of trustees. They regularly present at our board meetings to update on policies to help us target and reach a greater diversity of applicants to our funds. The Cairngorms Trust currently has eleven trustees. These include one appointed from the Cairngorms National Park Authority Board and one who is a representative of Cairngorms National Park Authority. Currently there are three females and eight males on the board of trustees. We are currently looking at additional trustees referencing our skills matrix and will hope to appoint additional trustees in 2023. There is also potential that we will recruit an additional trustee from our Youth LAG to sit on our main LAG. Both the Cairngorms Trust and Community grants staff who work with the CLLD funding are all female. All work part time.

Funding opportunities through the Cairngorms Trust are opened when the board of trustees are comfortable with the funds available. The Cairngorms Trust actively encourages applications from hard to reach groups. We have incorporated equality considerations into the standard terms and conditions of letters of offer. Funds we have opened in 2022 – 2023 are:

a) Cairngorms Green Recovery Fund

This is a partnership between the Cairngorms National Park Authority and the Cairngorms Trust aiming to support the recovery of the Cairngorms economy from the widespread impacts of Covid-19, while protecting and enhancing the natural environment and seeking to address the ongoing impacts of climate change. The Cairngorms Green Recovery Fund was first established in 2020 and has been redeveloped in 2021 with significantly enhanced funding (£300k). In 2023 there is a small fund of £15,000 which has just closed for applications.



Applications are encouraged from all groups and the decision-making panel are very aware of equality principles.

Key highlights from the programme so far have included:

- i. The Aviemore ice rink has catalysed community action and been very popular, exceeding the expectations set out in the business plan. The project has built the confidence of the Aviemore and Glenmore Community Trust and developed a key new facility for young people in the community at a challenging time.
- ii. Six communities took up the offer of funding to buy their own litter picking equipment and have gone on to develop their own volunteer programmes and contributed to a wider litter network across the National Park that is now becoming embedded in the Volunteer Cairngorms initiative.
- iii. A project to develop the legacy of the Badenoch Great Place Project which has now ended using traditional music and storytelling to build a story-telling culture in the area which has been very popular with elderly and socially isolated individuals.
- iv. A project led by Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust to pick up on the new Tomintoul and Glenlivet Cairngorms Dark Skies Park and develop a key interpretation facility at the Discovery Centre in Tomintoul.
- v. A project led by the charity Countryside Learning Scotland to build connections between schools, local land-managers and employers and to develop relevant skills amongst young people in the National Park
- vi. A project to deliver two “branching out” outdoor mental health projects in Strathspey, run by the local charity Roots and Shoots
- vii. A project by the Green Health Partnership to deliver green health skills development and build the capacity of new health walk leaders and programmes.

b) Cairngorms Nature Resilience Fund

This fund has been run in partnership with the nature and conservation team of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, utilising their skills and knowledge. The fund has distributed £38,000 with highlights being tree planting, pollinator planting and nature restoration within the Cairngorms.

c) Cairngorms Youth LAG

The Youth LAG was developed through funds from the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) funding programme from Scottish Government. This funding stream is the replacement for LEADER funding and the accountable body is the Cairngorms National Park Authority.

d) Community Led Vision Fund



The Community Led Vision Fund has been developed from our CLLD allocation and has actively targeted hard to reach groups within the communities of the Cairngorms. Funds were distributed to the Cairngorms Youth LAG for development and distribution. In addition to this, funds were also distributed to groups within the Cairngorms with some targeting poverty and hard to reach groups eg log banks for winter fuel, cosy boxes which included hats, gloves, hot water bottles etc.

e) Path Maintenance Campaign Funds

This is an ongoing Cairngorms Trust project where we are raising funds for path maintenance in Braemar. The project was chosen following an open application process where any path maintenance group within the Cairngorms was invited to apply.

f) Future Fund Plans

In 2023 - 2024 we are hoping to run the following funds again with open applications. All application forms are looked at with an eye to encourage hard to reach groups and inclusivity. Nature Resilience fund, CLLD funds, Cairngorms Youth LAG funds, Park for All grants and a path maintenance fund.

g) Active Cairngorms E-bike Project

The Active Cairngorms E-bike Project has been developed as a legacy project from LEADER. The Cairngorms Trust is managing the project and has contracted a local bike shop to deliver the project this year. The project has 17 E-bikes, three cargo E-bikes and has ordered an E-trike. The project is open to all residents from Dalwhinnie to Glenlivet and Tomintoul. The project allows residents to try a suitable E-bike for a four to six week loan period. The loan can be free, or for a donation to the Cairngorms Trust. The aim of the project is to encourage E-bike use, to reduce car miles within the Cairngorms, for social prescribing and now more than ever, to reduce transport costs during the loan period. The project is aiming to encourage as many participants from all backgrounds to try out and use bikes as a form of transport. The loan can be free so that it does not discriminate on affordability for the period of the loan. We are in the process of purchasing an E-trike for those with balance challenges, again looking to take away barriers to participation.

Corporate communications

Corporate communications are key to ensuring the Park Authority's services are accessible to the public. Promoting equality is achieved through:

Branding and publications

- As part of our brand refresh project (which kicked off in summer 2022), we have created a new set of brand guidelines including the core value of equality: 'The Cairngorms is a Park for All. No matter who you are or where you come from, everyone is welcome, and all are accepted. Everything we do is in partnership and



the more diverse our voices the stronger we are.' This is accompanied by specific advice on the types of imagery, fonts, and layouts we use, the audiences we serve, and how we can be more accessible and inclusive in our language and materials.

- Linked to the above, we use and promote best practice in accessible design and provide alternative formats on request. All corporate publications are available in large print and follow plain English principles. We seek to include a diverse range of stakeholders (from a wide variety of backgrounds) in the photography and video footage that accompanies these publications.
- We have commissioned over 1,000 people-based images over the past 12 months and well over 10% of these featured under-represented groups or communities. A photoshoot is scheduled this month, in collaboration with Able2Adventure, to secure a bank of images of people using hire-able adaptive equipment on accessible paths to increase the diversity of representation in our routine communications. This follows a specific photoshoot in the autumn of 2022 for ethnic minority visitors to the National Park.

Digital engagement

- A full audit of our website was conducted in November 2021 by accessibility experts the Digital Accessibility Centre, including testing by users with a range of disabilities. The audit was complementary about several elements of the site; however, specific issues were flagged around third-party plugins, the accessibility of the site for users of screen readers, and certain hard-coded design elements not being in line with WCAG 2.2 best practice guidance. A number of these recommendations have been taken forward on our current site; however, there were significant structural issues highlighted which will require a more holistic approach. This (alongside specific user testing with audiences with access requirements) has been included as a key requirement in our new website development tender.
- Accessibility is built into the tender documentation prepared for development of our new website, with a minimum requirement of WCAG 2.1 AA (ideally we will approach AAA standard across much of the site). Developers' accessibility credentials will be assessed as a key part of the process, and specific sessions on accessibility will be a part of the process of building, developing and user testing the new website with expert stakeholders.
- Accessibility guidance for social media has been drafted, agreed, and distributed as part of our Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 work and adopted through primary and familial social media channels. This encompasses accessibility for visual impairments such as alt text, but also broader accessibility issues such as literacy and tone of voice.

Meetings / campaigns

- All public meetings are held in accessible locations and meeting notices offer support for special needs such as hearing loops on request. During the pandemic, we have



been increasing the use of digital technology to broadcast meetings online, removing some barriers to access.

- Increased focus on relationship building with black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, including formative relationship-building meetings with specialist groups to discuss how we can meaningfully support them and ensure that the National Park is a Park for All.
- Funding has been secured for a £20k grant pot to be offered to black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, and discussions are well underway with partners who have adopted similar models to enhance participation of underrepresented and underserved groups. Evaluation requirements are likely to include a creative output which can then be shared across our social media feeds, increasing visibility and representation in a way that is authentic and meaningful.
- Events 'forward look' calendar updated to reflect opportunities for awareness events that relate specifically to our objectives of being a Park for All. A process is now in place internally where the whole communications team has input and can prioritise and allocate content development and creation. This has included celebrating LGBT history month, for example, where we platformed LGBT voices from across the Cairngorms and announced our work towards the LGBT Charter.
- Our communications campaign events such as the Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend (now Cairngorms Nature Festival) in May and Wee Walks Week in October include specialised inclusion events. We also co-funded Backbone CIC's Changing Landscapes - Actioning Change Symposium process, designed to provide a 'safe' space for open dialogue between black, Asian, and ethnic minority representatives and the outdoor / nature sector.

Procurement

We have sought to promote equalities through procurement by including a requirement for potential contractors and service providers to evidence their own approach to embedding equalities as an element of assessed quality of provision in tender assessment. Clear evidence of appropriate approaches by external organisations to equalities matters will therefore give an advantage to contractors in bidding for business with the Park Authority.

The Park Authority has adopted a new sustainable procurement strategy during this reporting period. This adopts key equalities outcomes around embedding the consideration of equalities as a quality score in procurement assessments. The strategy also positively encourages the use of supported businesses where possible, hence sustaining a key economic sector for the employment of people with disabilities. This is augmented by supporting the development of packages of procurement more suited to bidding by small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). In turn, this seeks to develop more business start-ups and growth locally, with the potential for a wider demographic of business owners and suppliers to the Park Authority as a public body and key economic entity in our rural region.



Expenditure commitment processes also require budget holders to evaluate equalities impacts and considerations as a second element of embedding equality outcomes considerations in our economic activities. Consideration of equalities outcomes has therefore become fully embedded in all of our economic processes.



Section 3 – Service provision

The statutory functions we deliver are through the planning services and outdoor access.

Planning service

We take a proactive approach to improving our planning service, benchmarking against other planning authorities, preparing an annual report for our Planning Committee and Scottish Government and setting annual improvement priorities. As part of that process, we put in place measures to ensure the system is easy to use and equitable, for example:

- **Planning Service Charter:** This has been prepared and reviewed in 2021, setting out customer service standards including commitments to be open and engaging.
- **We have planning policies in place to guide development and land use in a way that addresses identified equalities issues.** For example, in 2021 we adopted a new Local Development Plan which significantly enhanced the requirement for affordable housing in four communities to 45% (national benchmark in the rest of Scotland is 25%).
- **E-Planning:** An online process for planning applications has been implemented to encourage wider participation in planning.
- **Community feedback:** We encourage citizens who are in support of, or objecting to, planning applications to speak at committee meetings so that their views are heard directly as part of making decisions. This practice is not common with other planning authorities.
- **Community Planning Representatives Network:** We have established this network to bring together Community Councils and Associations to improve how they can feed into the process better and learn from each other.
- **Minecraft Project:** During early 2021, we undertook a project with the Cairngorms Youth Action Team (CYAT) to encourage participation in and understanding of the planning process. A staff member created a map of the Cairngorms National Park for the popular online game and learning environment Minecraft, and the CYAT members who participated undertook a series of activities within that environment. They had to make decisions about planning, the place they were in; how they used resources and changed the landscape and discussed the implications of their activity and what rules or policy choices they might apply to prevent harm.

Recreation and outdoor access

As the designated Access Authority under the Land Reform Scotland Act (2003), the Park Authority manages and promotes responsible outdoor access in the



National Park. A key role in access is the development of core paths in the National Park.

Here equality is promoted through:

- the principle of paths being as barrier-free as possible and new paths designed to current all-ability standards wherever possible.
- provision and maintenance of directional signage across the core path network
- maintaining promoted core paths in good condition to ensure accessibility to as wide a range of users as possible.
- path leaflets and signage adhere to best practice in accessible design.
- core paths plans are consulted on widely (using best practice in community engagement) and access rights are upheld.

Local Outdoor Access Forum (LOAF) meetings are held in accessible venues; and LOAF membership represents a wide range of stakeholder interests including land managers, recreational users, communities, and wider inclusion / accessibility interests. [Local Outdoor Access Forum - Cairngorms National Park Authority](#)

Key outdoor access initiatives

The Speyside Way

Upgrade works have been completed in Anagach Woods. Works are largely finished on the new path at Kincaig from the bridge towards the water sports centre. At Mains of Dalvey north of Cromdale existing “rambler” style gates are to be replaced with more accessible ones.

Community path leaflets

Community path leaflets have been developed for 17 communities in the national park. Reprints are updated to include the new Scottish Path Grading System so that users have more and consistent information about routes.

These leaflets are free to download from the Cairngorms National Park Authority website and can be printed in larger formats. Work in 2021 / 2022 has made the leaflets and maps accessible online and on mobile devices. [Community Paths and Trails - Cairngorms National Park Authority](#).

Wee walks route cards

Thirteen route cards have also been developed for key access routes in communities that are actively promoted to encourage daily exercise.



Health Walks

There are 14 Active Health Walks across the National Park, with over 40 volunteer Health Walk Leaders. Over 130 health walkers attend the walks each week, some walks ranging from short 20 minute strolls to a gentle one hour walk. Some Health Walk Leaders have trained in Dementia Friendly walking skills and strength and balance training. Cairngorms National Park Authority are working alongside the NHS Public Health Programme Manager, who is facilitating a green prescription link between general practitioner (GP) surgeries and Health Walks in the Strathspey area. This is creating a pathway between GP surgery patients who may need physical support in getting back to health, and mental health or reduction in isolation. We are working with Green Health NHS Highland to address Covid impacts and widening reach to new priority groups in Badenoch & Strathspey. The training and participation has been coordinated by the Senior Development Officer for Green Health, NHS Highland on behalf of the community groups and organisations who wish to access it and with input and ongoing support from the Cairngorms National Park Authority Health and Wellbeing Coordinator.

Financial grants

A number of Cairngorms National Park Authority grants were made to communities, land managers and third sector organisations to improve access opportunities including core paths and promote active lifestyles.

- i. Beinn a Ghlo car park - The car park will provide a total of 61 spaces, including two designated disabled parking spaces to provide infrastructure to satisfy the increasing level of demand.
- ii. Angus Glens - Car park improvements to improve the quality of the existing access road into site, and provide additional parking bays and overflow parking areas.
- iii. Rothiemurchus Estate - Promoted path improvement programme - Lochan Mor, Achnagoican routes.
- iv. Cairngorm Mountain - To allow the Cairngorm masterplan to be fulfilled in phases starting with the upgrade of surfaces and softening the car park with planting in 2022.
- v. Laggan - The project will build a blue grade trail at Laggan Wolftrax to complement the full grade system across the spectrum. A blue grade trail is aimed at less experienced cyclists and families.
- vi. Granttown - Burnfield toilets upgrades and refurbishments.
- vii. Kingussie - E-bike open day and show.
- viii. Boat of Garten - Milton Loch all abilities core path repairs.
- ix. Ballater - Loch Muick path repairs.
- x. Nethybridge - Explore Abernethy path repairs.



The Park Authority's outdoor access staff continue to advise and promote nationally accredited design guidance to path builders and developers. Our development and delivery of easy to access and free information on access is aimed at promoting greater use and enjoyment of the Cairngorms National Park by minority and economically disadvantaged groups, addressing a long-held Cairngorms National Park Authority equalities outcome.

Sustrans Active Travel

Dalnain Bridge community is currently completing the final stages of detailed design work to develop a non-motorised users link from Grantown on Spey to Dalnain Bridge (funded by Sustrans). Construction is expected in 2024 subject to securing all the necessary landownership permissions and funding.

Kingussie community is currently progressing the design development of active travel improvements in the village (Spey Street junction and Newtonmore Road) through grant funding from Sustrans. Additionally, they are refreshing their active travel plan through CG2030 funding.

Grantown on Spey and Laggan community have also received Sustrans Places for Everyone grants for feasibility and concept design stages for active travel interventions. Both have completed initial feasibility stage with work ongoing to develop concept designs that are acceptable to both Sustrans and the community.

Gathering evidence

Gathering evidence of service helps us to make our services more accessible to service users. Equality information is gathered through:

- a) Community Grants Programme. The equalities data gathered is used to monitor programme delivery.
- b) Visitor Survey. This survey is carried out every five years. The most recent survey was conducted in 2020, and captured data across a range of protected characteristics. This information informed the Equality Outcomes. The next survey will be in 2024.
- c) Cairngorms Nature Festival. This festival is run annually, and data gathered helps identify which groups are being missed so that future promotion can target this group.
- d) Consultations. Equalities data was gathered during the consultation for the National Park Partnership Plan 2022 – 2025. This will be a good benchmark.
- e) to help us focus activity for future consultations on groups that were underrepresented.
- f) Community engagement for Heritage Horizons projects. Data was gathered across several surveys, both online and through in person engagement.



- g) Events. The Cairngorms 2030 team are in the process of making an application to the NLHF for the next stage of the programme. Over the five years of the delivery phase the project team will continue to monitor the people who are interacting with the programme, to try to ensure that the participation is representative of the residents of the National Park, and of Scotland. Engagement work for the delivery stage of the project will be focussed on groups who are underrepresented and those who would benefit most from participating in the programme.

We recognised that equality characteristics were not effectively monitored during all engagement activity, and this informed the development of Outcome 4, which is that “more equality groups participate in Cairngorms National Park Authority led consultation and stakeholder forums / groups to influence decisions made in relation to the management of the National Park”. See Chapter 6 which provides a progress report on how we are doing in this regard.

Leadership and staff awareness

Mainstreaming the equality duty is an organisational responsibility and leadership and staff and Board awareness are central to success.

Equalities training 2022 / 2023

The Park Authority has delivered a number of equalities training courses in the past, but mindful that the last formal face to face training was delivered in 2017, and that our staff group has almost doubled since then, and that there had been several topical issues since then, for example, Black Lives Matter, The Gender Reassignment Debate etc, we recognised the need to deliver current, up to date training. A training brief was prepared and put out to tender. There were four bids for the contract, which was awarded to JRS KnowHow.

