



Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Strategic Equality

Plan 2012

At present this document is available in other formats including large print, plain text on a CD-Rom and Braille (upon request).

If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format, please contact the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority on 01874 624437 or e-mail

enquiries@breconbeacons.org for more information

Contents

1.	Foreword			3
2.	Introduction			4
	2.1	Who is protected under the Act		4
	2.2	The general duty		5
	2.3	The specific duty		5
3	Background and context			7
	3.1	Overview		7
	3.2	What are the Statutory Purposes and Statutory Duty of the National Park Authority		7
	3.3	Our customers		7
	3.3.1	Age Profile		8
	3.3.2	Disability		10
	3.3.3	Gender reassignment		11
	3.3.4	Marriage or civil partnership		11
	3.3.5	Pregnancy or maternity		11
	3.3.6	Race / National Identity / Ethnicity		11
	3.3.7	Religion or philosophical beliefs		12
	3.3.8	Sex / gender profile		12
	3.3.9	Sexual orientation		12
	3.3.10	Welsh language		12
	3.4	Members and employees of the National Park Authority		13
	3.4.1	Members		13
	3.4.2	Employees		13
	3.4.3	Remuneration policy		14
	3.4.4	Member and staff training		14
	3.4.5	Procurement		15
	3.5	What the National Park Authority currently does		15
	3.6	Summary of service delivery to groups with protected characteristics		17
	3.7	Engaging communities		17
4	What are we looking to do in the future			18

1. Foreword

We are delighted to present Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) which sets out how we will ensure that our Authority will embrace diversity and promote equality to make this National Park accessible and inclusive to everyone.

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority values the rich diversity and creative potential that people with different backgrounds, skills and abilities bring to the National Park. We recognise that we have a key responsibility for ensuring that all our Members, Officers and staff promote equality, fair treatment and social inclusion at all times. As part of this vision, we have produced this document which explains how we plan to meet our statutory duties in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and provides a clear starting point to be applied across our Authority to ensure we deliver high standards of service fairly across all sectors of our communities, user groups, businesses and visitors. To make that vision a reality, we are determined to promote diversity, inclusiveness, equality of access and eliminate inequalities in everything that we do.

Our values are central to the way we provide our National Park services.

We are committed to challenging the way we work by being innovative and dynamic in tackling the issues that have a direct impact on how people experience our National Park. In addition to this, we hope to build on the relationships we have already nurtured with disabled groups, Black and Minority Ethnic groups and other groups inside and outside the National Park's boundary. Through their experiences and valuable knowledge of the Park we have an ambition to improve these relationships and develop new ones which demonstrate our commitment to making a fundamental difference to the lives of different people experiencing our National Park and accessing our services.

We see this Plan as a living, breathing document which we hope will evolve through our commitment and multi-faceted partnership work. As part of the feedback we welcome the views of all interested individuals, partner organization, user groups and stakeholders so that we may influence the Plan's development in the years to come. We look forward to hearing from you.

Mr John Cook
Chief Executive



Mrs Julie James
Chairman



Cllr Andrew James
Member Champion,
Equality



2. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 is about ensuring a fair deal for everyone and focuses on ending discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and outcome and fostering good relations between different individuals and communities.

It replaces the previous 116 different equality statutes in one all encompassing statute. It simplifies and clarifies the role of Local Authorities as leaders in achieving equality improvements for their citizens and communities. Specific duties developed by the Welsh Government provide detailed and challenging requirements for Authorities but an overall emphasis on 'due regard' leaves authorities with greater freedom to produce distinctive local solutions and greater accountability to their communities.

2.1 Who is protected under the Act?

The Act sets out a new prescribed list of protected characteristics which replace what have traditionally been referred to as Equality Strands. These groups are protected through the general and specific duties of the Act.

The new general duty covers the following protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage & Civil partnerships
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
7. Religion or philosophical belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation
10. Welsh language

It applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

2.2 The general duty:

The Aims of the Act:

Local Authorities and other public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
2. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
3. foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are essentially the aims of the Act. Having due regard for advancing these equality aims involves:

1. removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
2. taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in
3. other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This will include the type of community cohesion activities developed by Local Authorities and Community Safety Partnerships in the past as well as initiatives such as intergenerational projects which may not have been linked to the equality agenda previously.

