



Scottish Natural Heritage

All of nature for all of Scotland

Scottish Natural Heritage – Achieving Equality and Diversity Naturally

Annual Report on progress towards achieving Gender Equality

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) published its first Gender Equality Scheme in June 2007. This set out our commitment to gender equality and the actions we proposed taking over the three years of the scheme 2007 to 2010. This annual report details the progress we have made in the second year (July 2008 until June 2009) of the scheme and highlights our key areas of work for the future.

Our Gender Equality Scheme sits along side our Race Equality Scheme and our Disability Equality Scheme; however our overall approach to equality and diversity incorporates all six equality strands and therefore also includes age, religion and belief, and sexual orientation.

The equality scheme action plan attached at Annex 1 details the progress we have made in relation to each task.

What are our main achievements in the past year?

1. Much of our work in the past year has continued to focussed on developing mechanisms, raising awareness and gathering information to help staff identify what actions need to be taken to ensure that our projects, policies and general decision-making contribute to the wider pursuit of equality, as defined and established as an objective through relevant legislation. Over the past year our efforts to this end have been focussed on a number of key areas.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Toolkit

2. This internal microsite provides a link to guidance and evidence to support the EqIA process. Wherever practicable we have adopted recognised best practice to facilitate greater access to the information by using plain English, and by employing menus, tabs and links providing a choice in preferred communication. We have also included a section on meeting the needs of the different equality groups, including gender. This helps to explain the different possible requirements as well as those of acquired gender and preferred gender. Links are also provided to help people to access information provided through research undertaken by partner organisations and through the information portals of representative gender groups.

Training & Awareness Raising

3. We use the e-learning package '*samedifference*' to allow staff to learn at a pace that suits them. This provides the opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of equality issues with practical solutions on how best to address these in the workplace and in the provision of services. We have also reviewed the content of the induction packs supplied to new staff and of the three day induction event and ensured that both contain an equality and diversity element. Mandatory completion of the relevant '*samedifference*' modules has been integrated into the Management Diploma qualification and other training courses that we offer staff. We continue to share best practice and enjoy reciprocal training with partner organisations such as the Cairngorms National Park and Forestry Commission.
4. As a result of feedback from staff we also identified the need for a more participative and targeted awareness-raising approach in the training of staff. This led the Equality and Diversity Team to develop an awareness raising session to inform staff and managers of their individual responsibilities and to help them gain an understanding of the Public Sector Duties. The first session was delivered in May 2009 and further sessions will be held across all of SNH's 35 offices in the coming year.

5. To complement this awareness raising activity we also highlight general equality and diversity issues through articles in the internal staff newsletter, presentations at management meetings, intranet and notice board flyers.

Research – Gathering Information

6. In 2007, we commissioned research to help us to engage representatives and members of organisations representing gender (and other) equality strands to identify the barriers faced by our customers in accessing the natural heritage and our services. This has provided a useful initial insight. To build on and broaden our understanding we have also gathered together and referenced partners' and similar organisations' published research. In combination this will inform our future approach and will be of value in developing the single equality scheme that we intend to produce by the end of November this year.
7. In 2008, we conducted our third Equal Pay Review. The purpose of this was to determine the existence of any discrimination not only on the grounds of gender but also on the grounds of the other 5 main equality strands. The analysis looked at a broad range of pay-related issues including basic salary, work patterns, performance awards, promotions, and allowances. Although the review led to a number of recommendations for change, these related to internal systems and were geared to improving the equal pay review process. The review did not identify any areas of discrimination in SNH's reward system.
8. SNH also participated in a benchmarking exercise comparing a number of public sector organisations (Public Sector Corporate Services VfM indicators). This compared a number of equality indicators including the number of woman in leadership positions. On this indicator SNH came out below average (18% for SNH compared to an average of 36%). A separate study of women in leadership and management in SNH identifies the barriers facing women in accessing leadership and management roles. This study makes a number of recommendations for SNH to support women in achieving leadership and management positions. This will be used to help develop the single equality scheme due later this year.
9. In 2008 SNH launched a new communications strategy and to help to evaluate the effectiveness of our external communications we have developed a quarterly customer survey – The Scottish Nature Omnibus. The pilot survey undertaken during March 2009 has already brought to light some interesting data in relation to gender. For example males accessing the countryside are more likely to be taking part in active pursuits, whilst females respond more positively to the natural heritage itself. The survey has now begun and we hope to gather further, more robust data over the coming year.