The training was mandatory and run in person at the Grantown on Spey office through summer 2022. All staff were asked to attend the one-day course, with line managers attending an additional course focussing on disability inclusion, and then a separate course for the senior management team, focusing on equalities at a more strategic and leadership level. A session was then delivered to the Board in April 2023, focussing on the importance of equalities for leaders, and leading by example. A virtual “mop up” session was held for those staff who were not able to attend the all-staff sessions during the summer. 88% staff attended the face-to-face sessions, dedicating 644 hours in training. There was a 31% increase in confidence across the learning objectives for the all staff equalities training. 75% of managers who attended the disability inclusion session said it had changed their perception of what disables people in society, and 100% of those who completed the post-training survey were able to give concrete examples of things they would like to do differently.



The all-staff session focussed on understanding how our identities, beliefs and intentions interact with our work; the dominant identities and how they shape the world; how advantage is invisible to those who have it, impacts of dominance; understanding what the equality act means for our work; a rights-based approach; the PSED; inclusive working cultures; intention and impact; and understanding barriers and how to address them.

E-learning

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has subscribed through the Learning Pool to an online learning package, which includes a number of interactive equalities course, including about neurodiversity, transgender, our equalities duties etc. Staff are required to complete these courses every two years.

LGBT Charter

Following the recommendation by the internal equality group that the organisation consider signing up to the LGBT Charter, the proposal was considered at length by the senior management team and the Cairngorms National Park Authority signed up for the Charter in April 2022. All staff were invited to do the online training. This was not made mandatory, and approximately 30% of staff did the training. The senior management team and equalities champions attended a live virtual training course, which started the process of developing the LGBT Charter Action Plan. The detailed action plan is set out in appendix 1.

Several actions have already been implemented:

- a) Staff have been given the opportunity to wear their staff ID badges on a rainbow lanyard, which shows visibility and allyship.
- b) Staff have been invited to display their pronouns on their e-mail addresses and on the ID badges and business cards, if they wish.
- c) Visitor ID badges have been redesigned to provide a “wipe-off” space to write their pronouns, if they wish.
- d) We ran a campaign during LGBT History Month (February 2023). The purpose of the campaign was to demonstrate our inclusivity and to send a signal to LGBT communities that we are aware of and proactively working to address the challenges experienced by many LGBT people in rural communities. Through the digital campaign, we shared three Cairngorms Voices pieces from five members of the LGBT community living in the National Park. We also had a staff drop-in session to generate conversation, allyship and ideas. The campaign was very successful, and a staff member commented as follows:

“By actively celebrating LGBT History Month and explaining its steps towards the LGBT Charter, the Park Authority sends out a message that it is committed to being a Park for All – not just by saying it to us, but in the



hard work it's done to really get under the skin of the LGBT community in the National Park and lift up their voices. I genuinely believe that this activity will have made a difference to people. As a member of the LGBT community I feel really optimistic, and have come away from this with a list of great activities to join and businesses to support in the future as well. It would be great if we can continue this celebration beyond LGBT History Month and continue to highlight voices of all genders, backgrounds and cultures in the National Park."

The detailed campaign report is set out in Appendix 2.

- e) We have signed up to Somewhere which is an LGBTQ+ led social enterprise - [Rainbow Enterprise Ntwk \(somewhereedi.org\)](https://somewhereedi.org). A key part of their mission is to support and amplify LGBTQ+ and ally business owners through their innovative Rainbow Enterprise Network. Through this membership, we have a subscription to the quarterly Somewhere: For Us magazine, as well as a business mentoring scheme. We have access to support and guidance from local experts in the area of LGBT.

Interestingly, we have noticed increased staff engagement on LGBT issues since we started activity towards LGBT Charter accreditation. Our LGBT staff population has grown in the last year, as has the number of applicants from the LGBT community. This is all very positive as is the fact that none of our LGBT staff feel they cannot be open with their colleagues or line manager. However, it is a concern that we still have some LGBT staff stating that they do not wish to be open about their sexuality in the workplace generally, and this will be explored in detail during the LGBT Charter process.

New policies

Over the last 18 months, in consultation with the internal equality group, the Equality Advisory Panel, senior management team and staff via the SCF, we have developed three new inclusive, staff policies:

- a) **Trial hybrid working approach**

As staff started to return to the office post-Covid, we realised that for many staff, the opportunity to work from home that the lockdown afforded provided significant benefits with regards inclusion and flexibility. We recognised also that there were benefits of people actually being in the office, not least around efficiency, collaborative working, and physical contact with other people. This policy aims to strike a balance between flexibility, choice, and individual preferences against the need for fairness, consistency, and the overarching need to deliver organisational objectives. As such, the starting principle is that all staff have the opportunity, if they wish, of working remotely or from home for 50% of their contractual hours without going through an application process or



prompting contractual change. The approach sets out the protocols of hybrid working. This is a trial approach that is due to be reviewed in the Summer 2023.

b) The right to disconnect policy

This policy recognises that the rise in new technology and the change to hybrid working post-Covid, has altered flexible working arrangements which means that employees are often working at different times of the day and week, and whilst there are benefits of this approach, it can also pose a risk to employees feeling they have to make themselves constantly available. As such, the policy sets out the right of employees to disconnect from their work and not answer any work-related e-mails, calls or messages outside of their normal working hours.

c) Neurodiversity policy

This policy takes account of the fact that approximately 20% of our staff and recruitment applicants identify as having a neurodiverse condition, and seeks to afford all staff the opportunities, encouragement, and support to realise their full potential. It specifies the Cairngorms National Park Authority's commitment to support staff to obtain diagnosis, encourage disclosure in a supportive and inclusive environment, work to eliminate barriers that neurodivergent people can face in the workplace, take reasonable steps to ensure that communications, training programmes and testing requirements are accessible to neurodivergent people, raise awareness of neurodiversity and consider changes made in response to requests and take steps to eliminate potentially discriminatory practices in the course of day-to-day activities.

Senior managers

Senior managers champion equalities in their teams and ensure equality is promoted in their delivery programmes. The operational management group (OMG), comprising the heads of services, consider the status of key strategic projects on a monthly basis, which ensure management oversight of and commitment to adherence to equalities principles in all projects. Senior managers have taken a leading role in the development of the Equality Outcomes with each outcome being led by a head of service.

Conclusion

We hope this chapter demonstrates the extent to which we have mainstreamed the equality duty into all aspects of our work, fostering good relations between groups, eliminating discrimination, and ensuring equality of opportunity. Staff, stakeholder and community engagement projects, initiatives and events have sought to attract increased participation from diverse groups. Mechanisms to improve inclusion have been further engrained into the Cairngorm National Park Authority's corporate functions and processes, and we have worked towards weaving equality, diversity and inclusion values into our organisational function and statutory framework.

The following three chapters are divided into the three equality outcome areas,



staff and leadership; visitors and community, and consultations and partnership. Each chapter reviews our progress on Equalities Outcomes and Actions (2021 – 2024). The outcomes have been designed to be challenging and reflective of our wider ambition.



Chapter 4: Staff and leadership

Our staff are at the heart of the Cairngorm National Park Authority. We ensure this by reviewing our internal recruitment procedures and development opportunities, updating staff policies, senior management awareness and evaluating equality monitoring data for our staff and Board. These actions will help enshrine equality, diversity, and inclusion, along with our values, into our daily work.

This chapter is set out as follows:

- a) A summary of progress on delivery of Outcome 1.
- b) Key analysis of the staff equality data, which includes employee and recruitment data, as well as the gender pay gap.
- c) Key analysis of Board equality data.

Summary of progress on delivery of Outcome 1

Outcome 1

Our workforce will become more diverse. We will have more women in senior positions in the organisations and will have an increased number of minority staff working for us (specifically in relations to sexual orientation, disability and ethnicity)

See Appendix 7 for full progress report.

There are currently 12 women in the senior management grades (bands E, F and G). This is two more than in 2022. In 2021, there were only seven women at this level of the organisation. There are three women at head of service level in comparison to one in 2021. This represents 38% of staff at this level in comparison to 14% in 2021. The Cairngorms National Park Authority has a larger LGBT population than previously, and we have more staff identifying as having a disability than we did in 2021. However, we have very few staff who represent an ethnic minority and there is work to be done in this regard.

Key actions that have helped us achieve a more diverse workforce include:

- Inclusion of degree qualification and requirement for a driving licence has been removed from the person specification of most new job descriptions unless deemed absolutely necessary to deliver the role.
- All recruitment adverts start with the following: "Cairngorms National Park Authority is an inclusive organisation and we welcome applications from everyone irrespective of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, relationship status, disability, age and social class. We particularly welcome applications from individuals from black, Asian



and minority ethnic communities, disabled and LGBTQ+ communities, as they are under-represented in the environment sector”.

- We installed a human resources database that allows staff to complete their equalities monitoring data electronically. Previously we had to gather this data via a SurveyMonkey survey. This, together with our new applicant tracking system has increased disclosure.
- We signed up to the LGBT Charter and have developed an action plan to help us to become a more diverse organisation. Through this, staff have been invited to display their pronouns on e-mail signatures, Identity badges and business cards, and these small steps towards visibility have helped to ensure staff feel their working environment is a safe environment.
- We delivered a programme of equalities training to staff and Board, which included day-long face to face sessions attended by 88% of all staff, a virtual line managers disability session, a virtual senior managers leadership session, and a day-long face to face session for Board members, attended by 94% members.

Some actions have not yet been delivered. We have not established a mentorship scheme, but this has been identified as a critical part of our organisational development strategy going forward, and a key part of our workforce management strategy. We also have more work to do on our recruitment advertising in terms of making it more targeted and engaging.

Employee data analysis

The full set of staff and Board equalities monitoring data is set out in Appendix 3.

As an employer, staff numbers have grown in the last few years from 84 in 2021, to 95 in 2020 and 110 in March 2023. The equality monitoring survey has evolved during this time, from being a survey conducted on SurveyMonkey in 2021, to one that staff can manage themselves in our human resources database from 2022. We have also expanded some of the potential responses. Response rates have varied from 74% in 2021, to 69% in 2022 and 78% in 2023. We think they dipped in 2022 as the new database was getting up and running, but the response rate was much higher in 2023. Although the response rate has increased, we have noticed a big increase in the “prefer not to say” option. This is disappointing, and we will focus our attention over the coming year to exploring this further.

Key metrics from staff equalities monitoring data are as follows:

	2021 – 57 respondents	2022 – 73 respondents	2023 – 90 respondents	Comment
Sexual Orientation	91% heterosexual. Numbers in	47% identify as heterosexual. 48% prefer not	64% identify as heterosexual.	The work we have delivered towards LGBT



	the categories bisexual, gay woman and other are too low to report.	to say. Bisexual, gay woman and other are too low to report.	26% prefer not to say. Bisexual, gay, lesbian, homosexual; pan or polysexual numbers are too low to report but an increase on 2022.	Charter accreditation commenced in summer 2022, and although numbers of LGBT staff are low, they have increased in the last 12 months. This could be that staff are more comfortable disclosing given the increased visibility and allyship.
Age	47% age bracket 45 – 54; 10% are 16 – 34.	37% age bracket 45 – 54; 10% are 16 – 34.	37% age bracket 45 – 54; 9% are 16 – 34.	The number of younger staff remains stable. This could be due to the increased focus on the youth employment.
Disability	94% staff indicated they do not have a disability.	79% indicated no disability with 21% identifying as having a disability.	81% indicated no disability with 17% identifying as having a disability.	Three staff reported a disability in 2021, going up to 15 in 2022 and 16 in 2023. We have expanded our survey to get



				a better understanding of the types of disability, with the majority being mental health, followed by neurodiversity. This is helpful in terms of policy development and as a result, we now have adopted a mental health first aid policy and a neurodiversity policy.
Caring responsibility	20% of staff reported as having no caring responsibility; 63% reported having primary caring responsibilities.	52% have no caring responsibility; 37% reported as having primary caring responsibilities.	55% have no caring responsibility; 32% reported as having primary caring responsibilities.	Fairly large numbers of staff have primary caring responsibilities. The National Park Authority has a carer's policy and also promotes flexible working as a key benefit of employment.
Ethnicity	91% identified as white.	97% identify as white.	94% identify as white.	There are very low numbers of ethnic minority staff working for the Cairngorms



				National Park Authority. The focus on the coming year will be to establish more partnership with ethnic minority groups and identify how we can attract minority applicants.
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Recruitment

Our recruitment and selection procedure is designed to be fair, robust and follow best practice. Applicants are assessed on competencies that are needed to carry out the role effectively. Recruitment panels comprise of three or more individuals to maximise fairness and transparency. Recruitment panels typically comprise a gender mix, and this is explicit in our recruitment policy.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority is a disability confident employer, and we guarantee to interview applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria of the post.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has a policy that all vacant posts are advertised internally in the first instance. An internal candidate is guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential criteria of the post. There is no guarantee of appointment though, and if the post is not appointed internally, it will be advertised externally.

Equal opportunities monitoring in recruitment

Full recruitment data can be found in Appendix 4.

All applicants are asked to complete and equality monitoring data form, that closely resembles the staff form. Until 2022, this was completed manually, but we installed our applicant tracking site (WebRecruit) last summer and the data is now gathered via this site.



Internal recruitment

In 2021, 56 posts were advertised for recruitment. There were 39 internal applicants for 22 of the 56 posts, 21 of which were appointed internally. In 2022, 34 posts were advertised. There were 26 internal applicants for 18 posts, 12 of which were appointed internally.

Key metrics of the internal recruitment over the last two years are:

	2021	2022
Sex	Male – 20; Female – 19	Male – 11; Female – 14
Disability	8% recorded a disability	4% recorded a disability

Key metrics of internal appointments:

	2021	2022
Sex	Male – 11; Female – 10	Male – 7; Female – 4
Disability	8% recorded a disability	8% recorded a disability

Over the two years, there were 31 male applicants, and 18 male appointments, in comparison to 32 female applicants and 14 female appointments. We calculate success rate by dividing the number of appointments by the number of applicants. So the success rate over the two years was higher for male applicants (58%) than for female applicants (44%).

External recruitment

In 2021 there were 438 external applicants. 32 posts appointed through the external round. In 2022 there were 244 external applicants. 19 posts were appointed through the external round.

Key metrics of external applicants:

	2021	2022
Sex	Male – 225; Female – 202	Male – 100; Female – 138
Sexuality	6% were LGBT; 82% were heterosexual	9% were LGBT; 80% were heterosexual
Disability	4% recorded a disability	17% recorded a disability
Age	The majority (37%) were in the 25 – 34 age group	The majority (33%) were in the 25 – 34 age group
Ethnicity	3% from a black and ethnic (BME) minority	5% from a black and ethnic (BME) minority

Key metrics of external appointments:

	2021	2022
Sex	Male – 18; Female – 12	Male – 8; Female – 11



Sexuality	78% of those appointed were heterosexual	11% appointed were LGBT
Disability	3% recorded a disability	5% recorded a disability
Age	The majority (28%) of those appointed were in the 25 – 34 age group	The majority (53%) of those appointed were in the 34 – 44 age group
Ethnicity	0% from a black and ethnic (BME) minority	0% from a black and ethnic (BME) minority

So, over the last two years, there have been 335 external male applicants and 340 female applicants. Twenty six males were appointed in comparison to 23 females. So, the gender balance has been fairly equal with the success rate for male applicants being 8%, compared to 7% for female applicants. There has been an increase in 2022 in the number of LGBT applicants and appointments. 2022 also saw an increase in both the number of applicants and appointments recording a disability. Disappointingly, the number of ethnic minorities applying for positions remains low. Whilst these stats suggest that the actions we are delivering to increase the diversity of the workforce are having the desired impact with regards disability and LGBT, there is more to be done with regards ethnicity.

Flexible working

Flexible working has been in place at the Cairngorms National Park Authority since its inception in 2003, and enables staff to choose their work pattern, eg reducing working hours, compressed hours. There were very few flexible working requests during the pandemic, and we have been working to a hybrid working approach for the last year, whereby staff can work 50:50 home:office based, and can also work their hours to suit their personal circumstances. Given the flexible working environment, and the fact we are still trialling this, there have been very few flexible working requests, with just three requests to alter working hours.

Maternity leave

In the last two years, three female members of staff have been absent from work due to maternity leave. Cairngorms National Park Authority operates an enhanced maternity pay, with staff receiving full pay for the first six months of maternity leave.

Paternity leave

Paternity leave is three weeks on full pay. In the last two years, just one person has been on paternity leave.

Shared parental leave

There have been no applicants for shared parental leave. In terms of this policy, male staff are entitled to the same enhancements as female staff who take maternity leave.



Staff development statistics

Every attempt is made to retain the training budget at healthy levels comparative to the economic circumstances. Within this budget Cairngorms National Park Authority has a policy of ensuring that any training need identified for an officer through the appraisal process will be prioritised, and typically staff can attend an average of up to four training events each year. Identification of training needs is based on individual work targets set for each year; competency levels to be attained by employees; employee career aspirations.

Staff development 2021

The data we already hold on staff training in 2021 can be reported as follows:

Twenty-eight women and 26 men went on at least one training course in 2021. This represents 58% of the total number of staff employed in the year.

The age breakdown of staff who went on training was:

16 – 24	5
25 – 34	6
35 – 44	17
45 – 54	20
55 – 64	6
65+	0

The grade breakdown of training undertaken by staff in 2021 was as follows (with band A being the lowest grade / salary):

Band	No. Staff	% in Grade
Band A	4	80
Band A1	0	No staff in grade
Band B	0	0
Band B1	10	100
Band C	7	54
Band C1	5	83
Band D	13	46
Band E	13	76
Band F	1	14
Band G	0	0
CEO	0	0

The training was split over the Directorates as follows:



Communications	2
Corporate Services	17
Nature & Climate Change	6
Planning & Place	28

Staff development 2022

The data we already hold on staff training in 2022 can be reported as follows:

61 women and 48 men went on at least one training course in 2022. This represents 88% of the total number of staff employed in the year.