2.3 The specific duty:

Each of the specific duties outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 applies to Local Authorities, Fire and Rescue Authorities and the National Parks in Wales.

The requirements for National Park Authorities are detailed below:

- 2.3.1 Develop and publish Equality Objectives and a Strategic Equality Plans.
- 2.3.2 Assessing impact
- 2.3.3 Collect Equality Information
- 2.3.4 Publish relevant information

- 2.3.5 Employment information
- 2.3.6 Pay Differences
- 2.3.7 Member and Staff Training
- 2.3.8 Procurement
- 2.3.9 Reporting and publishing
- 2.3.10 Accessibility
- 2.2.11 Review

3. Background and Context

3.1 Overview

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority is a single purpose public authority that employs 128 members of staff (January 2012), including full time, part time and seasonal posts and is governed by 24 Members, 16 elected Members representing the Constituent Local Authorities and 8 Members appointed by the Welsh Government.

3.2 What are the Statutory Purposes and Statutory Duty of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority?

1. to protect the natural beauty of the Park;
2. to help visitors enjoy and understand it; and
3. to foster the wellbeing of local people.

Within the remit of the National Park Authority we have identified 2 key areas where we as an Authority can engage with individuals that share a protected characteristic:

1. Promoting equality of access
2. Promoting understanding and enjoyment

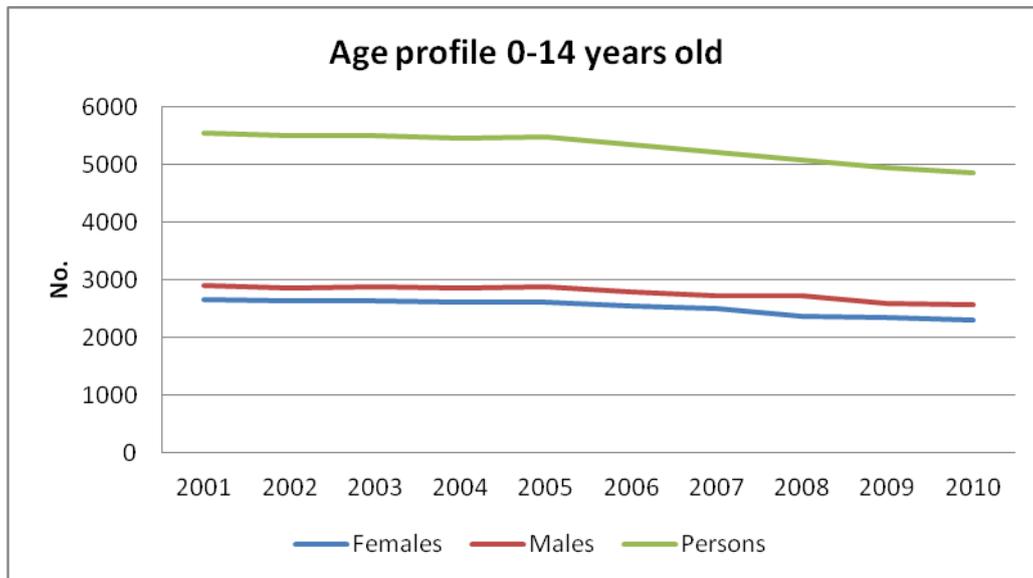
3.3 Our customers

The Park is home to 33,000 people with Brecon the largest settlement (7,900) and together with Crickhowell, Gilwern, Hay on Wye and Talgarth account for approximately 46% of the Park's inhabitants. In addition over three and a half million people each year visit the Brecon Beacons National Park and the work of the National Park Authority reflects the needs of residents and visitors combined with the purposes of protecting and enhancing the environment.