10. As well as developing external communications we are committed to improving our internal communications. Action on this front has included a survey of our employees about the different methods/forms of media (oral, email, written etc) they preferred to use. An initial analysis of this has been carried out but we intend to further scrutinise the feedback to determine if there are any particular differences in preference between men and woman. Any action identified as a result of this will again be taken forward as part of our single equality scheme.

Employment

11. In relation to employment, progress in the past year has focussed mainly on the gathering of information and evidence on SNH's workforce demographics to inform the reviews outlined above. Prior to this analysis, and following the implementation of a new employee database, an exercise was necessary to capture employees' equality data. This involved an element of awareness raising before we requested submission of the information needed. This data capture exercise highlighted a continued reluctance amongst employees to provide some of the more sensitive data and highlighted the need for more encouragement and advice to employees on how to complete their data, including the option 'prefer not to say'.
12. The HR Team have also taken steps to assess employment policies from an equality angle as part of the piloting of the Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit. A number of employment policies have been subject to assessments (e.g. the SNH Travel Plan, Grievance Policy & Procedures and Recruitment) and this will lead to the further refinement of policy in these areas.
13. Another key piece of work was raising awareness of the need to eliminate bullying and harassment in the workplace and promoting SNH as an organisation that aims to treat employees (and customers) with dignity and respect. This has been done through SNH's News and Information Bulletins and will continue to be highlighted in the forthcoming Equality & Diversity Roadshows.

Grants and Funding

14. SNH has continued to grant aid projects that encourage participation in the natural heritage. This includes funding projects such as Garden for Life at Gorgie City Farm, Edinburgh. This is a volunteer programme attracting a variety of groups including an Asian women's group who garden for herbs and a Men in Mind (mental health project for men) group. Another example is funding the Borders Women's Aid "Children's Service Goes Wild in the Country", which benefits from a three year commitment to enable women from the Jedburgh women's refuge and their children to enjoy the outdoors and take part in environmental education projects.

15. We also have funded access projects such as the Loch Leven Heritage trail which is a 14km all ability trail around the National Nature Reserve and a ranger base at Glen Doll in Angus which also has all abilities access. These projects benefit many of the equality strands, including gender, by improving perception of safety, enabling accompanied recreation and improving pushchair access.
16. Following an EqlA of our Ranger Policy we conducted a review of our terms and conditions for SNH supported ranger services. The new terms and conditions include a requirement for SNH supported ranger services to consider the needs of different equality groups in the provision of their services, producing a statement of how they intend to achieve this over the period of the grant.

Other Projects and Initiatives

17. In 2008, a project to develop the SNH website was initiated and through the completion of an EqlA we identified the benefits of greater accessibility, both technically and through the language and images we use. Completion of the Website Project and the participation of the Equality and Diversity team as web authors will allow better communication of how SNH is meeting its Public Sector Equality Duties and improve direct access to full EqlAs, as well as opening the possibility of greater web-based consultations for involving equality groups.
18. The new SNH Path Policy which has recently been developed has also been impact assessed. Given that women have particular concerns regarding access to the outdoors, gender groups such as Engender were given the opportunity to be involved in the consultation process. The results of the EqlA have led to the development of policy for the construction of footpaths that ensures accessibility for all is considered. In particular the policy identifies actions for those with pushchair or wheelchair; however, the policy should more broadly help meet the needs of all equality strands.

Involving and Consulting, engagement with Relevant Groups

19. As a result of feedback from the EqlA toolkit we have revised guidance on involving and consulting. Staff can now gain access to a new Customer Database holding contact details for equality groups that can be asked to participate on consultation and involvement. We are further developing our engagement with equality groups and trying to broaden the range of groups we consult and involve in the development of our activities. As well as broadening the range of groups according to their specific equality interest, we also aim to ensure that we engage with groups from all areas of Scotland. In the future we will also consider whether there is a specifically rural dimension to any of the equality strands.