The age breakdown of staff who went on training was:

16 – 24	7
25 – 34	21
35 – 44	27
45 – 54	42
55 – 64	10
65+	0

The grade breakdown of training undertaken by staff in 2022 was as follows (with band A being the lowest grade / salary):

Band	No. Staff	% in Grade
Band A	2	66
Band A1	3	75
Band B	3	100
Band B1	9	82
Band C	19	86
Band C1	6	100
Band D	36	92
Band E	19	86
Band F	7	78
Band G	3	100
CEO	1	100

The training was split over the directorates as follows:

Communications	6
Corporate services	30
Nature and climate change	28
Planning and place	45

Gender Pay Gap

We are committed to promoting and embedding equality of opportunity and diversity in employment. We believe this extends to the way we reward our staff, and that reward



should be awarded fairly and equitably. We are committed to the principle of equal pay for all our employees and aim to eliminate any bias in our reward system.

Cairngorms National Park Authority jobs are evaluated to determine which salary band they should be placed in, and most staff start at the bottom of the band, progressing by annual progression awards to the top of the scale. The potential for all forms of inequality is thus reduced by the fact that jobs are objectively evaluated, and salaries allocated according to the job content rather than the person. In designing the job evaluation framework in use within Cairngorms National Park Authority, we recognised the risk of inequality within evaluation systems, such as the weighting given to particular types of work, for example caring tasks have often attracted a lower weighting than manual labour in the past, which indirectly favours more men than women, and ensured these elements were fully designed out of our framework. The Cairngorms National Park Authority evaluation system has been designed and equality impact assessed to avoid this type of discrimination.

An equal pay audit is conducted annually, the most recent being calculated on the basis of a snapshot of staff data as at 31 March 2023. The full report can be seen in Appendix 5.

Highlights:

- a) The gender pay gap for 2023 was 9.55%, lower than the gender pay gap in Scotland (2021) of 10.1%, and lower than our pay gap in 2022, which was 12.49%. If we use the median methodology to calculate the gender pay gap, the figure is 2.92%, which is also notably lower than the Scottish median pay gap of 11.5%. The Cairngorms National Park Authority's gender pay gap has been on the downward trajectory for the last six years, so this is encouraging to see that the pay gap is now lower than the national average, the work to reduce the pay gap is clearly having an impact.
- b) The gender pay gap for full-time staff is 13.78%, which is an improvement on the 2022 figure of 14.64%.
- c) For part time staff the gender pay gap is 14.16%, which again is an improvement on the 2022 figure of 1.23%.
- d) The female average salary is higher than the male in some grades (bands C and D).
- e) Band D, the largest band, with 39 staff, comprising 25 female staff and 14 male staff has a gender pay gap of -3.77%.
- f) Band C has a pay gap of -4.06%, this is an improvement on the 2022 figure of -2.36%.
- g) The middle management band E has a gender pay gap of 0.33%, which is an improvement on 2022, when it was 2.20%.

Shadows:



- a) Of the lower graded bands A to C, band B has a pay gap of 2.28% and B1 is 0.58%, this is a slight deterioration from 2022 when the pay gap was zero.
- b) Of the 30 management posts (bands E to G + CEO), 12 (40% are female) in comparison to 10 out of 26 posts (45%) in 2022. There are more women in senior management, but the figures bely this as there are also more senior management posts than previously.
- c) The highest paid grade (band G) comprises only male staff.
- d) The senior management team (bands F, G and Chief Executive Officer) of 11 managers comprises only three females. However, there were only two females at this time in 2022, so this does also represent a small improvement.

Several actions have been implemented to deliver Outcome 1. The impact of many of these actions can partly explain why the gender pay gap is improving.

Occupational segregation

We recognise that the analysis of employment data helps us to better understand the intersections between the employment journey and protected characteristics. As our staff numbers are relatively small, we have not disaggregated beyond the job grade. Please see Appendix 6 which shows occupational segregation by gender, disability and race.

Board equality data

Board members are asked to complete the same equality monitoring survey questions as staff, but this is done anonymously via SurveyMonkey. This data informs Board diversity and succession planning.

Board completion of this survey has declined, with just a 52% response rate in 2023. This is disappointing, but we are hopeful that the Board equalities training may address any concerns or question members may have about equalities matters, and we are hopeful for an increase in reporting in 2023. We would suggest also that the Board changes in the last three months may also have impacted on response rates. The full results of this survey can be seen in Appendix 3.

Key metrics are as follows:

	2021 – 18 responses	2022 – 16 responses	2023 – 10 responses
Age	The majority (56%) of respondents are aged in the 55 – 64 category	The majority (50%) of respondents are aged in the 55 – 64 category	The majority (40%) of respondents are aged in the 65 – 74 category



Sex	56% of respondents were female; 37% were male	55% of respondents were female, 22% were male	30% of respondents were female, 60% were male
Caring responsibility	22% have primary caring responsibilities	38% have primary caring responsibilities	1% has primary caring responsibilities

The Park Authority Board could be more diverse, representing a broader range of protected characteristics.



Chapter 5: Visitors and community

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has a responsibility to our visitors and resident communities to shape and promote a “Park for All”. We aim to work with our partnerships to reduce barriers and provide inclusive access to nature through targeted nature-based events, providing accessible visitor information, and improving sustainable and affordable transport infrastructure.

To better be able to meet our equality duty, and promote a “Park for All”, we have identified an outcome area – visitors and community, and have two separate equality outcomes led by senior management from two of our primary organisational functions. The following two sections detail these outcomes.

Equality Outcome 2

Promoting and celebrating a national park for all visitors

See Appendix 7 for full progress report.

Unfortunately, we do not have new quantitative data on the percentage of visitors from different groups since setting this outcome, as the measurement is from the five yearly Cairngorms visitor survey, which was last carried out in 2020, and the results of which informed the development of this outcome. The next survey will be in 2024, however, we have subscribed to the Scottish people and nature survey to get more frequent data in future.

Despite the lack of quantitative data to confirm if our targets are being met, we have had several key successes over the last two years, and in particular:

- a) our rangers have organised six “our natural heritage” days, which reached 107 participants.
- b) there is activity both underway with Black Adventurers Scotland, and already delivered with Backbone, to give ethnic minorities, refugees, and asylum seekers opportunities to experience the National Park. Backbone organised an event held at Glenmore Forest Park, part funded and supported by the Cairngorms National Park Authority, the aim of which was to provide an action packed and fun filled day of nature-based activities for marginalised communities in Scotland. Ninety four people attended this event, which was primarily for refugees and asylum seekers. Cairngorms National Park Authority staff led conservation-based and physical activities with small groups, and ran an information tent to promote visitor information.
- c) the Cairngorms National Park Authority’s Volunteer Rangers helped support the provision of activities for those with a disability as the 2022 Able2Adventure



activity day. The primary aim of this event was to give opportunities to those with a disability to undertake activities including canoeing and paddleboarding.

- d) our ranger service has done outreach and inclusion work with disadvantaged groups of 159 adults and 78 children. The ranger engagement activity has included volunteering – 52 adults and eight children; education – 124 adults and 914 children; and Green Health – 119 adults.

Equality Outcome 3

Ensuring and enhancing more inclusive access to nature

See Appendix 7 for full progress report.

Cairngorms Nature Festival

[The Cairngorms Nature Festival 12 – 21 May 2023](#)

One of the key activities to achieve Outcome 3 is the Cairngorms Nature Festival. The purpose of the Cairngorms Nature Festival is to celebrate Cairngorms Nature as a partnership, to highlight the exceptional nature of the Cairngorms and to provide opportunities for people to experience this for themselves. This is done by coordinating a programme of over 80 events across the National Park with activities designed to allow people to connect to nature and appreciate what can be found here. The Cairngorms Nature Festival is unique in that it highlights nature engagement opportunities that happen all the time, and not just events that are put on especially for the Cairngorms Nature Festival period, allowing people to continue their nature-journey after it has ended.

The Cairngorms Nature Festival has evolved over the years, from a day-long 'village fair' style event when it was first run, to a long weekend of events across the National Park, and even shifting to become an online event during the pandemic. Feedback from the 2022 event was that the Cairngorms Nature Festival offered too many events in too short a period and that people could not attend the number of events they wanted to, as the events that interested them happened at the same time, or too far apart for them to travel in such a short period. As such, we have completely changed the approach in 2023, and the Cairngorms Nature Festival now comprises a launch weekend, comprising a number of events, with more events then delivered over the course of an entire week, and then closing with a finale weekend of events. When proposing this amended schedule, we considered running the event during the school holidays, but realised that by doing so we risked alienating the local resident and day-tripper population, who are key target audiences. The revised schedule appeals to a broader diversity of audiences, as it can satisfy families with inclusive weekend events, and also those seeking more targeted events during the week.



Increasing the accessibility of nature in the National Park is a key objective of the Cairngorms Nature Festival and has been carefully considered in the development of the programme. We are working with refugee groups and Homestart Highland to establish their interests, barriers, and needs. Approximately 50% of the events are low cost or free of charge which is key to inclusion in the Cairngorms National Park. Many events are drop-in events that don't require pre-booking, which further enhances accessibility. The programme is still being finalised, but so far there are six events specifically for people with disabilities, including handcycling for disabled adults, inclusive canoeing for disabled families, adaptive biking and off-road wheelchair taster sessions, outdoor climbing for adults with disabilities and guided adaptive biking for disabled families.

A new website has been created to serve as an information hub for the Cairngorms Nature Festival and allows events to be easily searched using a range of criteria including wheelchair access, toilets, family friendly and free events. On each event page public transport and full accessibility information is displayed, including any hidden costs such as parking fees, and many provide a specific contact email address for specific accessibility enquiries. The website itself is designed to ensure that the content is accessible; the design and construction of the site is in accordance with the guidelines provided by the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) which develops strategies, standards, and supporting resources to make the web more accessible to people with disabilities.

We are aiming to gather equalities data from people who engage with the Cairngorms Nature Festival where we can, but opportunities to do so are limited, as many events are not organised by or booked through the Cairngorms National Park Authority. It is key however that the programme has been designed to be inclusive and the Cairngorms Nature Festival as a whole strives to meet Outcome 3, and to continue to improve accessibility to nature in the National Park.



Chapter 6: Consultation and partnership

Most of the work of the Cairngorms National Park Authority is delivered through our partnerships. Rigorous consultations ensure inclusion of protected groups in decision making processes that help shape the National Park, and the Cairngorms National Park Authority is committed to ensuring we get consultation feedback from minority groups. We recognise also that we have minimal baseline data in this regard and recognise the importance of gathering that data to inform our future consultation activity.

Outcome 4

More equality groups participate in Cairngorms National Park Authority led consultations and stakeholder forums / groups to influence decisions made in relations to the management of the Cairngorms National Park

See Appendix 7 for full progress report.

The most significant piece of work that was undertaken in the reporting period was the consultation for the National Park Partnership Plan (2022 – 2025).

National Park Partnership Plan consultation process

The consultation process was a key part of developing the Plan. Detailed information about how the consultation took place can be found in the following link:

[220610 CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITYBdPaper2Annex2NPPP4ConsultationResponseSummaryReport.pdf \(cairngorms.co.uk\)](https://www.cairngorms.co.uk/220610-CAIRNGORMS-NATIONAL-PARK-AUTHORITYBdPaper2Annex2NPPP4ConsultationResponseSummaryReport.pdf)

Two phases of consultation were planned for the second half of 2021: an informal phase to establish key themes and talking points, and a formal phase for stakeholders to feedback on a draft partnership document. The informal consultation launched on 15 June and ran until September. It was built around a dedicated microsite using the Commonplace platform, and was supported by a variety of media, website, and social media promotion. The consultation was shared through various networks (eg All the Elements, Boots and Beards, Cairngorms Youth Action Team) and via dedicated community Facebook groups to boost engagement. During the informal phase, just under 5% of respondents came from ethnic minority backgrounds, and 5% identified as having a disability. Just under 45% were under the age of 45.



Following the conclusion of the informal phase, and utilising feedback from participants a draft consultation document was produced. The formal phase of the consultation launched on Thursday 23 September and ran until 17 December 2021, with the draft plan made available via a dedicated Commonplace website, long-format pdf, print and screen reader friendly versions.

Alongside the Cairngorms National Park Authority's own engagement activities, an independent market research agency (Scotinform) was commissioned to conduct 17 one-to-one interviews with audiences that were under-represented in the last consultation exercise five years ago. This included ethnic minority groups and audiences with accessibility needs, as well as land managers, local businesses, community groups and health providers.

In total, 1,453 responses were received online, via email and by post, as compared with a total of 319 for the equivalent consultation five years ago.

Demographic information gathered

Over the course of the three month formal consultation, demographic information was collected via Commonplace (in line with general data protection regulations (GDPR)) to ensure we reached as representative an audience possible. The Cairngorms National Park Authority's Equality Advisory Panel fed into what type of information would be collected, and data about a number of characteristics was gathered, including the following:

Gender: 570 people chose to answer this question, out of a total of just under 1,300 responses received via Commonplace (around 44%).

Responses broke down as follows:

Male: 57%

Female: 38%

Other: 3%

Prefer not to say: 2%

This is marginally lower than the 2019 Local Development Plan (LDP) consultation equality data where 40% of the consultees were female.

Sexuality: - 343 people (around 27%) chose to answer this question.

Responses broke down as follows:

Heterosexual: 84%

Bisexual: 3%

Gay / Lesbian: 3%



Prefer not to say: 10%

Ethnicity: - 542 (around 42%) people chose to answer this question.

Responses broke down as follows:

White Scottish: 51%

White British: 41%

White other: 6%

Mixed / multiple ethnic groups: 1.5%

Prefer not to say: 0.5%

This is lower than the 2019 Equality Survey of Cairngorms National Park Authority led stakeholder forums and groups, where 3.7% were from an ethnic group.

Disability: 539 people (around 42%) chose to answer this question.

Responses broke down as follows:

Has a disability: 13%

No disability: 83%

Prefer not to say: 4%

This is a significant improvement on the 2019 Local Development Plan (LDP) consultation equality data, where just 6% identified as having a disability.

Age range: 642 (around 50%) people chose to answer this question. The majority (27.7%) were aged 55 - 64; with 22.4% being 45 - 54, with 27.3% being under 45 years. This is a significant improvement on the 2019 equality survey of Cairngorms National Park Authority led stakeholder forums and groups, where just 16.14% were under the age of 45. It's an improvement also on the 2019 Local Development Plan (LDP) consultation, during which 12% of consultee respondents were under the age of 45.

Whilst engagement with some minorities has improved, it had declined with others. However, the key success is that we now have a good collection of baseline data against which to measure engagement going forward where previously such data was very minimal.

Other actions that have been delivered towards achieving Outcome 4 include:

- A brand refresh project through which we have created a set of guidelines, as well as advice on the types of imagery we use, the audiences we serve, and how we can be more inclusive in our language and materials.
- Captioning and British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation being offered for all board and planning meetings, with all promotional material for the Cairngorms National



Park Partnership Plan and Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2023 being appropriately captioned.

Some actions are still in progress. We undertook a digital accessibility centre audit on our website, which included testing with users with access requirements. The audit made several recommendations, and whilst a number have been taken forward on our current website, there were significant structural issues highlighted which will require a more holistic approach. This has been included as a key requirement in our new website development tender, which will be awarded in summer 2023.

Appendix 1 – LGBT Charter action plan

LGBT Charter action plan – Cairngorms National Park Authority

Following the LGBT Charter training that all staff were invited to do in autumn 2022, and the subsequent live session that senior management team and the LGBT Charter champions attended, five core areas of action were identified. Detailed below is the LGBT Charter action plan to address these areas.

The top five areas for development:

1. Lack of diversity in staff and “customers” / partners.
2. Ensuring that the National Park is a visibly welcoming place for LGBT people.
3. Improving general confidence and understanding of up to date terminology.
4. Compliance with the law, and clear and recognised definitions, not one ideology.
5. Positively managing views within the staff team.

Lack of diversity in staff and “customers” / partners			
Action	Timing	Impact	Responsibility
Develop LGBT-specific content for our social media and website channels and update core content to be reflective of our work around LGBT communities, and inclusion in general.	2023 Q 1 onwards	Potential residents, visitors, volunteers, current staff, and job applicants will be reassured that the National Park is inclusive.	Communications team
Recruitment adverts to be placed on relevant	2023, Q1	We are increasing our visibility within diverse recruitment spaces and	Human resources team



job boards representing equality groups.		ensuring that opportunities are more broadly advertised.	
Recruitment advertising to be more explicit about welcoming applications from specific, underrepresented, groups.	2023, Q1 and 2	We are clearly signalling our desire to be an inclusive workplace and targeting our recruitment at minority groups.	Human resources team
Audit our existing recruitment practices (including interview process), and where necessary amend to ensure they are truly inclusive of all minorities.	Immediate	Send signal to applications from minoritized communities that the National Park is inclusive, that their communities have been considered.	Human resources team

Ensuring that the Park is a visibly welcoming place for LGBT people			
Action	Timing	Impact	Responsibility
<p>Park Pride:</p> <p>We acknowledge that there are significant opportunities to support a Park Pride event, but timing is critical. We do not wish our support to be “tokenistic” and it’s important therefore that we are embracing LGBT inclusion internally first. Potential actions in the short term include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a presence at neighbouring Pride events – this may include marching behind a Cairngorms National Park Authority banner 	2023 / 24	Cairngorms National Park Authority is an ally business and publicly recognisable as such.	Josie, Brenna, Luke, Jacks



2. Sponsor a guest speaker as a neighbouring Pride event.			
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Improving general confidence and understanding of up to date terminology			
Action	Timing	Impact	Responsibility
Ensure training continues and is embedded: 1. Link up with Diversity Scotland who deliver relevant, bite sized courses: https://www.diversityscotland.co.uk/coaching-training . 2. Promote the ELMS online training who have now developed a new suite of equalities training topics.	2023, Q1 / Q2	Staff will have increased knowledge about a range of equalities issues.	Human resources team
The LGBT Charter briefing session is included in the induction.	Immediate	New staff are aware of LGBT.	Human resources team

Compliance with the law, and clear and recognised definitions, not one ideology			
Action	Timing	Impact	Responsibility
Develop a policy to support transgender, non-binary staff.	2023, Q1	As above.	Human resources team
Revisit our values.	2023, Q2 and 3	Our values will reflect our evolving organisation. Our "original" values were developed approx. 10 years ago. The organisation has changed significantly	External facilitator and all staff. This ensures all staff have the opportunity to input to the organisational



		since then, and will be celebrating its 20 anniversary this year. Senior management team and the organisational development programme board will consider doing some work to revisit / refresh our values. Any revisiting of the values should take account of our work around equalities.	values, but the communal voice will shape the final outcome.
Ensure our policies / procedures continue to go beyond the law, and that we are an exemplar.	Ongoing	The Park Authority will continue to ensure that all staff feel welcome, valued, and included and will seek to go beyond basic legal obligations to create an inclusive and supportive culture supported by robust policies and procedures.	Human resources team, senior management team

Positively managing views within the staff team

Action	Timing	Impact	Responsibility
The Park Authority as a collective has and will continue to be committed to the LGBT Charter, and to ensuring ALL minority staff feel welcomed and included, and “safe” working for the Park Authority. The Park Authority accepts that there will be	January 2023	To be able to support ALL staff on the LGBT Charter journey.	Human resources team



differing views across a spectrum of issues, but expects that all staff will adhere to the principles of respect and inclusion.			
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Conclusion

The Park Authority supports LGBT inclusion and is committed to showing leadership in making the Cairngorms National Park a “Park for All”. The Park Authority acknowledges that there are areas of the current gender recognition legislation debate which are divisive, but this does not directly impact on our work in delivering National Park Partnership Plan 2022 - 2027, our statutory responsibilities around planning and access, and our plethora of project and core work. The Park Authority respects the right of individual staff members to hold their own private views, but the Park Authority has made a decision to progress the LGBT Charter and has committed to investing time on making progress on this collective journey, and to be an exemplar in this regard. Ultimately, we seek to be the best small public sector organisation in Scotland, and the LGBT Charter is part of achieving this aspiration.