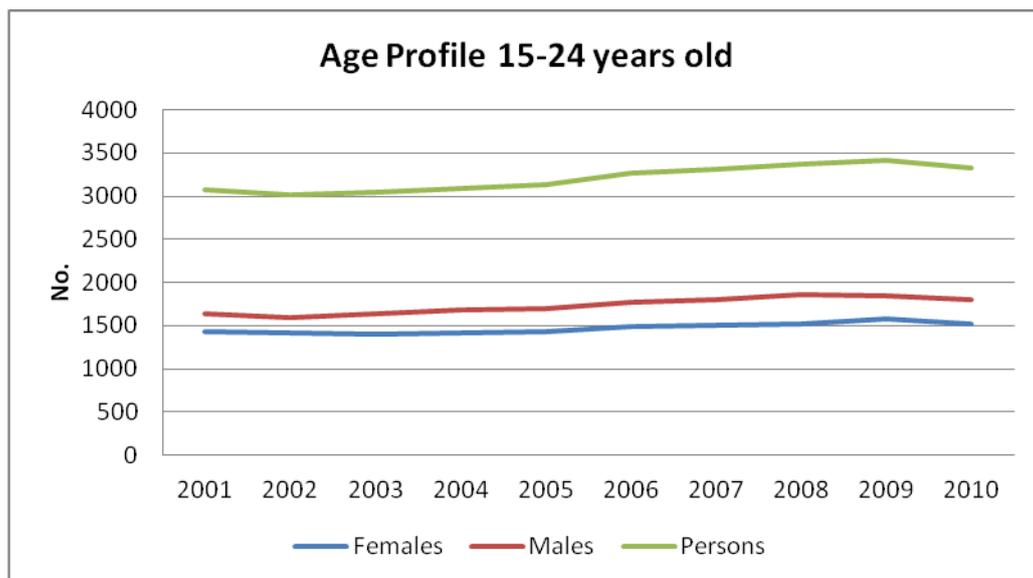
Administratively, the Brecon Beacons National Park includes 50 Community Councils and 9 Unitary Authorities comprising Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath / Port Talbot, Powys, Rhondda / Cynon Taf and Torfaen with Powys accounting for 66% of the Park's geographical area. We are indebted to the Welsh Government, Demography, Heritage and Equalities Statistics Department of the Statistics Directorate who produced the following information for the Authority.

3.3.1 Age profile 2001-2010

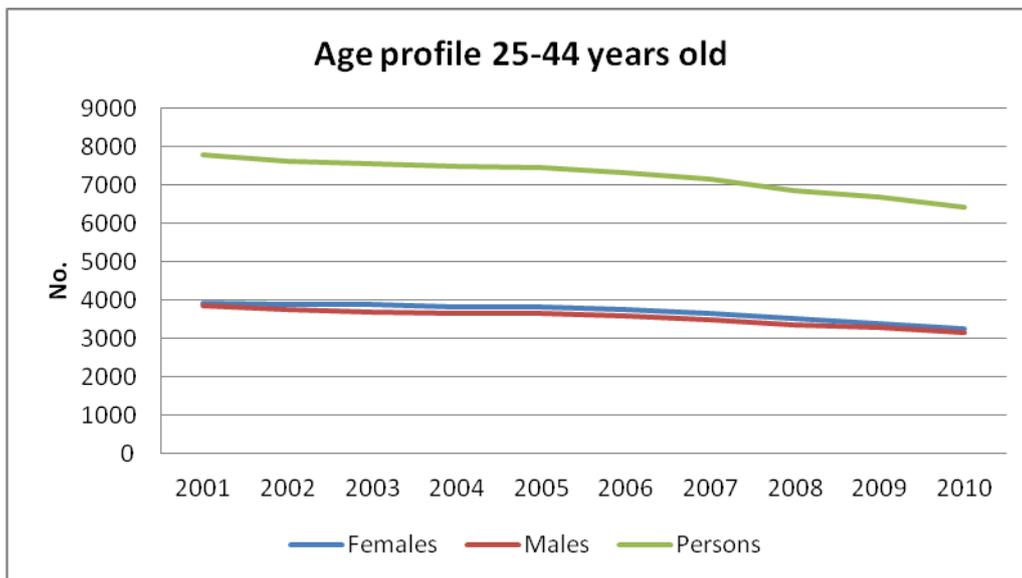
Whilst gender numbers have remained constant the change in age profile of people living within the National Park has been significant.