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20. SNH continues its involvement with the National Access Forum. Established to assist with the implementation of access rights, this body brings together all relevant interests and has a broad advisory role to SNH and other organisations on a wide range of matters relating to the Scottish Outdoor Access code. The forum also supports local access forum with an important role in resolving any difficulties that may arise at a local level, including those in relation to equality.
21. We continue to work closely with other public sector organisations to share good practice, research and information and attend regular meetings of the Non-departmental Public Bodies Equality Forum. We also continue to work with organisations such as Cairngorms and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authorities, Highland Community Planning Partnership and Highland and Islands Equality Forum in sharing information and working together wherever possible.

What will we be doing in the year ahead?

Single Equality Scheme

22. Our main focus for the coming year is to produce a Single Equality Scheme in which we aim to achieve a clearer relationship between the evidence gathered, the actions recorded in our action plans and our corporate priorities. The actions will be informed by much of the evidence gathered by the various surveys, reviews and pieces of research that have been described previously in this report. We will also give greater consideration to how we monitor that we are achieving change to benefit the equality groups.

EqIA Toolkit

23. We will continue to provide further detailed EqIA Workshops for staff following on from the awareness raising sessions discussed earlier in this report. This will enable a phased roll-out of the EqIA toolkit, resulting in full organisational use in 2010. The Equality and Diversity team will continue to support Units by joining EqIA teams and providing advice and guidance. Our Diversity Champions Network also remains a valuable source of support and information to the Corporate Divisions supporting delivery of the Road show where available. We intend to establish a requirement to complete EqIAs before bidding for budgets towards activities to ensure that the business includes consideration for Equality and Diversity from the initiation of projects.

Research – Gathering Information

24. Next year we will undertake further work to collate and assess relevant research and information that can assist in the EqIA process. We will also identify gaps in research and conduct further evidence gathering as necessary.

Employment

25. An HR Action Plan for Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity is under development. The aim of the plan is to outline the actions that SNH proposes to take to prevent discrimination and promote equality and diversity within its employment. This will be informed by the Equal Pay Review, the public sector benchmarking exercise and the management report on women in leadership and management roles. This action plan will form part of the single equality scheme that we intend to publish by the end of November this year.

Grants & Procurement

26. The review of both our grants and tendering processes will include consideration of how to introduce new terms and conditions to include a requirement to take into account the needs of different equality groups in the provision of our funding and in our purchasing.

Other Project & Initiatives

27. SNH will be hosting the Scottish Government NDPB Equality Forum in July 2009. As well as sharing best practice, the group is undertaking a quality check of member organisations' EqlA. Under discussion is the sharing of services, with mediation services at the fore and the possibility of facilitating a Staff Equality Forum – possibly an electronic discussion board. These could allow a degree of anonymity and realising the gains of sharing of ideas and experiences.

Involving and Consulting, engagement with Relevant Groups

28. As stated earlier we intend to develop our approach to involving and consulting equality groups. An example of our planned activity is participation in the Highland Community Planning Partnership, supporting community capacity-building events at a variety of locations throughout the summer and autumn of 2009. The aim is to identify the priorities of equality groups who use our services and ways in which the Partnership can work with the community to ensure these priorities are addressed. We intend outcomes of this activity to inform the approach for future community engagement for all members of the Partnership.

Conclusion

29. The past year has seen a considerable focus on developing the systems to allow us to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Duties and raising awareness of staff. As highlighted in this report, we have supported some key initiatives which should benefit gender equality. As we embed the EqlA toolkit across the organisation and staff become more aware of the ways in which their activities can affect gender equality, we hope to be able to report on more initiatives that have a positive impact in relation to gender groups.