February 2023

Appendix 2: Cairngorms National Park LGBT history month campaign report

As part of our work towards the LGBT Charter, the Park Authority celebrated LGBT history month for the first time this February. The celebration involved a public facing campaign, and a staff drop-in session.

Aim:

The purpose of our work through LGBT history month was to demonstrate our inclusivity and to send a signal to LGBT communities that we are aware of and proactively working to address the challenges experienced by many LGBT people in rural communities. By platforming the voices and experiences of LGBT people, we are working to counter the myth that LGBT people are not present in rural spaces, offering our support and solidarity, and showing leadership in working to try to ensure LGBT people feel seen, heard, and supported by the Park Authority. In addition, we sought to positively use the reach and power of the Cairngorms National Park brand to platform underrepresented voices and encourage others (for example the Cairngorms Business Partnership) to do the same.



What we did:

Our public-facing campaign was shared across our digital estate, namely our website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Through February we shared three Cairngorms Voices pieces from five members of the LGBT community living in the Cairngorms National Park and promoted these routinely throughout the month. We also announced our work towards the LGBT Charter publicly and reinstated our [Park Plan objective of being a Park for All](#).

Involving staff in the LGBT history month campaign was a critical element of the campaign as organisationally we progress our broader objectives in becoming a Park for All. Staff were made aware through all-staff emails and newsletters about the campaign and offered the opportunity to attend a drop-in session to meet the internal equalities group, hear more about the campaign and feed in / back.

Insights and feedback:

Both elements of the campaign were successful. Our Cairngorms Voices pieces garnered more than 600 page views, with a total social media reach of 35,724 and more than 2,000 engagements so far. This is expected to rise with the final post of the campaign being posted today to wrap up the campaign.

One piece which detailed the isolation of being queer within a rural context in the Cairngorms National Park and her joy at very recently having found belonging and a community quickly became our most read Cairngorms Voices piece ever, demonstrating the impact of powerful storytelling and audience interest. The response – an example of which is below – was so overwhelmingly positive that the author then decided to stand for the upcoming Park Authority Board elections.

"Thank you for supporting and sharing. Most of us from the LGBTQ+ community that have moved to small towns or rural areas share Bonnie's experiences and, though the pace of change seems so slow, it's heartening to hear such stories that show society continues to change and grow. #LoveisLove"

Unfortunately, this has meant that this piece has had to be temporarily taken down from our website in line with election guidelines and the need not to be seen to advantage any candidate, but we worked collaboratively with Highland Council, VisitCairngorms and the author to ensure that the piece could be published elsewhere for the duration of the election period and plan to republish following this.

Thirty plus staff attended the staff drop-in which was the vast majority of those present in the office on the day, despite the date unfortunately being a school holiday and the heating having been broken, which we considered to be a successful turnout. We presented briefly on the public campaign and internal equalities work and left the rest of



the space open for discussion and feedback, with post-its available for people to put thoughts to paper.

Through the staff drop-in session, several new and innovative suggestions were made. For example, we are currently re-printing all staff identification cards to align with our new corporate brand. It was suggested that we invite staff to include their pronouns on their identification cards. Many staff already display their pronouns on their e-mail signatures, but this is an additional and more visible step. Furthermore visitor identification badges are also being redesigned as “wipe clean” badges, with space provided for visitors to write their pronouns if they wish. Whilst these may seem small steps, they were implemented very quickly after a staff member made the suggestion and indicate really positive staff engagement.

The response and engagement to the public campaign and staff drop-in session was overwhelmingly positive. Unfortunately, though perhaps not unsurprisingly, there were some homophobic responses to the pieces online, examples of which are below:

“Members of the LGBT gang love to bathe together and have found ways to save on ferry fees.”

“When 9 / 11 has only one day of memorial but LGBT has a whole month because LGBT is a bigger tragedy.”

We had prepared responses in the eventuality that our campaign was met with hostility, but in these instances the most appropriate response was to delete and hide abusive comments. Though this is regrettable, and in particular for those community members who will have seen these posts, it does further strengthen our argument internally and externally that this work is necessary.

Quote from staff drop-in session:

“It has been fantastic to see LGBT content on social media channels. It seems to have gone down extremely well locally and has been spotted by a junior ranger who found it really inclusive for them.”

Quote from staff member:

“By actively celebrating LGBT history month and explaining its steps towards the LGBT Charter, the Park Authority sends out a message that it is committed to being a Park for All – not just by saying it to us, but in the hard work it’s done to really get under the skin of the LGBT community in the National Park and lift up their voices. I genuinely believe that this activity will have made a difference to people. As a member of the LGBT community I feel really optimistic, and have come away from this with a list of great activities to join & businesses to support in the future as well.



It would be great if we can continue this celebration beyond LGBT history month and continue to highlight voices of all genders, backgrounds and cultures in the National Park."

Appendix 3: Staff and board equalities survey

Staff equalities survey 2022

The following survey was sent to 106 members of the Cairngorms National Park Authority staff; 73 people completed it. This is a return of 68.87%.

* indicates the result was five or less.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	
Yes	15
No	58
Prefer not to say	0
If you answered yes, what is the nature of your disability?	
Sensory impairment (blind, visual impairment, deaf, hard of hearing):	*
Learning disability or difficulty (Down's syndrome, dyslexia, autism, head injury):	*
Long standing illness or health condition (cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy)	*
Mental health condition	5
Physical impairment (mobility issues, using arms, wheelchair user, on crutches)	
Prefer not to say	
Other condition	*

Cairngorms National Park Authority wants to create an environment where our employees feel totally able to be themselves at work. To assist us with identifying where there may be barriers to achieving this, it would be helpful if you could answer the following question.

If you have answered that you have a disability, are you open about your disability?

At home	
Yes	11
Partially	*
No	



Prefer not to say / blank	
With colleagues	
Yes	6
Partially	8
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	
With your line manager	
Yes	10
Partially	*
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	
At work in general	
Yes	5
Partially	6
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Which of the following best describes your current marital status?	
Married / civil partnership	38
Separated / divorced	*
Single	16
Widowed	*
I prefer a term not listed	13
Prefer not to say	*

Age	
16 – 24	7
25 – 34	14
35 – 44	20
45 – 54	27
55 – 64	5
65 – 74	
Prefer not to say	

What was your sex assigned at birth?

Previously: How do you identify yourself? (If you are undergoing gender re-assignment, please use the gender identity you intend to acquire).

Have you ever identified as transgender?



Female	21
Male	11
Intersex	
I prefer a term not listed	*
Prefer not to say	40

How do you currently identify your gender? (New question).	
Same as assigned at birth	70
Trans woman	
Trans man	
Non-binary	
Agender / gender neutral	*
I prefer a term not listed	*
Prefer not to say	

How would you describe your sexual orientation?	
Previously: Which of the following best describes you?	
Asexual / aromantic	
Bi, pan or polysexual	*
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	
Heterosexual	34
Multiple identities	
I prefer a term not listed	*
Prefer not to say	35

Cairngorms National Park Authority wants to create an environment where our employees feel totally able to be themselves at work. To assist us with identifying where there may be barriers to achieving this, it would be helpful if you could answer the following question.	
At home	
Yes	*
Partially	*
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*
With colleagues	
Yes	*
Partially	*
No	*



Prefer not to say / blank	*
With your line manager	
Yes	*
Partially	*
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*
At work generally	
Yes	*
Partially	*
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What is your religion or belief?	
Agnostic	8
Atheist	19
Baha'i	*
Buddhist	*
Christian	11
Esoteric tradition	
Hindu	
Humanist	
Jewish	
Muslim	
No religious affiliation	29
Pagan	
Rastafari	
Sikh	
Other	*
Prefer not to say	*

Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?	
Previously: Which ethnic group do you most identify with?	
(There were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)	
African, African Scottish, or African British: African	*
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	*
White British	35
White Northern Irish	*
White other	*



White Scottish	32
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Which of the following best describes your caring responsibilities?	
None	38
Primary carer of a disabled adult (18 and over)	*
Primary carer of a child / children (under 18)	21
Primary carer of an older person (65 and over)	*
Primary carer of a disabled child / children (under 18)	
Secondary carer	5
I prefer to self describe	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What do you feel is your national identity?	
British	27
English	
Northern Irish	
Scottish	23
Welsh	*
Other	*

Please indicate which Directorate you work in	
Corporate services (inc. communications)	25
Nature and climate change	21
Planning and place	27

Board equalities survey 2022

The following survey was sent to 19 members of Cairngorms National Park Authority Board members; 16 people completed it. This is a return of 84.21%.

* indicates the result was 5 or less.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	
Yes	*
No	13
Prefer not to say	*
If you answered yes, what is the nature of your disability?	
Sensory impairment (blind, visual impairment, deaf, hard of hearing)	



Learning disability or difficulty (Down's syndrome, dyslexia, autism, head injury)	
Long standing illness or health condition (cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy)	*
Mental health condition	
Physical impairment (mobility issues, using arms, wheelchair user, on crutches)	
Prefer not to say	
Other condition	

Cairngorms National Park Authority wants to create an environment where our employees feel totally able to be themselves at work. To assist us with identifying where there may be barriers to achieving this, it would be helpful if you could answer the following question.

If you have answered that you have a disability, are you open about your disability?

At home

Yes	*
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	

With colleagues

Yes	*
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	

With your line manager

Yes	*
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	

At work in general

Yes	*
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	

Which of the following best describes your current marital status?

Married / civil partnership	12
Separated / divorced	*



Single	*
Widowed	
I prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say	*

Age	
16 – 24	
25 – 34	
35 – 44	
45 – 54	*
55 – 64	8
65 – 74	*
Prefer not to say	

What was your sex assigned at birth?

Previously: How do you identify yourself?

(If you are undergoing gender re-assignment, please use the gender identity you intend to acquire)

Have you ever identified as transgender?

Female	10
Male	*
Intersex	
I prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say	*

How do you currently identify your gender? (New question)

Same as assigned at birth	14
Trans woman	
Trans man	
Non-binary	
Agender / gender neutral	
I prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say	*

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Previously: Which of the following best describes you?

Asexual / aromantic	*
Bi, pan or polysexual	
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	



Heterosexual	14
Multiple identities	
I prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say	*

Cairngorms National Park Authority wants to create an environment where our employees feel totally able to be themselves at work. To assist us with identifying where there may be barriers to achieving this, it would be helpful if you could answer the following question.

At home

Yes	15
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

With colleagues

Yes	15
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

With your line manager

Yes	15
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

At work generally

Yes	15
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What is your Religion or belief?

Agnostic	
Atheist	*
Baha'i	
Buddhist	
Christian	12
Esoteric tradition	
Hindu	
Humanist	



Jewish	
Muslim	
No Religious affiliation	*
Pagan	
Rastafari	
Sikh	
Other	
Prefer not to say	*

Which ethnic group do you most identify with?

(there were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)

White British	8
White Scottish	7
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Which of the following best describes your caring responsibilities?

None	9
Primary carer of a disabled adult (18 and over)	*
Primary carer of a child / children (under 18)	*
Primary carer of an older person (65 and over)	*
Primary carer of a disabled child / children (under 18)	
Secondary carer	
I prefer to self-describe	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What do you feel is your national identity?

British	10
English	
Northern Irish	
Scottish	5
Welsh	
Other	

Staff equalities survey 2023

The following survey was sent to 116 members of Cairngorms National Park Authority staff; 90 people completed it. This is a return of 77.59%.

* indicates the result was 5 or less.



Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	
Yes	16
No	73
Prefer not to say	*
Inclusion of neurodiverse	
If you answered yes, what is the nature of your disability?	
Sensory impairment (blind, visual impairment, deaf, hard of hearing)	
Learning disability or difficulty (Down's syndrome, head injury)	*
Long standing illness or health condition (cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy)	*
Mental health condition	5
Neurodiverse (autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia)	*
Physical impairment (mobility issues, using arms, wheelchair user, on crutches)	
Prefer not to say	*
Other condition	*

Cairngorms National Park Authority wants to create an environment where our employees feel totally able to be themselves at work. To assist us with identifying where there may be barriers to achieving this, it would be helpful if you could answer the following question.	
If you have answered that you have a disability, are you open about your disability?	
At home	
Yes	10
Partially	*
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*
With colleagues	
Yes	5
Partially	7
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*
With your line manager	
Yes	8
Partially	*
No	*



Prefer not to say / blank	*
At work in general	
Yes	*
Partially	5
No	5
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Which of the following best describes your current marital status?	
Married / civil partnership	43
Separated / divorced	7
Single	27
Widowed	*
I prefer a term not listed	10
Prefer not to say	*

Age	
16 – 24	8
25 – 34	17
35 – 44	26
45 – 54	33
55 – 64	6
65 – 74	
Prefer not to say	

What is your sex?	
Previously: What was your sex assigned at birth?	
Female	44
Male	28
Intersex	
I prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	18

How do you currently identify your gender?	
Same as assigned at birth	86
Trans woman	
Trans man	
Non-binary	*
Agender / gender neutral	*



I prefer a term not listed	*
Prefer not to say	*

How would you describe your sexual orientation?	
Asexual / aromantic	
Bisexual	*
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	*
Heterosexual	58
Multiple identities	
Pan or polysexual	*
I prefer a term not listed	*
Prefer not to say / blank	24

Cairngorms National Park Authority wants to create an environment where our employees feel totally able to be themselves at work. To assist us with identifying where there may be barriers to achieving this, it would be helpful if you could answer the following question.	
At home	
Yes	5
Partially	*
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	5
With colleagues	
Yes	*
Partially	*
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	5
With your line manager	
Yes	*
Partially	*
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	6
At work in general	
Yes	*
Partially	*
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	5



What is your Religion or belief?	
Agnostic	9
Atheist	22
Baha'i	*
Buddhist	
Christian	14
Esoteric tradition	
Hindu	
Humanist	
Jewish	
Muslim	
No religious affiliation	40
Pagan	
Rastafari	
Sikh	
Other	*
Prefer not to say	*

Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?	
(There were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)	
African, African Scottish, or African British: African	*
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	*
White British	44
White English	*
White other	*
White Scottish	37
I prefer not to say	*

Which of the following best describes your caring responsibilities?	
None	50
Primary carer of a disabled adult (18 and over)	*
Primary carer of a child / children (under 18)	24
Primary carer of an older person (65 and over)	*
Primary carer of a disabled child / children (under 18)	
Secondary carer	5
I prefer to self-describe	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*



What do you feel is your national identity?	
British	28
English	*
Northern Irish	
Scottish	27
Welsh	
Other	*

Please indicate which Directorate you work in	
Corporate Services (inc. Communications)	29
Nature and climate change	25
Planning and place	36

Board equalities survey 2023

The following survey was sent to 19 Cairngorms National Park Authority Board members; 10 people completed it. This is a return of 52.63%.

* indicates the result was 5 or less.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	
Yes	*
No	7
Prefer not to say / blank	*
Inclusion of neurodiverse	
If you answered yes, what is the nature of your disability?	
Sensory impairment (blind, visual impairment, deaf, hard of hearing)	
Learning disability or difficulty (Down's syndrome, head injury)	
Long standing illness or health condition (cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy)	
Mental health condition	
Neurodiverse (autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia)	
Physical impairment (mobility issues, using arms, wheelchair user, on crutches)	
Prefer not to say	
Other condition	*



Cairngorms National Park Authority wants to create an environment where our employees feel totally able to be themselves at work. To assist us with identifying where there may be barriers to achieving this, it would be helpful if you could answer the following question.

If you have answered that you have a disability, are you open about your disability?

At home	
Yes	
Partially	
No	*
Prefer not to say / blank	
With colleagues	
Yes	
Partially	*
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	
With your line manager	
Yes	
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	*
At work in general	
Yes	
Partially	*
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	

Which of the following best describes your current marital status?

Married / civil partnership	8
Separated / divorced	
Single	*
Widowed	
I prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Age

16 – 24	
---------	--



25 – 34	*
35 – 44	
45 – 54	
55 – 64	*
65 – 74	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What is your sex?