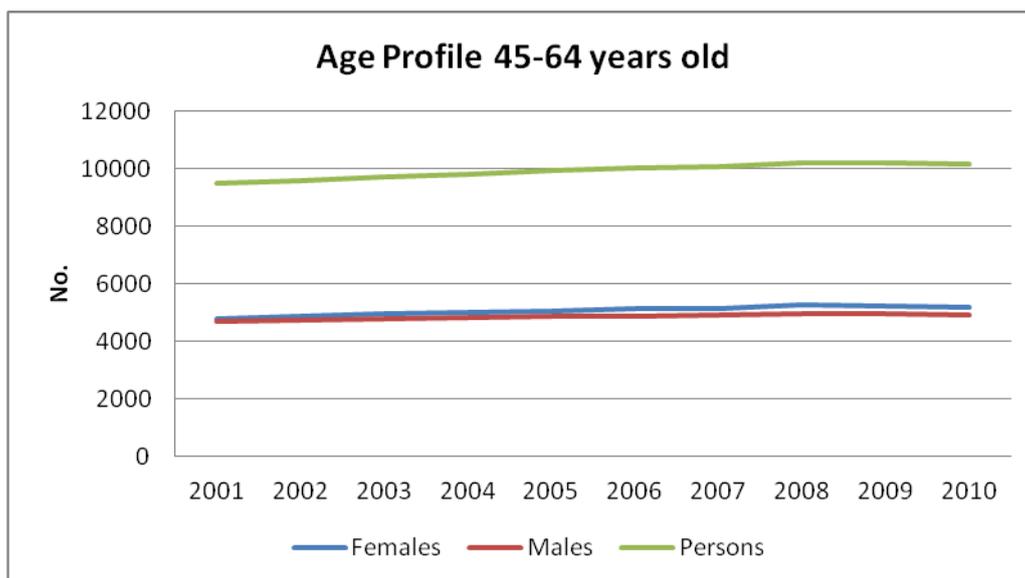
Between 2001 and 2010 the total number of people aged between 0-14 years has declined by 685 (-12.3%). The female population has declined by 13.5% and males by 11.3%.



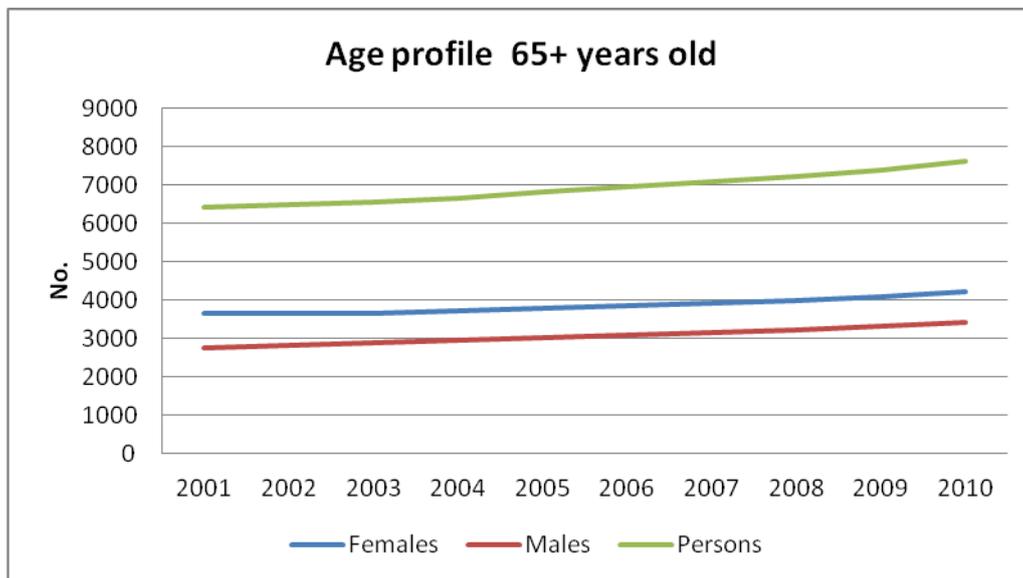
Between 2001 and 2010 the total number of people aged between 15-24 years has increased by 257 (8.4%). The female population has increased by 6% and males by 10.5%.



Between 2001 and 2010 the total number of people aged between 25-44 years declined by 1,372 (-17.6%). The female population has decreased by 17% and males by 18.3%.



Between 2001 and 2010 the total number of people aged between 45-64 years increased by 654 (6.9%). The female population increased by 8.9% and males by 4.8%.



Between 2001 and 2010 the total number of people aged 65+ increased by 1,218 (19%). The female population increased by 15% and males by 24.5%.

3.3.2 Disability

Table 1: Proportion of the working age population with a disability, by National Park area, 2010(a)

National Park	DDA disabled (b)	Total disabled (c)
Brecon Beacons National Park	21.1	24.2
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	19.2	24.5
Snowdonia National Park	15.9	21.3
Wales	20.2	23.5

Source: Annual Population Survey, 2010

(a) Working age refers to males aged 16-64 and females aged 16-59.