Annex 1 - Action Plan – Progress at June 2009

1. Implementing & Promoting the Disability Equality Scheme & Equality and Diversity Programme				
Task	Responsibility	Target Date	Progress	Outcome
Identify dedicated resources (staff and financial)	HR Management Team	March 2008	Diversity Budget secured	Monitor progress against Equality Action Plans <i>Project resourcing secured until March 2009.</i>
		November 2007	Equality & diversity incorporated into the business planning process for each unit	
		January 2008	Diversity Champions appointed	
Continue Development of Equality and Diversity Programme including development of overall Diversity Strategy	HR/Customer Relations	Ongoing with review in March 2009	Project Initiation Document agreed with People Strategy Project Board and Management Team	Equality mainstreamed with corporate priorities
Review and issue statement on progress in SNH's Annual Report	HR Corporate Planning and Evaluation Unit (CPEU)	June 2008 June 2009	<i>Statement included in 2007/08 report</i> <i>Statement included in 2008/09 draft report</i>	Statement of progress included in Annual Report
Review and revise scheme on a three yearly basis	HR/CPEU	June 2010	Completed	Scheme published every 3 years Change to Single Equalities Scheme for Publication end of November 2009

2. Involvement & Consultation				
Task	Responsibility	Target Date	Progress	Outcome
Develop guidance on production of impact assessments for use across the organisation	HR/Customer Relations	March 2009	Completed	EqIA built into all policy and project planning processes
Develop an overall approach/strategy to the involvement of people with all equality groups including gender.	HR/Customer Relations	Ongoing	Equality & Diversity microsite includes guidance to staff on involving all equality groups	Development of better means of communication, build knowledge of issues and consultation in matters of developing policy and practice
3.Strategic and Policy Development				
Task	Responsibility	Target Date	Progress	Outcome
Review inclusion of equality and diversity statement and targets within the Corporate Plan and Business Plans	Management Team (CPEU)	November 2007	Equality & Diversity has been incorporated into our business planning process	Capture activity and monitor progress towards meeting our equality action plan and any new objectives
Develop a programme across SNH for prioritising and producing impact assessments for existing and new policies	All Units	March 2010	This has been included in the Corporate Business Plan. To concentrate on new or reviewed activities/policies etc	All relevant policies equality proofed for disability

4. SNH Functions & Services				
Partnerships				
Task	Responsibility	Target Date	Progress	Outcome
Include conditions in contract specifications to encourage compliance with our equality duties	Procurement Project Managers	TBD	Under consideration	Increased awareness of equality issues to organisations out with public sector
Ensure equality duties considered when assessing projects for SNH grant assistance	Grants	TBD	Under consideration	Increase in number of equality groups /individuals applying to SNH for grants
Work in partnership with the Scottish Resource Centre for Women in Science, engineering and technology and Careers Scotland, and education providers to promote in schools and colleges the opportunities for working in SNH Consider other action to be taken to address gender balance across levels and job types	HR Quality of Life	Under review	To be considered and prioritised in development of the Single Equality Scheme.	Improved gender balance of potential recruits in underrepresented posts
Publications				
Establish mechanisms by which information can be made equally available to men and women	Publications Communications & Promotions	June 2010	An audit has been conducted of our publications, EqIA completed for Magazine publication, internal newsletter revised and website is being completely reviewed.	Information easily accessible to all

			To be considered and prioritised in developing Single Equality Scheme.	
Recreation & Access				
Consider building more multi-purpose paths and routes suitable for pushchair users	Quality of Life Managed Sites	June 2010	SNH Path Policy Statement EqIA and consultation completed. This will encourage creation of more accessible footpaths.	Increase in number of women visiting natural heritage sites
Provision of safety literature in public places	Quality of Life Communications & Promotions	June 2010	An Audit has been conducted of our publications and we have provided funding to Ranger services with Equality awareness terms included. The new website provides links to safety information to places to visit in order to enable decision before arriving on site. Leaflets provide accessibility information, again to enable an informed decision.	Increase in women and children visiting natural heritage sites