Previously: What was your sex assigned at birth?

Female	*
Male	6
Intersex	
I prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

How do you currently identify your gender?

Same as assigned at birth	9
Trans woman	
Trans man	
Non-binary	
Agender / gender neutral	
I prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say	*

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Asexual / aromantic	*
Bisexual	
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	
Heterosexual	7
Multiple identities	
Pan or polysexual	
I prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	*



Cairngorms National Park Authority wants to create an environment where our employees feel totally able to be themselves at work. To assist us with identifying where there may be barriers to achieving this, it would be helpful if you could answer the following question.

At home

Yes	8
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

With colleagues

Yes	8
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

With your line manager

Yes	8
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

At work in general

Yes	8
Partially	
No	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What is your Religion or belief?

Agnostic	*
Atheist	*
Baha'i	
Buddhist	
Christian	*
Esoteric tradition	
Hindu	
Humanist	
Jewish	
Muslim	
No religious affiliation	*



Pagan	
Rastafari	
Sikh	
Other	
Prefer not to say	*

Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?

(There were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked).

White British	*
White Scottish	5
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Which of the following best describes your caring responsibilities?

None	6
Primary carer of a disabled adult (18 and over)	
Primary carer of a child / children (under 18)	
Primary carer of an older person (65 and over)	*
Primary carer of a disabled child / children (under 18)	
Secondary carer	*
I prefer to self-describe	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What do you feel is your national identity?

British	*
English	
Northern Irish	
Scottish	5
Welsh	
Other	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Appendix 4: Staff recruitment and retention statistics

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has a policy that all vacant posts are advertised to internal staff in the first instance. All internal applicants are guaranteed an interview provided they meet all the essential criteria for the post. There is no guarantee of appointment however, and if the post is not appointed through the internal recruitment process it is advertised externally.



2021

In 2021, a total of 56 posts were advertised for recruitment, with 53 posts recruited. Three posts were not appointed. There were internal applicants for 22 posts – 21 of these posts were filled by an internal applicant; 32 posts were filled by external candidates.

Internal applicants 2021

There were a total of 39 internal applicants for the 56 posts.

* indicates the result was 5 or less

Disability	
Yes	*
No	36
Prefer not to say / blank	

Marital status	
Married / civil partnership	24
Not married / not in a civil partnership	12
Separated / divorced	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Age breakdown	
16 – 24	*
25 – 34	9
35 - 44	9
45 – 54	14
55 – 64	*
65 +	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What is your gender?	
Note: This was subsequently changed to 'Which of the following best describes your gender?' (April 2021)	
Male	20
Female	19
Prefer not to say / blank	



Transgender (categories below were prior to April 2021)	
Transgender – yes	
Transgender – no	38
Prefer not to say / blank	*
Gender (categories below were introduced April 2021 onwards)	
Same as assigned at birth	
Trans man	
Trans woman	
Non-binary	
Agender / gender neutral	
Prefer not to say / blank	

Sexuality	
Asexual / aromantic	
Bi, pan or polysexual	
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	
Heterosexual	35
Multiple identities	
Other / prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Religion / belief	
Agnostic	
Atheist	*
Buddhist	
Christian	7
Hindu	
Jewish	
Muslim	
None	23
Other	
Other Christian	
Roman Catholic	**
Sikh	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Ethnicity



(there were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)	
White Scottish	19
White English	10
White Welsh	*
Other British	8
Prefer not to say / Blank	*

Nationality	
British	9
English	*
Irish	
Northern Irish	
Scottish	*
Welsh	
Other	
Prefer to not say / blank	25

Internal appointments 2021

There were 21 posts which were filled by internal applicants.

* indicates the result was 5 or less

Disability	
Yes	*
No	20
Prefer not to say / blank	

Marital status	
Married / civil partnership	14
Not married / not in a civil partnership	7
Separated / divorced	
Prefer not to say / blank	

Age breakdown	
16 – 24	*
25 – 34	*
35 - 44	6



45 – 54	7
55 – 64	*
65 +	
Prefer not to say / blank	

What is your gender?

Note: This was subsequently changed to 'Which of the following best describes your gender?' (April 2021)

Male	11
Female	10
Prefer not to say / blank	

Transgender

(categories below were prior to April 2021)

Transgender – yes	
Transgender – no	20
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Gender

(categories below were introduced April 2021 onwards)

Same as assigned at birth	
Trans man	
Trans woman	
Non-binary	
Agender / gender neutral	
Prefer not to say / blank	

Sexuality

Asexual / aromantic	
Bi, pan or polysexual	
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	
Heterosexual	21
Multiple identities	
Other / prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	

Religion / Belief

Agnostic	
Atheist	*
Baha'i	
Buddhist	



Christian	*
Esoteric tradition	
Hindu	
Humanist	
Jewish	
Muslim	
None	16
Other	
Pagan	
Rastafari	
Roman Catholic	
Sikh	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Ethnicity

(There were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)

White British	*
White Scottish	11
White English	6
White Welsh	*

Nationality

British	5
English	
Irish	
Northern Irish	
Scottish	*
Welsh	15
Other	
Prefer to not say / blank	

External recruitment 2021

All external applicants complete a questionnaire that focuses on all the protected characteristics. The information held on external applicants for 2021 is as follows:

Total number of applicants was 438, of which 202 (46%) were female and 225 (51%) were male with 11 not disclosing. Of the 32 posts appointed through the external round, 18 (56%) were male and 14 (44%) female.



* indicates the result was 5 or less

Disability	
Yes	16
No	404
Prefer not to say / blank	18

Marital status	
Married / civil partnership	124
Not Married / not in a civil partnership	282
Separated / divorced	5
Prefer not to say / blank	27

Age breakdown	
16 – 24	73
25 – 34	160
35 – 44	89
45 – 54	69
55 – 64	27
65 +	3
Prefer not to say / blank	17

What is your gender?	
Note: This was subsequently changed to 'Which of the following best describes your gender?' (April 2021)	
Male	225
Female	202
Prefer not to say / blank	11
Transgender	
(categories below were prior to April 2021)	
Transgender – yes	
Transgender – no	
Prefer not to say / blank	421
Gender	
(categories below were introduced April 2021 onwards)	
Same as assigned at birth	
Trans man	
Trans woman	



Non-binary	1
Agender / gender neutral	
Prefer not to say / blank	16

Sexuality	
Asexual / aromantic	
Bi, pan or polysexual	12
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	11
Heterosexual	359
Multiple identities	3
Other / prefer a term not listed	1
Prefer not to say / blank	52

Religion / belief	
Agnostic	10
Atheist	24
Baha'i	
Buddhist	
Christian	67
Esoteric tradition	
Hindu	2
Humanist	2
Jewish	
Muslim	1
None	274
Other	4
Pagan	1
Rastafari	
Roman Catholic	6
Sikh	
Prefer not to say / blank	44

Ethnicity	
(There were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)	
White British	51
White Scottish	211
White English	80
White N Irish	3
White Welsh	3



White other	51
Irish	7
Gypsy / traveller	1
Polish	3
Mixed or multiple	4
Indian, Indian Scottish, or Indian British	2
Asian, Asian Scottish, or Asian British other	3
African, African Scottish, or African British	2
Prefer not to say / blank	17

Nationality	
British	43
English	6
Irish	3
Northern Irish	1
Scottish	47
Welsh	
Other	24
Prefer to not say / blank	295

External appointments 2021

There were 32 posts filled by external candidates.

* indicates the result was 5 or less

Disability	
Yes	*
No	27
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Marital status	
Married / civil partnership	9
Not Married / not in a civil partnership	17
Separated / divorced	
Prefer not to say / blank	6

Age breakdown	
16 – 24	6



25 – 34	9
35 - 44	6
45 – 54	6
55 – 64	*
65 +	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What is your gender?

Note: This was subsequently changed to 'Which of the following best describes your gender?' (April 2021)

Male	18
Female	12
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Transgender

(categories below were prior to April 2021)

Transgender – yes	
Transgender – no	29
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Gender

(categories below were introduced April 2021 onwards)

Same as assigned at birth	
Trans man	
Trans woman	
Non-binary	
Agender / gender neutral	
Prefer not to say / blank	

Sexuality

Asexual / aromantic	
Bi, pan or polysexual	*
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	
Heterosexual	25
Multiple identities	
Other / prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Religion / belief

Agnostic	
Atheist	*



Baha'i	
Buddhist	
Christian	
Esoteric tradition	
Hindu	
Humanist	
Jewish	
Muslim	
None	22
Other	
Pagan	
Rastafari	
Roman Catholic	
Sikh	
Prefer not to say / blank	7

Ethnicity

(there were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)

White British	7
White Scottish	16
White English	*
White other	*
Prefer not to say / blank	6

Nationality

British	*
English	
Northern Irish	
Scottish	*
Welsh	
Other	*
Prefer to not say / blank	23

2022

In 2022, a total of 34 posts were advertised for recruitment. Three posts were not appointed. There were internal applicants for 18 posts – 12 of these posts were filled internally.



Internal applicants 2022

There were a total of 26 internal applicants.

* indicates the result was 5 or less

Disability	
Yes	*
No	24
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Marital status	
Married / civil partnership	12
Not Married / not in a civil partnership / single	10
Separated / divorced	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Age breakdown	
16 – 24	*
25 – 34	*
35 – 44	7
45 – 54	9
55 – 64	*
65 +	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

What is your sex?	
Previously: What was your sex assigned at birth?	
Previously: Which of the following best describes your gender?	
Male	11
Female	14
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Transgender	
(categories below were prior to April 2021)	
Transgender – Yes	
Transgender – No	12
Gender	



(categories below were introduced April 2021 onwards)	
Same as assigned at birth	12
Trans man	
Trans woman	
Non-binary	
Agender / gender neutral	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Sexuality	
Asexual / aromantic	
Bi, pan or polysexual	
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	
Heterosexual	23
Multiple identities	
Other / prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Religion / belief	
Agnostic	*
Atheist	*
Baha'i	
Buddhist	
Christian	
Esoteric tradition	
Hindu	
Humanist	
Jewish	
Muslim	
None	19
Other	
Pagan	
Rastafari	*
Roman Catholic	
Sikh	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Ethnicity
(there were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)



White British	5
White Scottish	20
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Nationality	
British	*
English	*
Irish	
Northern Irish	
Scottish	8
Welsh	
Other	
Prefer to not say / blank	14

Internal appointments 2022

There were 12 posts which were filled by internal applicants.

* indicates the result was 5 or less

Disability	
Yes	*
No	10
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Marital status	
Married / civil partnership	*
Not married / not in a civil partnership / single	6
Separated / divorced	*
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Age breakdown	
16 – 24	*
25 – 34	*
35 – 44	*
45 – 54	5
55 – 64	
65 +	
Prefer not to say / blank	*



What is your sex?	
Previously: What was your sex assigned at birth?	
Previously: Which of the following best describes your gender?	
Male	7
Female	4
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Transgender	
(categories below were prior to April 2021)	
Transgender – yes	
Transgender – no	6
Gender	
(categories below were introduced April 2021 onwards)	
Same as assigned at birth	*
Trans man	
Trans woman	
Non-binary	
Agender / gender neutral	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Sexuality	
Asexual / aromantic	
Bi, pan or polysexual	
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	
Heterosexual	9
Multiple identities	
Other / prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Religion / belief	
Agnostic	*
Atheist	*
Baha'i	
Buddhist	
Christian	
Esoteric tradition	



Hindu	
Humanist	
Jewish	
Muslim	
None	7
Other	
Pagan	
Rastafari	
Roman Catholic	
Sikh	
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Ethnicity (there were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)	
White British	*
White Scottish	10
Prefer not to say / blank	*

Nationality	
British	*
English	*
Irish	
Northern Irish	
Scottish	9
Welsh	
Other	
Prefer to not say / blank	*

There are no trends in these statistics that are a cause of concern or indicate inequality in our policies and practices.

External recruitment 2022

All external applicants complete a questionnaire that focuses on all the protected characteristics. The information held on external applicants for 2022 is as follows: Total number of applicants was 244, of which 138 were female and 100 were male.

* indicates the result was 5 or less



Disability	
Yes	41
No	197
Prefer not to say / blank	6

Marital status	
Married / civil partnership	76
Not Married / not in a civil partnership / single	138
Separated / divorced	10
Widowed	1
Prefer not to say / blank	19

Age breakdown	
16 – 24	54
25 – 34	82
35 – 44	61
45 – 54	23
55 – 64	16
65 +	2
Prefer not to say / blank	6

What is your sex?	
Previously: What was your sex assigned at birth?	
Previously: Which of the following best describes your gender?	
Male	100
Female	138
Prefer not to say / blank	6

Transgender (categories below were prior to April 2021)	
Transgender – yes	
Transgender – no	29
Gender (categories below were introduced April 2021 onwards)	
Same as assigned at birth	202
Trans man	
Trans woman	



Non-binary	1
Agender / gender neutral	2
Prefer not to say / blank	10

Sexuality	
Asexual / aromantic	2
Bi, pan or polysexual	13
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	6
Heterosexual	196
Multiple identities	
Other / prefer a term not listed	2
Prefer not to say / blank	25

Religion / belief	
Agnostic	8
Atheist	18
Baha'i	
Buddhist	1
Christian	34
Esoteric tradition	1
Hindu	1
Humanist	2
Jewish	
Muslim	4
None / no religious affiliation	152
Other	1
Pagan	2
Rastafari	
Roman Catholic	1
Sikh	
Prefer not to say / blank	19

Ethnicity	
(there were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)	
White British	97
White English	8
White Irish	1
White Northern Irish	1
White Scottish	78



White Welsh	2
White other	35
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	5
African, African Scottish, or African British: African	3
Arab, Arab Scottish, or Arab British	1
Asian, Asian Scottish, or Asian British: Indian	2
Asian, Asian Scottish, or Asian British: Pakistani	2
Asian, Asian Scottish, or Asian British: Other	1
Caribbean or Black, Caribbean, or Black Scottish, Caribbean, or Black British: Caribbean	1
Other ethnic group: other	1
Prefer a term not listed	1
Prefer not to say / blank	5

Nationality	
British	86
English	3
Irish	
Northern Irish	2
Scottish	72
Welsh	3
Other	44
Prefer to not say / blank	34

External appointments 2022

There were 19 posts which were filled by external candidates.

* indicates the result was 5 or less

Disability	
Yes	1
No	16
Prefer not to say / blank	2

Marital status	
Married / civil partnership	7
Not Married / not in a civil partnership / single	8
Separated / divorced	3
Widowed	1



Prefer not to say / blank	
---------------------------	--

Age breakdown	
16 – 24	2
25 – 34	4
35 – 44	10
45 – 54	2
55 – 64	1
65 +	
Prefer not to say / blank	

What is your sex?	
Previously: What was your sex assigned at birth?	
Previously: Which of the following best describes your gender?	
Male	8
Female	11
Prefer not to say / blank	

Transgender	
(categories below were prior to April 2021)	
Transgender – yes	
Transgender – no	3
Gender	
(categories below were introduced April 2021 onwards)	
Same as assigned at birth	16
Trans man	
Trans woman	
Non-binary	
Agender / gender neutral	
Prefer a term not listed	
Prefer not to say / blank	

Sexuality	
Asexual / aromantic	
Bi, pan or polysexual	1
Gay, lesbian or homosexual	1
Heterosexual	17
Multiple identities	
Other / prefer a term not listed	



Prefer not to say / blank	
---------------------------	--

Religion / belief	
Agnostic	
Atheist	4
Baha'i	
Buddhist	
Christian	2
Esoteric tradition	
Hindu	
Humanist	
Jewish	
Muslim	
None / no religious affiliation	12
Other	
Pagan	
Rastafari	
Roman Catholic	1
Sikh	
Prefer not to say / blank	

Ethnicity	
(there were many categories against which to report, but detailed below are just those that were ticked)	
White British	8
White Scottish	8
White other	1
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1
African, African Scottish, or African British: African	1

Nationality	
British	8
English	
Irish	
Northern Irish	
Scottish	9
Welsh	1
Other	1
Prefer to not say / blank	



Staff development statistics

Every attempt is made to retain the training budget at healthy levels comparative to the economic circumstances. Within this budget Cairngorms National Park Authority has a policy of ensuring that any training need identified for an officer through the appraisal process will be prioritised, and typically staff can attend an average of up to four training events each year. Identification of training needs is based on individual work targets set for each year; competency levels to be attained by employees; employee career aspirations.

Currently our human resources database records training undertaken by all staff. The data is recorded by the names of staff and because our human resources database records some, but not all the protected characteristics of staff, we can only report on a limited number of characteristics.

We do have data on the age and gender of each our employees, and work is currently taking place to interrogate this data to look at patterns and learn about our staff profiles and what this means for staff and the organisation. The approach currently being taken with these statistics is the standard we would like to achieve across data covering all of the protected characteristics.

Staff development 2021

The data we already hold on staff training in 2021 can be reported as follows:
28 women and 26 men went on at least one training course in 2021. This represents 58% of the total number of staff employed in the year.

The age breakdown of staff who went on training was:

16 – 24	5
25 – 34	6
35 – 44	17
45 – 54	20
55 – 64	6
65+	0

The grade breakdown of training undertaken by staff in 2021 was as follows (with band A being the lowest grade / salary):

Band	No. Staff	% in Grade
Band A	4	80
Band A1	0	No staff in grade



Band B	0	0
Band B1	10	100
Band C	7	54
Band C1	5	83
Band D	13	46
Band E	13	76
Band F	1	14
Band G	0	
CEO	0	0

The training was split over the directorates as follows:

Communications	2
Corporate services	17
Nature and climate change	6
Planning and place	28

Staff development 2022

The data we already hold on staff training in 2022 can be reported as follows:

61 women and 48 men went on at least one training course in 2022. This represents 88% of the total number of staff employed in the year.