(b) DDA disabled includes those people who are classed as disabled according to the Disability Discrimination Act.

(c) Total disability includes those people with a DDA disability and those people with a work-limiting disability only.

In 2010, 20.2 per cent of working age people in Wales were disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act and 23.5 per cent of working age people had a disability in total.

For the National Park areas:

- Brecon Beacons National Park had a higher proportion of disabled people in both categories than the Wales average.
- Snowdonia National Park had a lower proportion of disabled people in both categories than the Wales average.

- Pembrokeshire Coast National Park had a lower than average proportion of DDA disabled people (19.2 per cent) but a higher than average proportion of people in total with a disability (21.3 per cent) than the Wales average.

3.3.3 Gender reassignment

No information is held by the National Park Authority

3.3.4 Marriage or civil partnership

No information is held by the National Park Authority

3.3.5 Pregnancy or maternity

No information is held by the National Park Authority

3.3.6 Race / National Identity / Ethnicity

Table 2: National Identity by National Park area, 2010

National Park	<i>percentage</i>		
	Welsh National Identity	Non-Welsh National Identity	Total
Brecon Beacons National Park	56.1	43.9	100.0
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	54.6	45.4	100.0
Snow donia National Park	61.2	38.8	100.0
Wales	65.0	35.0	100.0

- In 2010, 65.0 per cent of people in Wales declared their national identity as Welsh.
- The percentage of people with a Welsh national identity who lived in each of the national park areas was lower than the average for Wales.
- Of the three national park areas, Snowdonia had the highest proportion of people with a Welsh national identity (61.2 per cent) and Pembrokeshire Coast had the lowest (54.6 per cent).
- In 2010, 1.3 per cent of people living in National Park areas were from a black or minority ethnic background compared to 3.8 per cent for Wales.

3.3.7 Religion or philosophical belief

- In 2010, 71.1 per cent of people living in National Park areas declared themselves as Christian compared to 68.2 per cent of people in Wales.
- 2.4 per cent of people living in National Park areas declared themselves as non-Christian compared to 3.3 per cent of people in Wales.
- 26.5 per cent of people living in National Park areas declared themselves as having no religion compared to 28.6 per cent of people in Wales.

3.3.8 Sex / Gender profile 2001-2010

- Between 2001 and 2010 the Gender profile of the residents of the National Park remained constant:

- Source: Welsh Government - [005287] Mid Year Population Estimates (2001 onwards), by National Park (quinary year of age, gender)

	2001			2010			% change In population
Female	16,464	51%		16,495	51%		0.20%
Male	15,831	49%		15,872	49%		0.30%
Total	32,295	100%		32,367	100%		0.20%

3.3.9 Sexual orientation

- In 2010, 2.1 per cent of people living in National Park areas declared themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual compared to 1.2 per cent of people in Wales as a whole.
- 5.9 per cent of people living in National Park areas preferred not to state their sexual identity or provided no response compared to 4.3 per cent of people in Wales.

Note:

National Parks Equality Profile

- Data on disability, ethnicity, national identity and religion is sourced from the Annual Population Survey 2010.
- Data on sexual identity is sourced from the Integrated Household Survey, April 2010, to March 2011.

Some of the data in this document are based on small sample sizes and must be treated with caution.

Source; Welsh Government, Demography, Heritage and Equalities Statistics Department

3.3.10 Welsh Language

15.5% of the National Park's residents are Welsh speaking and the great majority of the Welsh speakers live in the West of the Park. Some of the communities with the highest percentage of Welsh speakers nationally are within the Park's Western boundaries (Quarter Bach 75.5%, Cwm Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Strategic Equality Plan 2012

Amman 68.5%). The number of staff who speak welsh or have attained a level of understanding / fluency are detailed below

	Non Speaker	Basic	Learner	Intermediate	Fluent	Unknown	Qualifications
Number of individual staff	24	35	16	10	14	16	23 Staff between them hold the following qualifications 7 x O levels, 20 x GCSEs 1 x AS level, 3 x A levels, 1 x Degree
% of staff total	20.9%	30.4%	13.9%	8.7%	12.2%	13.9%	20% of staff have a qualification

(Source: BBNPA Welsh Language Monitoring Scheme Report 2009/10)

The Authority has a number of posts designated as Welsh essential, predominantly for staff working in the west of the Park and we also provide, in conjunction with Powys County Council, weekly welsh learners classes.