5. Employment				
Task	Responsibility	Target Date	Progress	Outcome
Review the introduction of a general diversity competency (incorporating disability, race, gender, etc) for all managers and employees	HR Training	End of 2007	Complete	Managers appraised against diversity competency. Annual monitoring of appraisal trends
Ensure next Equal Pay Audit addresses equal pay issues	HR	March 2009	Complete	Ensure equal pay for equal work
Consider further action to promote our flexible working policy for all staff regardless of gender, age and commitments	HR	August 2007	Initial Impact Assessment on policy conducted with further influence expected from Equal pay Audit and Reward and Recognition Project	Increased take up of flexible working options for men and employees reaching retirement age
Recruitment and selection				
Consider promotion of work placement opportunities in areas where gender imbalance (i.e., women on National Nature Reserves and other site related projects roles and men in administrative roles)	HR	TBD	Initial analysis of gender balance in recruitment and establishment completed. Will be further considered and prioritised in developing Single Equality Scheme	More women working in traditional male jobs, more men working in traditional female jobs

Target recruitment of specific jobs (senior managers and junior administrators to redress imbalance – review	HR	As vacancies arise	Will be further considered and prioritised in developing Single Equality Scheme	Increase numbers of women and men applying for non-traditional roles
6. Equality and Diversity Awareness Raising and Training				
Task	Responsibility	Target Date	Progress	Outcomes
Initiate a programme to raise awareness of diversity issues ensuring SNH employees aware of obligations and responsibilities	HR (initially) <i>Now E & D CPEU</i>	Ongoing	Awareness raised from 44 % in 2007 to 66% in 2008 Road show preview and content completed. Road shows start mid June and run until 1 March 2010 providing all Staff with opportunity to attend. Ongoing Communications internally through Newsletter, notice boards and message of the day.	Increase awareness of equality & diversity internally and externally. Raise awareness of need for staff to do EqIAs.
Further build Diversity into Corporate Training Programme to increase employee awareness and understanding of diversity issues	HR Training/ <i>E & D CPEU</i>	End of 2007	<i>Completed</i> Induction pack and event, elearning package and mandatory modules for Management Diploma, recruitment and selection. EqIA workshops to follow	As above

			Roadshow attendances	
7. Monitoring and Evaluation				
Task	Responsibility	Target Date	Progress	Outcome
Identify areas/functions for monitoring and develop a equality and diversity monitoring programme	All Units	End of 2007	Measures have been built into our corporate systems. This enables us to identify any areas for further development	Able to measure progress towards equalities duties. <i>This will be reviewed as a consequence of development of the Single Equalities Scheme</i>
Take account of equality duties in developing the Inclusion Survey (Customer Survey) to be conducted in 2008	CPEU	July 2008	Final Report Published	Assess gaps in current service requirements in relation to disabled customers
Conduct employee survey with specific questions relating to equality and diversity. Review annually	HR	January 2007 April 2008	completed	To establish current level of awareness of diversity issues (including gender) across SNH
Review use of website to gather data and feedback on gender (and other equality) issues	Strategy & Communications	Ongoing	In progress as part of website project	Ability to measure improvements in services since establishment of DED
Carry out monitoring of workforce gender balance through development of 'People Report'	HR	December 2007	Ongoing	Monitor and report equality issues in employment

Annex 2 - Units relevant to the general duty

The following represents a composite initial impact assessment of SNH's main programmes and services:

Unit	Section	Programme/ Service	Likelihood	Consequence	Score (Relevance to Equality Duties) *	Level of Priority *
Business Support Services	Property	DDA compliance	4	5	20	High
Human Resources		People Strategy	4	5	20	High
Quality of Life		Access	4	4	16	High
Communication & Promotion		Education & Information	4	4	16	High
Area		Education & Information	4	4	16	High
Quality of Life		Greenspace	4	4	16	High
Area		Greenspace	4	4	16	High
Communication & Promotion		Interpretation	4	4	16	High
Area		LNR	4	4	16	High
Quality of Life		NNR	4	4	16	High
Managed Sites		NNR	4	4	16	High
Area		NNR	4	4	16	High
Business Support Services	Procurement	Procurement	3	5	15	High
Communication & Promotion		Website	5	3	15	High
Corporate Planning		Customer Relations	4	3	12	Medium
Information Management		Natural Heritage Data	4	3	12	Medium
Quality of Life		Policy	4	3	12	Medium
Quality of Life		Research	4	3	12	Medium
Communication & Promotion		Sharing Good Practice	4	3	12	Medium
Communication & Promotion		Written Publications	4	3	12	Medium
Communication & Promotion		Key Messages	5	2	10	Medium
Strategic Direction	Strategic Direction	Creating a better & healthier place to live	3	3	9	Medium