The age breakdown of staff who went on training was:

16 – 24	7
25 – 34	21
35 – 44	27
45 – 54	42
55 – 64	10
65+	2

The grade breakdown of training undertaken by staff in 2022 was as follows (with band A being the lowest grade / salary):

Band	No. Staff	% in Grade
Band A	2	66
Band A1	3	75
Band B	3	100
Band B1	9	82
Band C	19	86



Band C1	6	100
Band D	36	92
Band E	19	86
Band F	7	78
Band G	3	100
CEO	1	100

The training was split over the directorates as follows:

Communications	6
Corporate services	30
Nature and climate change	28
Planning and place	45

Appendix 5: Equal pay audit

Executive summary

1. Highlights

- The gender pay gap for 2023 was 9.55%, lower than the gender pay gap in Scotland of 10.1%*, and lower than our pay gap in 2022, which was 12.49%. If we use the median methodology to calculate the gender pay gap, the figure is 2.92%, which is also notably lower than the Scottish median pay gap of 11.5%*. The Park Authority's gender pay gap has been on the downward trajectory for the last six years, so this is encouraging to see that the pay gap is now lower than the national average, the work to reduce the pay gap is clearly having an impact.
- The gender pay gap for full-time staff is 13.78%, which is an improvement on the 2022 figure of 14.64%.
- For part time staff the gender pay gap is -14.16%, which again is an improvement on the 2022 figure of 1.23%.
- The female average salary is higher than the male in some grades (bands C and D).
- Band D, the largest band, with 39 staff, comprising 25 female staff and 14 male staff has a gender pay gap of -3.77%.
- Band C has a pay gap of -4.06%, this is an improvement on the 2022 figure of -2.36%.
- The middle management grade E has a gender pay gap of 0.33%, which is an improvement on 2022, when it was 2.20%.

2. Shadows

- Of the lower graded bands A to C, band B has a pay gap of 2.28% and B1 is 0.58%, this is a slight deterioration from 2022 when the pay gap was zero.



- Of the 30 management posts (bands E to G + CEO), 12 (40% are female) in comparison to 10 out of 26 posts (45%) in 2022. There are more women in senior management, but the figures bely this as there are also more senior management posts than previously.
- The highest paid grade (band G) comprises only male staff.
- The senior management team (bands F, G and CEO) of 11 managers comprises only three females. However, there were only two females at this time in 2022, so this does also represent a small improvement.

3. Background

An equal pay audit is designed to assess pay levels across the organisation in terms of gender equality. It should scrutinise all aspects of pay including profiles of the different grades and directorates across the organisation, as well as recruitment and promotion in order to highlight any areas where direct or indirect discrimination may be impacting on pay equality. The Cairngorms National Park Authority is committed to conducting an equal pay audit as part of its approach to equalities, and we assess pay for gender equality on an ongoing basis.

4. The Cairngorms National Park Authority has a robust and objective job evaluation system which is designed to eliminate all elements of potential discrimination in the grading of different jobs, but it is important that our processes are scrutinised to ensure that inequalities are not allowed to develop inadvertently.
5. There may be socio-demographic reasons behind differences in pay or variations in numbers of male or female staff at different grades within the organisation which acts to skew some results, but it is not sufficient to assume that this is the case. Hence we undertake a detailed review to seek to understand our equal pay position as fully as possible.
6. This equal pay audit was conducted using the salary levels and staff numbers as at 31 March 2023.
7. There are two measures of pay gap which we are required to report on – mean and median. The mean (sum of hourly rates of pay divided by the number of staff) includes the highest and lowest rates of pay. The median (the midpoint of the employee's hourly rates of pay) is not skewed by very low or very high hourly rates of pay, and potentially gives a more accurate representation of typical difference, but it can obscure gendered pay differences. Guidance therefore suggests that preference should be given to the mean, as it gives a deeper understanding of any pay gaps. Our calculations across the board are based on the mean average. For the overall gender pay gap figure, we have also used the median calculation.
8. We have analysed the pay gap across full and part time staff; across grades; across directorates; and then as an overall assessment, as follows:

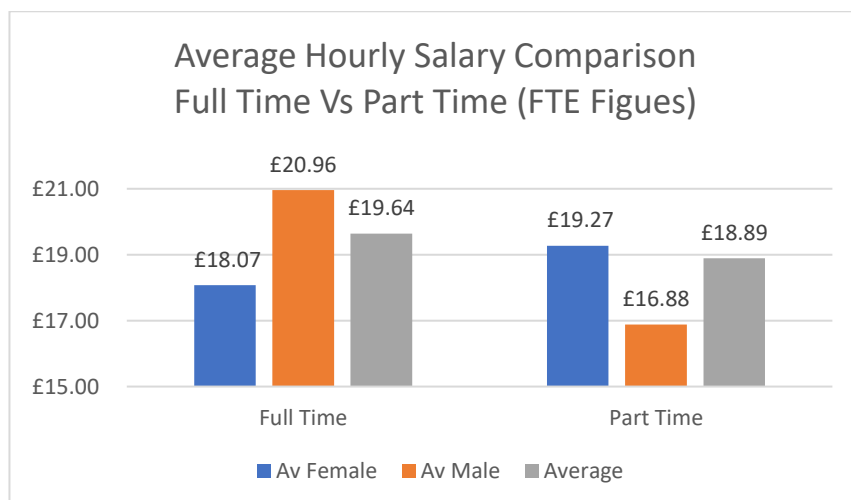
Gender pay gap results for full-time and part-time staff

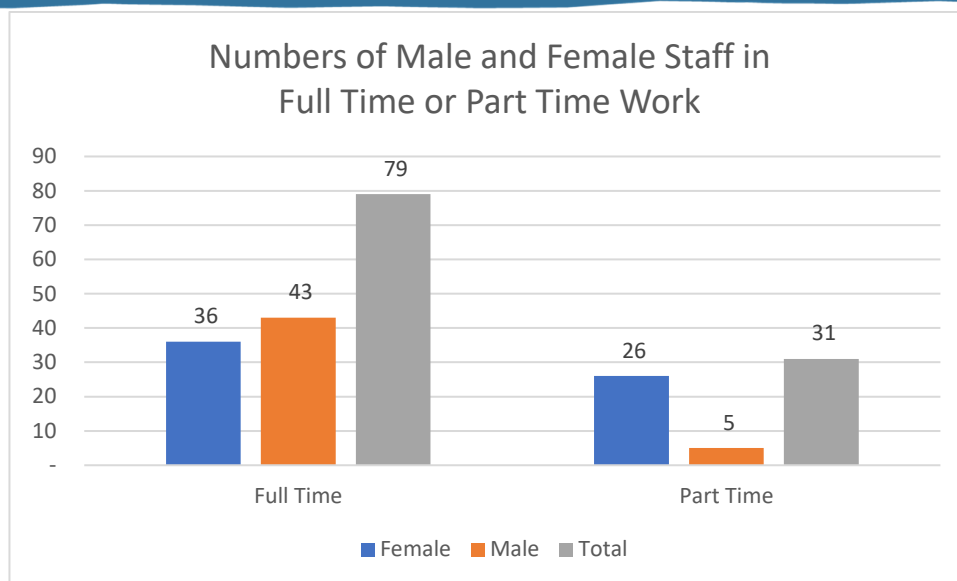
9. Of our total 79 staff who work full time, 46% are women, in comparison with 54% who are men. The full-time pay gap across the entire organisation (comparing women's full-time average hourly pay with men's full-time average hourly pay) is 13.78%. This is an improvement on last year's figure, which was 14.64% but this



figure is above Scottish average for full-time staff in 2022 which is 6.6%*. Our analysis of these figures is as follows: Of the 36 full-time female staff, 47% are in the lower graded / paid bands (A-C); 36% are in the middle paid range (D); and 17% are in the higher graded / paid bands (E-G). Of the 43 full-time male staff, 33% are in the lower paid bands; 26% are in the middle range, and 41% are in the higher bands. Whilst the majority of male full time posts are in grades that are at the higher end of the salary scale, there has been a slight reduction in the female full-time posts positioned in the grades that are at the higher range of the salary scale.

- 10.84% of the organisations' part-time staff are female, and 16% are male. The average part-time female salary is £19.27, which is higher than the average male part-time salary of £16.88, making the gender pay gap for part-time staff -14.16%. This is a significant improvement on the 2022 figure, which has the part-time gender pay gap at 1.23%. Of the lower graded posts bands A–C, there are two part-time male members of staff, but eight part-time female staff; at the middle band D range, there are 12 part-time female staff, and three male; and at the higher salary bands E–F, six are female and none are male. There are more female part-time staff with a spread over the salary bands.





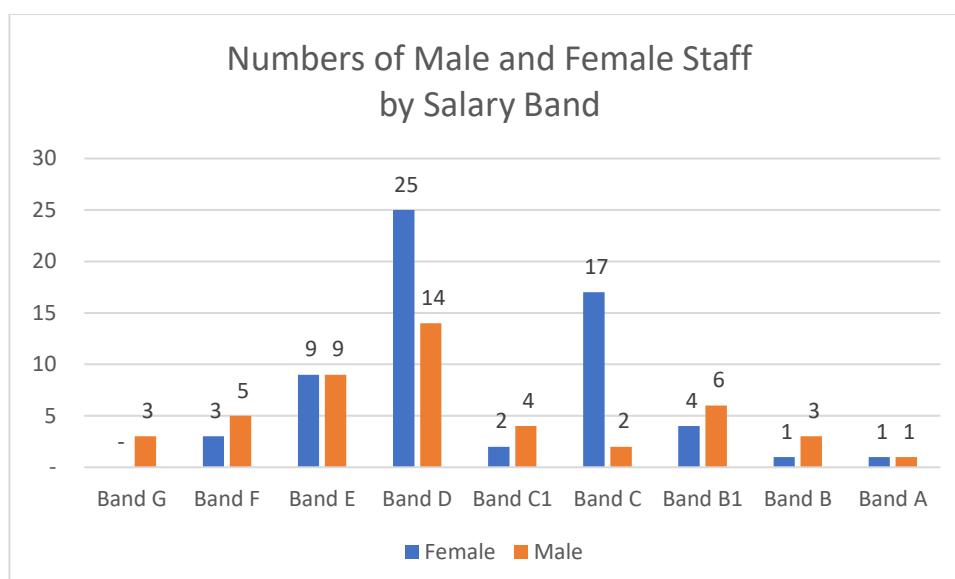
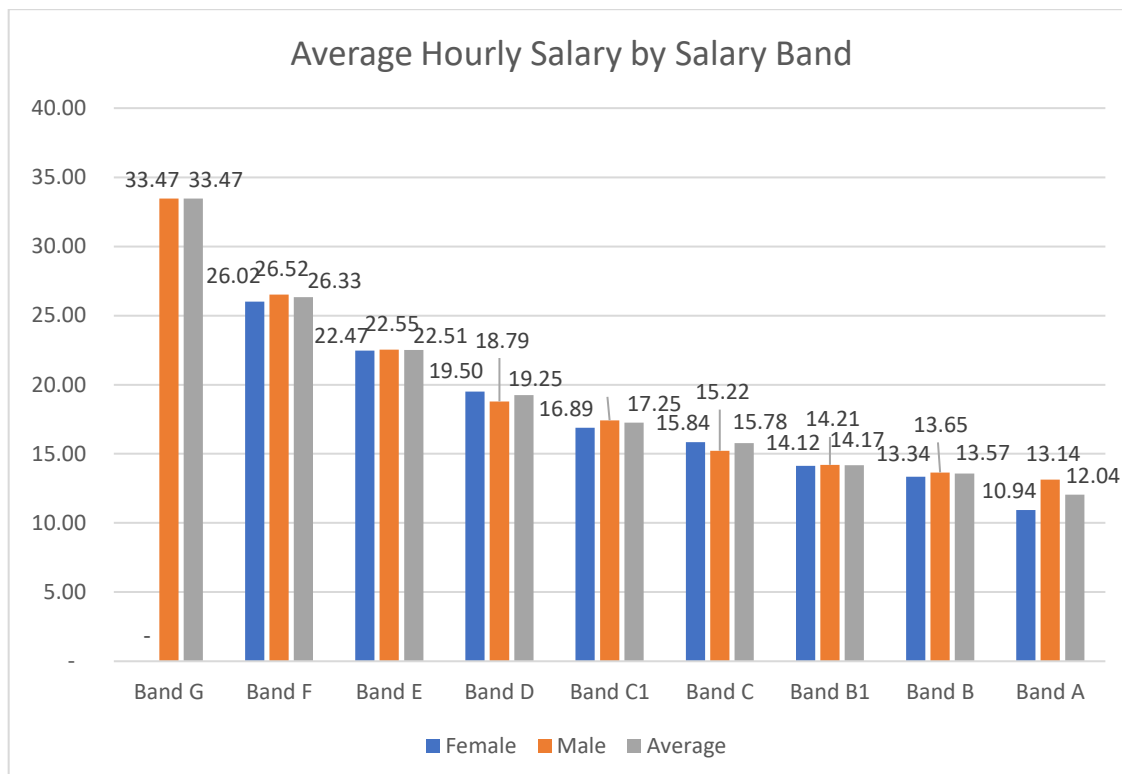
Results by Grade

11. The equal pay audit found that there were variances in salary average between male and female across the grades, with the female average higher than the male in some grades (bands C and D); and lower than the male average in all other grades (bands A, B, B1, C1, E and F). Band A has an equal number of male and female staff and bands B, B1, C1 and F comprise more male than females. Band E has the same number of male and female staff. One grade comprises only male staff (band G), which includes the highest paid staff.
12. Of the 33 staff in the lower graded bands A to C, 23 are female. There is a 2.28% pay gap at band B, 0.58% at band B1, 3.08% at band C1 and a -4.06% pay gap at band C.
13. Band D is the largest band, with 39 staff, comprising 25 female staff and 14 male staff. This is a policy officer level of grade / pay. The gender pay gap for this grade is -3.77%. Four of the male staff are currently at the top of the salary band, all of whom having been with the organisation for at least six years, whilst 11 of the female staff are at the top of their bands.
14. It should be noted that of the 30 management posts (bands E to G + CEO), 12 (40%) are female in comparison to 45% in 2022, 32% in 2021, 33% in 2020, 37% in 2019 and just 25% in 2017. Although this represents a slight percentage reduction for female staff in management posts, it should be noted that there has been an overall increase in the number of posts at this level. Despite the fact that the majority (75%) of senior management roles (bands F, G and CEO) are held by male staff, this is an improvement on the 2022 figure which was 85%. At the middle management level band E, there are equal numbers of male and female staff, with a pay gap of 0.33%.



The pay gap in this band has improved on the 2022 figure of 2.20%, 4.65% in 2021 and 6.9% in 2020.

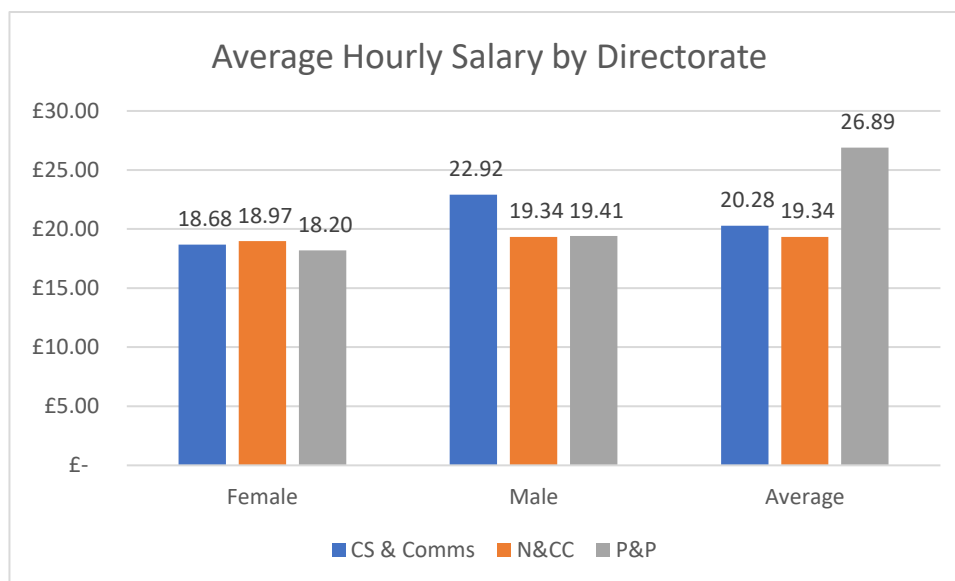
15. Despite evidence nationally of journey times having some discrimination against female staff, the Cairngorms National Park Authority's policies have countered this to date and there is no evidence of this issue within Park Authority.





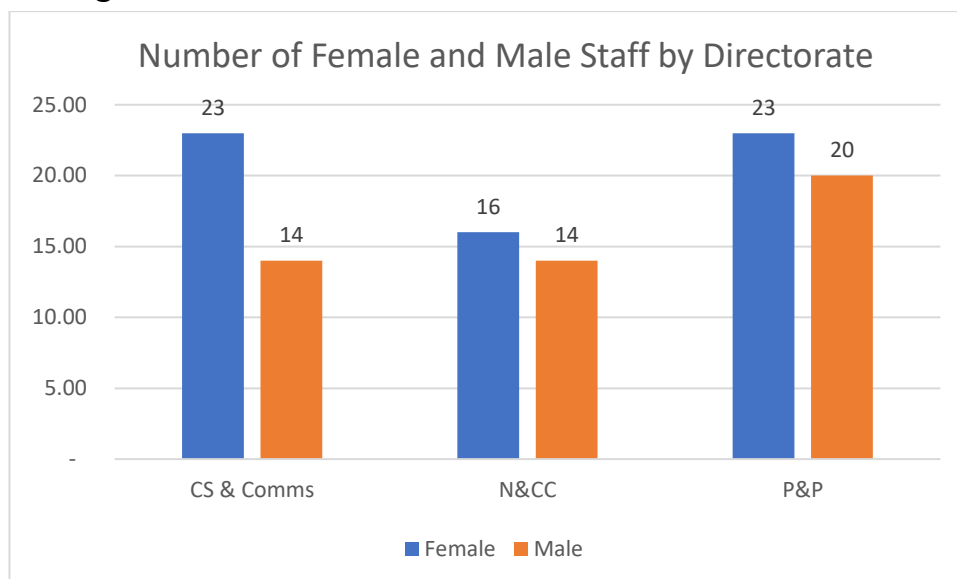
Results by directorate

16. An analysis of the salary levels by directorate across the organisation showed that the average female salary was lower than the average male salary in all directorates. Much of this difference appears to be due to the higher levels of female staff at admin or support officer levels within the directorates, combined with significantly more males than females at the higher paid bands F and G across the organisation. However, the results of the analysis of pay by grade will also play into this position. We have identified above that there are gradually increasing numbers of females in middle management grades. As these members of staff are relatively new to the grade, they are still at an early stage of their journey times through salary grade. Consequently, there is a time lag in these positive improvements in gender balance showing into the analysis of salaries by grade and by their respective directorates.