3.4 Members and Employees of the National Park Authority

3.4.1 Members:

There are currently 23 Members of the National Park Authority (February 2012) – 70% are male (16) and 30% (7) female.

3.4.2 Employees:

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Comment</u>				
Age:	Staff Age profile: (January 2012)				
	16-24	25-44	45-64	65+	Total
Female	1	31	36	5	73
Male	1	27	24	3	55
Total	2	58	60	8	128
%	2	45	47	6	100

Disability:	There are currently four staff (3%) whose conditions would fall within the definition of disability
Gender reassignment	No information recorded
Marriage & Civil partnerships	No information recorded
Pregnancy and maternity	There are currently 4 staff on Maternity leave (3.1%)
Race:	97.7% of staff describe themselves as White European and three staff (2.3%) describe themselves as from a non-white background
Religion or philosophical belief	No information recorded
Sex:	There are 128 employees (January 2012) – 43% are male and 57% are female.
Sexual orientation	No information recorded
Welsh Language	

The National Park Authority acknowledges that there are gaps in providing the range of information relating to Members and staff and the different protected characteristics and it is our intention to address the requirements within the next twelve months and include the information in the first annual report.

3.4.3 Remuneration policy

There are currently two remuneration schemes operating in the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority. The Authority implemented Single Status in 1997 and the Authority's non-Chief Officer grades and salary levels are determined using the National Joint Council (NJC) Job Evaluation scheme. Salaries for Chief Officers were evaluated using the Hay Scheme in 2007.

3.4.4 Member and Staff Training

The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) provided Equality awareness training for Members and senior managers in January 2012 and further training in Equality Impact assessments is scheduled for March 2012.

Staff awareness training is scheduled for March and April 2012 with further training in equality Impact assessments following in May 2012.

The Authority has also provided staff training in the following areas:

- Social inclusion
- Disability awareness
- Sign language
- Deaf awareness
- Welsh language

3.4.5 Procurement

At the current time the Authority does not have a specific policy aimed at using procurement to address inequality in society as the additional information or requirements required of our suppliers may disadvantage and be disproportionate to our local small scale suppliers.

3.5 What the National Park Authority currently does

Within the National Park Authority we have a number of strategic documents and policies that require consultation across a wide spectrum of interested parties and organisations. During the preparation and consultation stage of the National Park Management Plan 2010 – 2015 and the Local Development Plan (currently post deposit, prior to submission to the Welsh Government) we invited comments from a large number of organisations including the following: Welsh Government, County and Community Councils, Abergavenny Shop Mobility, Black Environment Network Wales, Brecknock Access Group, CAIR (Monmouthshire Disablement Association), Equality & Human Rights Commission, Disability Wales/Anabledd Cymru, Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee, Disabled Ramblers, Ghurkha Welfare Association, Gypsy Council, Mosaic and Mosaic Cymru, Organisation for Disabled People, The Disabled Ramblers, Travellers Law Reform Project who have been asked to contribute and provide comment on the proposed strategic documents.

Within the National Park Authority a number of Departments currently and have previously provided services and activities tailored towards specific groups including:

- Improved access to our Visitor Centres, Baby changing and breast feeding facilities.
- Provision of information including: printed material / signage attributes / email responses / physical access around and within properties etc.