Joint Projects		Framework Grants	3	3	9	Medium
Joint Projects		Grants	3	3	9	Medium
Communication & Promotion		Promotions & Events	3	3	9	Medium
Area		Rangers	3	3	9	Medium
DSU Policy & Advice		Research	3	3	9	Medium
Strategic Direction	Strategic Direction	Volunteering	3	3	9	Medium
Information Systems Services		Business Change	2	4	8	Medium
Joint Projects		Legal Partnership Agreements	2	4	8	Medium
Business Support Services	Cleaning	Cleaning	2	3	6	Low
Information Management		Development & Business Engagement	2	3	6	Low
Area		Grants	2	3	6	Low
Business Support Services	Health & Safety	Health Safety	2	3	6	Low
Strategic Direction	Strategic Direction	Landscape & Communities	2	3	6	Low
Information Management		Library	2	3	6	Low
Senior Management Unit		M/T & Board Processes	2	3	6	Low
Area		Meetings	3	2	6	Low
Strategic Direction	Strategic Direction	Supporting the Economy	2	3	6	Low
Corporate Planning		Annual Review	2	2	4	Low
Terrestrial Ecosystems		Biodiversity	2	2	4	Low
HR	Welfare	Casework	2	2	4	Low
Senior Management Unit		Correspondence	2	2	4	Low
Senior Management Unit		Events	2	2	4	Low
Area		Front of house	2	2	4	Low

Managed Sites		Natural Care	2	2	4	Low
Coastal & Marine Ecosystems		Research & Communication	2	2	4	Low
Business Support Services	Service Centre	Service Centre	2	2	4	Low
Information Systems Services		Technical	2	2	4	Low
Sustainable Use		Consultation	1	3	3	Low
Strategic Direction	Government & EU Relations	Promoting SNH	1	3	3	Low
Audit & Consultancy		Staff Inspection & Job Evaluation	1	3	3	Low
DSU Policy & Advice		Casework	2	1	2	Low
Corporate Planning		Corporate Plan	2	1	2	Low
Area		Correspondence	2	1	2	Low
Evidence Base, Research & Monitoring		Evidence base	2	1	2	Low
Audit & Consultancy		Fraud Audit	1	2	2	Low
DSU Policy & Advice		Project Management System	2	1	2	Low
Statutory Framework		Publications	2	1	2	Low
Evidence Base, Research & Monitoring		Research & Monitoring	2	1	2	Low
Audit & Consultancy		Audit	1	1	1	Low
Finance		Business Support	1	1	1	Low
Evidence Base, Research & Monitoring		Casework	1	1	1	Low
Strategic Direction	Strategic Direction	Climate Change	1	1	1	Low

Audit & Consultancy		Consultancy	1	1	Low 1
Strategic Direction	Strategic Direction	Consultation	1	1	Low 1
Terrestrial Ecosystems		Earth Science, Uplands & Peatlands	1	1	Low 1
Business Support Services	Greening	Greening	1	1	Low 1
Statutory Framework		Legal Interpretive Advice	1	1	Low 1
Statutory Framework		Licensing	1	1	Low 1
Strategic Direction	Strategic Direction	Managing the Seas	1	1	Low 1
Coastal & Marine Ecosystems		New Legislation	1	1	Low 1
Strategic Direction	Government & EU Relations	Parliamentary Monitoring	1	1	Low 1
Strategic Direction	Government & EU Relations	Parliamentary Questions	1	1	Low 1
Managed Sites		Protected areas data	1	1	Low 1
Evidence Base, Research & Monitoring		Quality Assurance	1	1	Low 1
Strategic Direction	Government & EU Relations	Raising political awareness amongst staff	1	1	Low 1
Strategic Direction	Strategic Direction	Scottish Biodiversity Strategy	1	1	Low 1
Managed Sites		Site Condition Monitoring	1	1	Low 1
Finance		Transactions	1	1	1 Low

1. Degree of relevance to Equality Duties: 1 =lowest, 20 =Highest
2. Level of Priority – High, Medium, Low