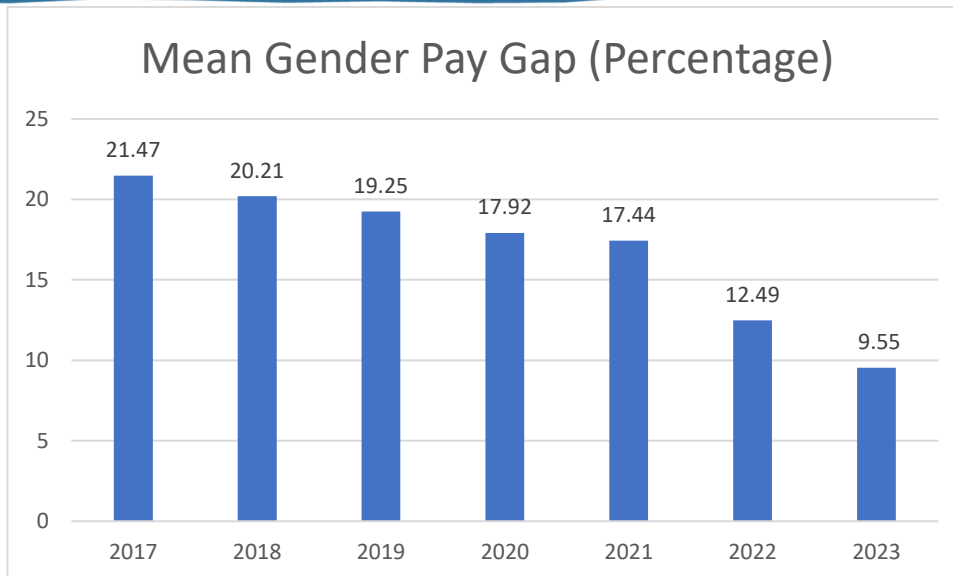


Directorate gender:



Overall organisational results

17. Across the organisation as a whole, there are 62 female staff and 48 male staff – so female staff make up 56% of the workforce. This figure has stayed the same as 2022. The overall average male hourly salary is £20.54 and the overall average female salary is £18.58 (the average hourly salary across the organisation is £19.43). This makes the mean gender pay gap (ie the difference in average hourly earnings between men and women) **9.55%** (and lower at 6.97% if you removed the CEO from the calculations). This figure is an improvement and is now below the 2023 Scottish gender pay gap (2021) of 10.1%*, it is showing a continued decreasing trajectory, once again being down on the Cairngorms National Park Authority's 2022 gender pay gap of 12.49%, the 2021 figure of 17.44%, the 2020 figure of 17.92%, the 2019 figure of 19.25%, the 2018 figure of 20.20%, the 2017 figure of 21.47%, and the 2015 figure of 23.64%. The gender pay gap result therefore highlights an ongoing positive trend in the Park Authority's practices successfully narrowing the gender pay gap on this measure with a reduction in gender pay gap annually over the last eight years. The foregoing analysis, highlighting an increase in female staff at policy officer and middle manager salary grades within the organisation at early stages in their journey times through salary bands also lays a good foundation for further reductions in gender pay gap in subsequent years.



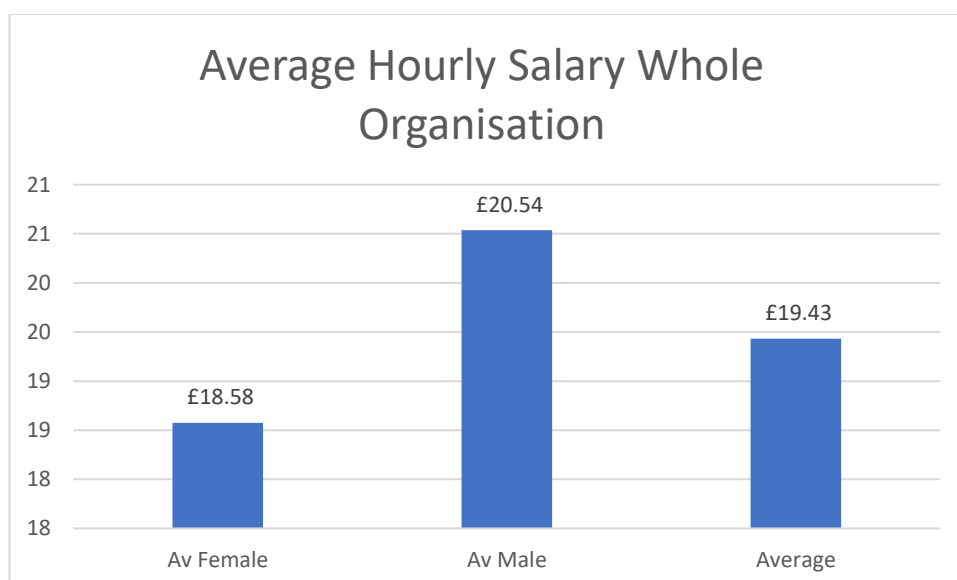
18. If we use the median methodology to calculate the gender pay gap, the figure is lower at 2.92%. However, this is an increase on the 2022 figure of -5.47%, but a reduction on the 2021 figure of 5.9%, the 2020 figure of 10%, the 2019 figure of 15.25%, and on the 2017 figure of 15.87%. This figure is also significantly lower than the 2021 Scottish median pay gap (2021) of 11.5%.

19. This can be explained by the following:

- a) There were more male appointments to the lower graded band B - C posts than before – band B now has three male staff and one female, band B1 has four male and six female staff and band C1 has four male and two female.
- b) In the last 12 months, a further band F senior manager vacancy was appointed to a female, thereby increasing the number of females in this higher paid band to three.
- c) As part of our commitment to our equality outcomes regarding improving the diversity of our staff makeup and increasing the number of women at senior positions, we have continued to take the following actions:
 - i. At recruitment we have reduced the number of essential criteria to ensure those that remain are indeed essential (research has indicated that women are less likely to apply for positions if they do not meet ALL the essential criteria), All job descriptions have to be approved by the human resources team, who will robustly challenge the perception of the necessity for each essential criterion;
 - ii. Most posts are now advertised with the potential of being part time or job share.
 - iii. All recruitment panels contain male and female members;



- iv. Recruitment advertising has been revamped to highlight the benefits of flexible working.
- v. Recruitment advertising places looked at to encourage applicant diversity.
- vi. There is more joined up recruitment with similar public sector organisations and we are supportive when possible of secondment opportunities
- vii. We removed core hours and improved remote accessibility to information technology facilities.
- viii. Ongoing review of organisational structure with more policy positions being developed at lower grades, which were traditionally where only “admin” roles, more heavily slanted towards women were graded. There are now more male staff in lower graded post than there have been historically.



Overtime

20. Overtime is paid only in exceptional circumstances and makes up a small element of the pay bill.

Recruitment statistics (January to December 2022)

- 21. In 2022 a total of 34 posts were advertised, with 31 posts recruited. The majority of posts were advertised internally in the first instance. Three posts were not appointed.
- 22. There were 26 internal applicants with 12 internal appointments. Of the 26 applicants, 14 were female, 11 were male and one preferred not to say and of the internal appointments four were female, seven were male and one preferred not to say.



23. In 2022, of a total of 244 external applicants there were 100 (41%) male applicants and 138 (57%) female, with six not disclosing. Of the 19 posts appointed through the external round, eight (42%) were male and 11 (58%) female.

24. So, looking at overall totals, there were slightly more female applicants (152) than male (107). However, the number of female to male applicants appointed was the same, female 15 (48%), male 15 (48%), with one person preferring not to say.

Conclusions from the audit

25. Cairngorms National Park Authority jobs are evaluated to determine which pay band they should be placed in, and most staff start at the bottom of the pay band, progressing by annual progression awards to the top of the scale. The potential for all forms of inequality is thus reduced by the fact that jobs are objectively evaluated and salaries allocated according to the job content rather than the person. There is still potential for inequality within evaluation systems, such as the weighting given to particular types of work, for example caring tasks have often attracted a lower weighting than manual labour in the past, which indirectly favours more men than women. The Cairngorms National Park Authority evaluation system has been designed and equality impact assessed to ensure this type of discrimination does not happen within Cairngorms National Park Authority.

26. The Cairngorms National Park Authority has a number of policies designed to ensure that male and female members of staff have equal access to career progression. Male and female staff are given support in managing childcare commitments and other work life balance issues to enable them to work effectively at any level of the organisation. We have a range of part time, job-share and ad-hoc working from home arrangements which have been accessed equally by men and women across the organisation. More part time or job share roles at the higher band E have been appointed, which shows that we are successfully challenging the organisational cultural perception that posts cannot be delivered at that level in part time hours.

27. The gender pay gap is improving, and we are starting to see the impact of the interventions implemented to support the equality outcomes of ensuring there is a gender balance in the senior positions. However, we cannot become complacent, and recognise that continued work and monitoring must be an organisational priority going forward. The Equality Advisory Panel will play a key role in scrutinising, challenging, and supporting this action.

*Close the Gap Working Paper (2022) Gender Pay Gap data for 2021

March 2023



Appendix 6: Occupational segregation

As staff numbers are fairly small, it would be meaningless to report data below disaggregated further by directorate or department. As such, we have shown the breakdown just by grade. Where figures are less than 5, we have simply provided an asterisk, as we would not wish individuals to be identified.

2022

By gender (as per equal pay audit data of 31 March 2022)

Grade		Grade description	Female	Male
A		Reception / admin assistant	*	*
B		Admin / finance officer	*	6
C		Technical / snr admin / policy officer	17	6
D		Policy officer / supervisor / first level management	23	13
E		Management / technical specialist	8	7
F		Manager of managers / heads of service	*	*
G		Directors and CEO	0	*

By race (as per information provided on HR database)

Grade	Grade description	White British	White Scottish	White other	Black / Asian	Other	Information not provided
A	Reception / admin assistant		*	*			*
B	Admin / finance officer	*	*				
B1		*	*				6
C	Technical / snr admin / policy officer	6	7	*			*
C1		*	*			*	*
D	Policy officer / supervisor / first	11	10	*		*	11



	level management						
E	Management / technical specialist	8	6				7
F	Manager of managers / heads of service	*					*
G	Directors and CEO	*	*				

By Disability (as per information provided HR database)

Grade	Grade description	No disability	Disability declared	Information not provided
A	Reception / admin assistant	*	1	*
B	Admin / finance officer	*		0
B1		*	*	6
C	Technical / snr admin / policy officer	9	5	*
C1		*	*	*
D	Policy officer / supervisor / first level management	18	6	11
E	Management / technical specialist	14		7
F	Manager of managers / heads of service	*		*
G	Directors and CEO	*		0

2023

By gender (as per equal pay audit data of 31 March 2023)

Grade	Grade description	Female	Male
A	Reception / admin assistant	*	*
B	Admin / finance officer	*	9
C	Technical / snr admin / policy officer	19	6
D	Policy officer / supervisor / first level management	25	14



E		Management / technical specialist	9		9
F		Manager of managers / heads of service	*		*
G		Directors and CEO	0		*

By race (as per information provided on HR database)

Grade	Grade description	White British	White Scottish	White other	Black / Asian	Other	Information not provided
A	Reception / admin assistant		*	*			
B	Admin / finance officer	*	*				
B1		5	5	*			
C	Technical / snr admin / policy officer	8	8			*	*
C1		*	*			*	*
D	Policy officer / supervisor / first level management	13	12	*		*	10
E	Management / technical specialist	9	*				6
F	Manager of managers / heads of service	*	*				*
G	Directors and CEO	*	*				

By Disability (as per information provided HR database)

Grade	Grade description	No disability	Disability declared	Information not provided
A	Reception / admin assistant	*		
B	Admin / finance officer	*		*
B1		11	*	



C	Technical / snr admin / policy officer	11	6	*
C1		*	*	*
D	Policy officer / supervisor / first level management	22	7	*
E	Management / technical specialist	12	*	6
F	Manager of managers / heads of service	5		*
G	Directors and CEO	*		



Appendix 7: Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2024

Update 2021- 2023

Outcome 1: Our workforce will become more diverse. We will have more women in senior positions in the organisation, and will have an increased number of minority staff working for us (specifically with relation to sexual orientation, disability and ethnicity). Led by Kate Christie, Head of Organisational Development.

Evidence:

- a) Staff equality data indicates that our workforce is typically white, Scottish. Average age is 45 - 54. Very low / no indication of ethnic minorities, very low numbers identify as LGBTQ+ with 92% identifying as heterosexual, 94% do not have a disability.
- b) Recruitments statistics indicate a balance of female and male applicants, no transgender applicants, very few applicants in the 55+ age category, significantly low numbers of applicants with a disability, majority are unmarried, majority identify no religion, significant majority are heterosexual, white Scottish.

Headline update March 2023:

There are 12 women in the senior management grades (bands E, F and G). This is two more than in 2022. In 2021, there were only seven women at this level of the organisation. There are three women at head of service level in comparison to one in 2021. This represents 38% of staff at this level in comparison to 14% in 2021. The Park Authority has a larger LGBT population than previously, and we have more staff identifying as having a disability. However, we have no staff who represent an ethnic minority and there is work to be done in this regard.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
Assessing the reach we have as an organisation in terms of recruitment, and taking practical steps to extend that reach, understand how we are perceived by certain equality groups as an employer, how we present ourselves externally and what people's experience is of the recruitment process and beyond to development and progression. Practical step to achieve this include the following:	People across all equalities characteristics are confident applying to jobs with Cairngorms National Park Authority, want to work for the Cairngorms National Park Authority and see the Cairngorms National Park Authority as an inclusive employer.	Increase in the number of applications (from the 2020 baseline) from: BAME applicants LGTBQ+ applicants, disabled applicants. Increase in the number of appointments across BAME, LGTBQ+, disabled applicants. Increase in the number	All, with specific focus on BAME, LHTBQ+, Disability, gender, transgender.	Cairngorms National Park Authority human resources team Equality Advisory Forum	
a) Scrutinise job descriptions of vacant posts to ensure all the essential criteria are indeed essential.					a) All job descriptions are scrutinised by the human resources team prior to evaluation. We have generally removed the requirement for a



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
		of female appointments at senior levels (baseline is 2% SMT is female).			degree, unless this is deemed by the line manager to be absolutely essential, which is only happening in the minority of cases. We are also removing the requirement for a drivers licence for jobs that can be more desk based.
b) Ensure all posts are advertised with the potential of being part time or job share.					b) We have challenged our managers to move away from the default position that all posts should be full time. 90% of posts that are still considered to be full-time are now advertised on the basis that part time hours of 30 hours /



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
					week will be considered. They are also advertised as a job share option.
c) Recruitment advertising should highlight support for home working.					All jobs are advertised as being able to benefit from flexible working. However, given our hybrid approach is still at a trial stage, we have not yet advertised that job locations can be hybrid. Once we have committed to this following the trial (which ends in June 2023), recruitment advertising will be amended to reference hybrid working.
d) Recruitment application packs should contain information about childcare and accommodation provision in the area.					Not yet actioned.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
e) Recruitment advertising should be targeting minority equalities groups.					Our recruitment advertising includes the following at the very start of all adverts: Cairngorms National Park Authority is an inclusive organisation and we welcome applications from everyone irrespective of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, relationship status, disability, age and social class. We particularly welcome applications from individuals from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, disabled and LGBTQ+ communities, as they are under-represented in the environment sector.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
					We state also that We are disability confident committed employer, if you are an applicant with disabilities who meets the essential requirements of the post, we will interview you. In all circumstances Cairngorms National Park Authority appoints on merit-based evidence the applicant supplies in meeting the essential criteria for the post.
f) Recruitment advertising should include testimonials from staff who represent minority groups.					Not yet actioned.
g) Survey staff recruited in the last two years					Not yet actioned.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
to assess their views about the interview process in terms of inclusion.					
h) Work with Inclusion Scotland to support internships from the disabled community.					In 2021, we recruited an intern through Inclusion Scotland. The internship lasted 10 months to May 2022 and gave staff a valuable opportunity to learn more about the intern's experience of disability. It also helped us reconsider some of our practices to ensure inclusivity. This was an effective model and we are hoping to repeat it in 2024.
i) Work with other equalities groups (e.g. Backbone) to develop support for					Not yet actioned.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
internships from other minority groups.					
j) Support the work of Backbone on the Changing Landscapes – Actioning Change Symposium.					Cairngorms National Park Authority has been an active partner in the symposium, and also provided part funding towards it.
We will encourage a higher staff uptake of reporting on Equalities data: practical steps include:	Staff representing minority groups will feel supported and listened to by the organisation. They will feel included and understood, and comfortable with being open about the groups they	Disclosure from majority staff representing minority groups.	All	Cairngorms National Park Authority human resources team. Equality Advisory Forum	
a) Implement new human resources software whereby equalities data can be self-updated.					a) New human resources software was installed in March 2021. This has increased reporting stats, and also the accuracy of them. In addition, in 2022 we installed WebRecruit, an electronic applicant