- Guided Walks programme to include walks with a range of ease - for the young and old. Provide walking/education programmes for University of the Third Age (U3A), young children, new play scheme.
- Easy access trails - Sychryd all ability trail and more are planned within the Waterfall Country Management Plan.
- Our Education Team and Wardens work with local schools and special needs groups within and outside the National Park boundary to provide educational services and promote understanding and enjoyment
- Our Interpretation, Information and Tourism teams have produced a range of services specifically aimed at a younger audience including *“Explosive times”* interpreting the gunpowder works at Pontneddfechan; *“Trails and Tales for Families”* in Abergavenny and *‘Goblin Gwladus’* an audio trail interpreting the industrial heritage along Afon Nedd fechan.
- Our Community Development team provide a service to communities and groups within and outside the National Park boundary including MOSAIC, Geocaching Project, Rural Skills project and our Easy Access Guide which is produced in and available in a printed and online version.
- Planning (TAN 12) – Developers are required to submit design and access statements which require them to explain how their proposed development ensures ease of access for all by adopting inclusive design principles that deliver adequate provision for all people including those with mobility impairments, sensory impairments and learning difficulties.
- The Authority’s employment policies include Equality, People with Disabilities, Work Options (Work Life balance), compassionate and emergency leave, flexible working patterns, Family friendly policies including maternity, paternity, partner, adoption and parental leave The Authority supports the *“Two Ticks”* scheme to encourage the recruitment of people with disabilities.
- IT & Communications –
 - All web site development work is done with attention to the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)’s guidance and standards on delivering websites that are usable by people with disabilities. An overview of these subjects is available here <http://www.w3.org/WAI/users/Overview.html>
 - The team that develops the Authority’s websites has a solid grounding in these standards and a track record of delivering highly accessible sites for the Authority and other customers.
 - Whenever new website work is being considered by the Authority the WAI guidance is used to inform these considerations and any subsequent specification.

- The website is used to promote all the work the Authority does on making the Park more accessible to people with disabilities, e.g. easier access routes and those from ethnic minorities, e.g. MOSAIC.

3.6 Summary of service delivery to groups with protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Promoting access	Promote understanding & Enjoyment
Age	Yes	Yes
Disability	Yes	Yes
Gender Reassignment	No	No
Marriage & Civil partnership	No	No
Pregnancy & Maternity	Partial*	Partial*
Race	Yes	Yes
Religion or Philosophical belief	No	No
Sex	No	No
Sexual orientation	No	No
Welsh Language	Yes	Yes

Note* where we have indicated partial, the Authority promotes activities and services to families whilst not specifically pregnancy or maternity related.

3.7 Engaging communities

The Authority directly engaged with public sector bodies, Community Councils and interested groups between November 2011 and the end of January 2012. We received four responses from interested parties and the responses and Authority comments are provided in **Appendix 1**.

The Authority has engaged with and sought additional support and guidance from Monmouthshire and Powys County Councils, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and we would like to thank these bodies for their support.

4. What are we looking to do in the future?

Strategic Equality Action Plan

	Description	Outcome	Output	By when
1.	Provide training for both members and employees on equality awareness and equality impact assessments	Both staff and Members have a better insight into equality issues and use the Equality Impact Assessments to improve the delivery and services to groups with protected characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managers and Officers will be more proficient and aware of Equality issues when considering projects, strategies and policies. 2. Members will be more proficient and aware of equality issues when making decisions. 	August 2012
2.	<p>Introduce Equality Impact screening and assessments for all Authority reports</p> <p>This will ensure that all reports presented consider equality implications and provide Members with sufficient information to make informed decisions.</p>	All reports presented to Authority Committees for decisions i.e. Authority, Audit & Scrutiny and Planning, Access & Rights of Way be supported by Equality Screening or Equality Impact Assessment information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officers will have considered equality issues in the design and development stages of projects, strategies and policies. 	August 2012
3.	Through the Social Inclusion and Child Poverty Action Plans the Authority will work inclusively in local partnerships by developing partnerships which will help reach a wider audience and include	<p>We will work with the a greater number of groups with protected characteristics to increase their participation and improve their skills i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mosaic 	Rural Skills project: We will work with a minimum of 4 groups to deliver accredited Agored Cymru rural skills training.	April 2013

	organisations with skills and experience in working with excluded groups as well as those with a community or economic development role (B1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Skills project • Local schools 		
4.	Work with Deaf Awareness groups to incorporate standard symbols into our Visitor guides	To redesign our literature and promote our services and centres to people with disabilities	Redesign our Visitor Guide for 2013/14 and publicise our facilities to people with disabilities.	April 2013
5.	Continue to work in partnership with the Brecknock Access Group to screen Planning Application Design & Access Statements	Planning applications are considered with the needs of people with disabilities screened from the outset	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Application Design & Access statements are screened by the Brecknock Access group 2. Members are able to make better informed decisions with due regard to access / disability issues considered 	April 2012
6.	Employment Information relating to Members and staff across the range of protected characteristics	Employment information published in the first annual report	Employment information to be provided for Members and staff to provide an evidence base for future use.	March 2013