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
	represent. They will feel that they have the same opportunities as all staff.				tracking system for all our recruitment activity and we have identified that this has resulted in more accurate applicant reporting of equalities data.
b) Ensure all staff feel that their working environment is a safe environment for disclosure.					b) We have signed up to the LGBT Charter and have developed an Action Plan of work to achieve this. We have invited staff to display their pronouns and wear their ID badges on rainbow lanyards and have feedback from minority staff who said this visibility made them feel very welcome.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
					We have also established an internal equality, diversity, and inclusion advocacy group to provide all staff with a safe space to discuss lived experience. This group also informs our equalities work, and members are the LGBT Charter champions
c) We will seek to engage with minority staff groups to identify barriers to disclosure, and how we might overcome those barriers.					c) Partly being actioned both through the internal equality group and the LGBT Charter, but there is still more to be done in this regard.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
We will seek to ensure that all our staff welcome diversity in the staff group by:	Staff are comfortable with a diverse workforce, champion diversity and challenge incidents that seek to undermine such diversity within the workforce.	100% staff and Board trained in equalities, unconscious bias and having appropriate conversations around diversity. 100% management and Board trained in allyship.	All	Cairngorms National Park Authority human resources team Equality Advisory Forum	
a) We will proactively drive improved knowledge and understanding of equalities through progressive and engaged equalities training and ally-ship programmes.					a) Comprehensive on-site training was procured in 2022, with very positive feedback. This was supplemented by LGBT training delivered as part of the LGBT Charter journey. The organisation has signed up with Somewhere: for us and their Rainbow Enterprise Network and is now publicly an ally organisation.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
b) We will establish an internally focussed equalities strategy and will set up an internal equality advisory group to support work to ensure equalities is embedded in all staff policies and procedures.					b) The group has now been established and actively informs all our equality work. We have now to focus on developing an equalities strategy, to implement alongside our equal opportunities policy and LGBT action plan
c) We will Incorporate equality and diversity metrics into performance reporting on an annual basis to ensure actions are driven by senior management.					c) Still to action



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress report 2021-2023
d) We will set up peer networks, eg for young people (18 – 30); women, carers, LBTPQ+ staff etc, and where numbers are low, will seek to align with such networks within similar partner organisations.					d) Our neurodiversity policy allows for peer support. We are in discussion with NatureScot regarding inclusion of Park Authority staff in their peer networks.
e) We will establish a mentorship programme, which will support people seeking development within the organisation.					e) Still to action

Outcome 2: Promoting and celebrating a national park for all visitors (led by Colin Simpson, Head of Visitor Services and Active Travel)



Evidence:

- a) Current UK data indicates a national social split ABC1 53% C2DE 47% but visitor survey data for Cairngorms National Park indicates fewer, but increasing numbers, of visitors from the 'latter group. This data also indicates Cairngorms National Park receives fewer, but again increasing, visitors from black and ethnic minority groups than the national average – see targets below. Cairngorms National Park data collected from five yearly, 12 month visitor survey conducting 2,500 face to face interviews around the National Park.

Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
Preferentially promote outdoor experiences that free and low cost and work with businesses to support programmes encouraging people to experience the National Park from C2DE backgrounds.	a) Increase the percentage of visitors from C2 D & E social groups	<p>Increase closer to National 53%:47%</p> <p>2020</p> <p>ABC1 70% C2DE 27%</p> <p>2015</p> <p>ABC1 75% C2DE 18% Note: Data not 100% because not all</p>	All	<p>Cairngorms Business Partnership</p> <p>Cairngorms Tourism Partnership</p> <p>Ranger services</p>	<p>No further quantitative data on percentage of visitors from different groups - measurement is from five yearly Cairngorms visitor survey – next in 2024. Cairngorms National Park Authority has bought into Scottish people and nature survey from 2023 to get more frequent data in future. Rangers organised six “our natural heritage” days with 107 participants. Travel grants used to support people accessing the National Park.</p>



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
		interviewed would respond.			
Promote experiences that are accessible to black and ethnic minorities.	a) Increase the percentage of visitors of black and ethnic minorities to the national 4%.	Increase closer to National 4% 2020 BEM 2.4% 2015 BEM 1.0%	BAME	Cairngorms Business Partnership Cairngorms Tourism Partnership Backbone Ranger services	Quantitative data on percentage of visitors from different groups is mainly from five yearly Cairngorms visitor survey – next in 2024. In a one-off survey of visitors in 2022 as part of Capercaillie project 95.4% were white with 4.6% BEM. Activity with Black Adventure Scotland (planning underway) and Backbone (already delivered) to give ethnic minorities, refugees, and asylum seekers opportunities to experience the National Park. Overall outreach activity with disadvantaged groups in 2022 involved 159 adults and 78 children.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
Promote a wide range of experiences that are accessible to people regardless of ability.	Increase number of visitor opportunities for people with disabilities.	Increase the proportion of visitors with a disability from 9% (2020) to 13%	Disability	Cairngorms Business Partnership Cairngorms Tourism Partnership Ranger services	Quantitative data on percentage of visitors from different groups is mainly from five yearly Cairngorms visitor survey – next in 2024. In a one-off survey of visitors in 2022 as part of Capercaillie project 23% stated they had a health condition (13%) or disability (12%). Cairngorms Business Partnership working with Euan's guide and Visit Aberdeenshire event support businesses in offering more experiences suitable for those with a disability. Cairngorms National Park Authority volunteer rangers helped support the provision of activities for those with a disability at the 2022 Able2Adventure activity day.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
					Cairngorms National Park Authority has and continues to invest in bringing more paths up to all abilities standard.
Promote a wide range of experiences that are accessible to people regardless of age	Increase number of visitor opportunities for young people.	Increase the percentage of young and older people visiting from baseline of 16 – 34 years 22% (2019 / 2020) 65+ 18% (2019 / 2020) Further data on youth engagement required.	Young people	Cairngorms Business Partnership Cairngorms Tourism Partnership Ranger services Cairngorms National Park Authority Visitor experience team	No further quantitative data on percentage of visitors from different groups - measurement is from five yearly Cairngorms visitor survey – next in 2024. Cairngorms Business Partnership winter campaign undertaken in 2022 / 2023 aimed at those not tied to school holidays ie younger & older age groups. Largest single group targeted with social media element was 25-34.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
				Young Scot	

Outcome 3: - Ensuring and enhancing more inclusive access to nature (led by Sarah Henshall, Head of Conservation)

Evidence of need:

- a) Anecdotal evidence and feedback from providers indicate that attendance at nature-based activities and events, biological recording and conservation volunteering typically has little representation from BAME communities, people with mental and physical health disabilities and those in the socio-economic brackets C2 / D / E.
- b) None of our volunteer rangers identify as an ethnic minority, 2% identify with a disability, and more than 50% have household incomes above £25k.
- c) Data gathered at Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend events is very limited. No respondents identify themselves as from BAME communities, 7.2% consider themselves disabled, half of whom consider their disability being mental health. There is no data on sexual orientation, socio-economic classification.

Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
Gather more socio-economic data from attendees at nature-based events.	We understand more about hard to reach groups'	Baseline data increased participation in wildlife groups,	All	Cairngorms National Park Authority	Cairngorms Nature Big Weekend (CNBW). Cairngorms Nature Festival (CNF)



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
	interaction with nature.	volunteering, and recording increased attendance at events 10% of BIG w / e and ranger events targeted at inclusion groups.		Ranger services Cairngorms Nature BIG weekend partners environmental volunteering & biological recording organisations	Cairngorms Nature Big Weekend (CNBW) was online in 2021 due to Covid. 2022 it was back in person. Feedback was collated but did not collect socioeconomic data other than where the respondents lived. In 2023 the CNBW has evolved into the 10 day Cairngorms Nature Festival, the opportunity to gather equalities information will be considered when gathering feedback and evaluation.
Improve understanding of target groups' needs, aspirations and barriers through face-to-face interviews, surveys and focus groups.			BAME communities C2 / D / E communities People with mental and physical		Need to develop this work area further. This year through the Cairngorms Nature Festival we are working with refugee groups and Homestart Highland. We are communicating with these groups to establish



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
			health disabilities		their interests, barriers, and needs.
Recruit and support Cairngorms nature ambassadors by facilitating access to nature-based experiences in the National Park and providing support to share those experiences amongst peer groups.	People from target inclusion groups feel welcome and at ease being part of nature based activities.		All		Yet to be fully developed. One of our partnership projects Rare Invertebrates in the Cairngorms has species champions that promote and deliver activities and provide opportunities for groups to experience and help conserve some of our rarest insects at iconic sites in the Cairngorms.
Provide training and skills development opportunities for people from target inclusion groups					Not yet actioned
Showcase activities that involve inclusion groups.					Through partnerships with Able2Adventure, Nature4Health, Badaguish and Alzheimer Scotland, the Cairngorms Nature Festival offers tailored activities for inclusion groups, including



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
					people with disabilities, refugees, and older people. Paddling with Pride was featured in Cairngorms Voices. The group is part funded by Cairngorms Youth Local Action Group fund via the Cairngorms Trust. It offers people from the LGBT community in the National Park (and further afield) a safe and social space to meet up, get out on the water, learn new skills and generally, have a lot of fun. Sessions are held at Loch Morlich.
Tailor events in CNBW and ranger programmes specifically to meet the needs of inclusion groups.	There are lots of opportunities for people from a wider range of		BAME, C2 / D / E, mental & physical health.	Cairngorms National Park Authority	CNBW was online in 2021 due to Covid. 2022 it was back in person, of 74 events four were specifically targeted for people with disabilities.



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
	backgrounds to get involved in conservation and nature related activities.			Ranger services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canoeing for disabled young people• Paddle boarding for disabled young people• Off road wheelchair walks• Hill walking for autistic adults <p>The programme for the Cairngorms Nature Festival 2023 is still in development but there are currently six events specifically for inclusion groups, with at least two more planned, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• handcycling for disabled adults• inclusive canoeing for disabled families• adaptive biking and off-road wheelchair taster sessions



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
					<ul style="list-style-type: none">• outdoor climbing for adults with disabilities• guided adaptive biking for disabled families <p>The new Cairngorms Nature Festival website allows events to be easily searched using a range of criteria including; wheelchair access, toilets, family friendly and free events, and on event pages public transport and full accessibility information is displayed, including any hidden costs such as parking fees.</p>
Subsidise transport costs for people to get to outdoor events and take nature-based activities indoors for those who can't get out.			C2 / D / E, people with physical and mental health disabilities		For some of the key inclusion events with this year's Cairngorms Nature Festival we are including transport for groups to attend. Cairngorms National Park Authority travel grants used



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
					to support travel to the National Park – 10 offered in 2021 / 2022 and 22 in 2022 / 2023. Additional funding for school trips and ranger events held in schools.
Develop partnerships with support workers and carers to build relationships and provide safe, supportive environments.					Bringing nature indoors. Working with care homes in our local community to bring nature indoors by creating an outdoors nature experience indoors, an indoor walk in nature, through images, soundscapes and tactile items in a dedicated area of the home. Through Heritage Horizons; Cairngorms 2030 the UK's first Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre has been developed. Enabling people living with dementia and their family and carers to experience the mental and



Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
					physical benefits of spending time outdoors.
Support local wildlife groups' engagement with the wider community.			All		Groundwork started on this. Reached out and made contact with six wildlife groups in Cairngorms National Park to understand their motivations, aspirations, current activities, and methods of engagement. Establishing how we can support these groups to develop and engage more widely.

Outcome 4: More equality groups participate in Cairngorms National Park Authority led consultations and stakeholder forums / groups to influence decisions made in relation to the management of the Cairngorms National Park (led by Olly Davies Head of Communications).

Evidence of need:

- a) 2019 equalities survey of Cairngorms National Park Authority led [stakeholder forums & groups](#) shows 16.14% of those involved are under 45 years of age.



- b) 2019 equalities survey of Cairngorms National Park Authority led [stakeholder forums & groups](#) shows 3.7% of those involved are from a non-white ethnic background.
- c) 2019 LDP consultation equality data showed 40% female consultees; 12% under the age of 45; and 6% identifying a disability, though the sample size was small as few respondents completed equality questionnaire.

Action	Aim / output	Target	Equality group	Lead partners	Progress Report 2021 - 2023
Share 2019 equality survey results with Cairngorms National Park Authority-led stakeholder forums & groups to discuss how more engagement with under 45 year olds and ethnic minority groups can be achieved.	Equalities surveys will show an increase in participation of younger and more diverse ethnic groups.	Increase towards 25% under 45 year olds (16.14% 2020 baseline) and 4% non-white ethnic backgrounds (3.5% 2020 baseline).	Under 45 year olds and ethnic minority groups - BAME	Equality Advisory Panel Cairngorms Youth Action Team Backbone	Specific focus on gathering feedback from under-represented groups as part of National Park Partnership Plan consultations. During the informal consultation phase, just under 5% of respondents came from ethnic minority backgrounds and 5% identified as having a disability. Just under 45% of respondents were aged under 45. During the formal consultation phase, 1.5% of respondents identified as being from an ethnic minority background, 6% as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, 13% as having a disability and 27% as



					being aged under 45. We have continued gathering equalities monitoring information as part of our Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 programme but have experienced low completion rates on some questions – particularly those around gender and sexuality – which we will be picking up with Equality Advisory Panel soon.
Provide captioning and / or BSL interpretation on request for all live streamed forums and meetings held by Cairngorms National Park Authority, including board and planning meetings.	Cairngorms National Park Authority meetings – and key strategic discussions – are accessible to a wider range of audiences, particularly those with disabilities.	All board and planning meetings to have the option of captioning and / or BSL interpretation. Roll out this approach to other forums as they go online.	Disabled audiences and those with access requirements.	Equality Advisory Panel.	Captioning and / or BSL interpretation has been offered on request for all board and planning meetings since 2021. We also took the decision for our National Park Partnership Plan launch to provide captioning and BSL interpretation without anyone requesting it and will do so in future for major Park Authority events. All promotional videos for the Partnership Plan and



					Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 were appropriately captioned and social media activity has included alt text on all images since mid 2022.
Audit the existing Cairngorms National Park website to determine its suitability for audiences with access requirements, and address any issues raised. Ensure any tools used for online consultation are audited in the same way.	Cairngorms National Park website and the information it provides accessible to a wider range of audiences.	For the Cairngorms National Park website to be an exemplar within the public sector in Scotland for audience accessibility, and for all identified issues to be addressed within the same financial year.	Disabled audiences and those with access requirements.	Equality Advisory Panel	A full audit of our website was conducted in November 2021 by accessibility experts the Digital Accessibility Centre, including testing by users with a range of disabilities. The audit was complementary about several elements of the site, however, specific issues were flagged around third-party plugins, the accessibility of the site for users of screen readers, and certain hard-coded design elements not being in line with WCAG 2.2 best practice guidance. A number of these recommendations have been taken forward on our current site, however, there were



					significant structural issues highlighted which will require a more holistic approach. This (alongside specific user testing with audiences with access requirements) has been included as a key requirement in our new website development tender, which will be awarded in summer 2023.
Conduct user experience testing on the existing Cairngorms National Park website with a variety of audience types (including those with access requirements, ethnic minority groups etc) to ensure it is fit for purpose and addresses audience needs.	To flag any issues with the existing site and to ensure it goes beyond simple compliance with legislation to be genuinely usable and representative.	For the Cairngorms National Park website to be an exemplar within the public sector in Scotland for audience accessibility.	Disabled audiences and those with access requirements; ethnic minority audiences.	Equality Advisory Panel Backbone	As above, the Digital Accessibility Centre audit included testing with users with access requirements and our upcoming website development tender specifies that dedicated testing be carried out with a range of audiences to improve overall user experience. This process will begin in summer 2023.
Identify specific actions within the National Park Partnership Plan	To make the Park Plan as representative	Deliver at least five activities designed to	Under 45 year olds, disabled and ethnic	Equality Advisory Panel	We supplemented the National Park Partnership Plan responses referenced



consultation process to engage with a more diverse range of audiences (under 45 year olds, disabled and ethnic minority groups etc).	as possible for all stakeholders within Cairngorms National Park.	reach under 45s, ethnic minority communities and / or audiences with disabilities within the consultation period.	minority groups.	Cairngorms Youth Action Team Backbone	above with specific sessions with our Equalities Advisory Panel and 27 qualitative, 45-minute interviews with individuals and organisations representing under-represented communities. The consultation was also shared through various networks (eg All the Elements, Boots and Beards, Cairngorms Youth Action Team etc) and via dedicated community Facebook groups to boost engagement. Instagram was particularly effective in driving response from younger audiences, with nearly 200 comments received during the informal consultation phase through the platform.
Review all Cairngorms National Park Authority promotional materials, particularly those relating to	To ensure our materials are reflective of all the audiences	All Cairngorms National Park Authority promotional	Under 45 year olds, disabled and ethnic	Equality Advisory Panel	As part of our brand refresh project (which kicked off in summer 2022), we have created a new set of brand



stakeholder consultation, to ensure they use appropriate imagery reflective of the diverse range of audiences engaging with the National Park. Commission new material (photography, video, case studies etc) where required.	we are trying to reach.	materials, particularly those relating to stakeholder consultation, to include imagery reflective of the diverse range of audiences we serve.	minority groups.	Cairngorms Youth Action Team Backbone	guidelines including the core value of equality: 'The Cairngorms is a Park for All. No matter who you are or where you come from, everyone is welcome and all are accepted. Everything we do is in partnership and the more diverse our voices the stronger we are.' This is accompanied by specific advice on the types of imagery we use, the audiences we serve, and how we can be more accessible and inclusive in our language and materials. This in turn has influenced our approach to promotional materials and we are taking forward a rolling programme of updates in this area, commissioning over 1,000 new images of people in the National Park (with a specific focus on under-represented
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Cairngorms

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					audiences) and taking practical steps to use plain English, minimum font sizes / colour contrasts and much more.
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