

# Equality Impact Assessment Form

## Part 1 – Initial Screening

### 1. People responsible for completing the assessment:

Roger Matthews (South Downs & Coastal Communities Spatial Project Delivery Leader)  
Emily Ball (Projects Champion)

### 2. Name of the project:

South Downs & Coastal communities – a South East spatial project

### 3. What is the main purpose or aims of the project?

Natural England's South East region has identified the South Downs & Coastal Communities as one of four Regional Spatial Projects. These spatial project areas have been selected because the evidence, from regional datasets and staff consultation, tells us that they are the priority areas for the delivery of many of Natural England's outcomes.

#### These new spatial projects will do two key things:

- they will focus Natural England's skills, efforts and resources within the project areas, thereby maximising delivery for the natural environment across Natural England's outcomes, within set timescales, using all the levers available where they have best effect;
- they will develop new and innovative ways of working – this will include using project techniques, as well as integrating the different strands of Natural England's work, and in the way we work with partners, bringing added value.

The South Downs & Coastal Communities Spatial Project will work with key partners to:

1. Lead a landscape scale approach to restoring habitat and species diversity through improved land management, including actions to protect and deliver ecosystem services, and other public services. Raising awareness of the value of ecosystem services and securing investment to maintain/restore them.
2. Increase the number, diversity and frequency of people enjoying the South Downs and other greenspaces, with a focus on the areas of poorest health performance.
3. Increase the financial viability and sustainability of land management practices, in-part through the improved targeting and delivery of agri-environment schemes.
4. Find opportunities for the promotion of renewables and the creation of more robust ecological networks in the face of climate change.
5. Achieve the above through partnership working and integrated delivery of Natural England's remit.

### 4. Who will be the beneficiaries of the project?

- Staff working on the project who will have opportunities to grow new experience and skills (plus the region will benefit from resource efficiencies this project brings),
- Staff in partner organisations with involvement in project delivery and steering,
- Local communities involved in and/or effected by specific aspects of the project e.g. health related sub-projects – this will be further defined later,
- Local businesses (including farmers) linked to sustainable land management.

**5. Has the project been explained to those it might affect directly or indirectly?**

Yes, the Spatial Project’s rationale and purpose has been explained to those directly affected. Internal staff have received various information notes and had the opportunity to input through workshops. External partners have been engaged (see below). Circulation of the project’s action plan and iterations of this are ongoing. Staff will be selected to work on the project from local teams.

Those indirectly effected will be informed as part of the project implementation process. Certain parts of the local community may be effected and this will be reviewed later on. In particular, component projects and associated actions around sustainable land management, will be implemented through partners, and it is expected that explanation will be delivered through these partners.

**6. Have you consulted on this project?**

Yes, there has been an extensive scoping consultation, both internally and externally with key delivery partners such as the South Downs Joint Committee and the Environment Agency etc, through a series of workshops, face-to-face discussions and e-mail correspondence. This bottom-up approach has shaped the content of the project. Impact on the wider community included within the spatial project area is not yet fully known; further consultation will be undertaken where appropriate on specific component projects e.g. schools project.

**7. Please completed the following table and give reasons/comments for where:**

*(a) The project could have a positive impact on any of the equality target groups or contributes to promoting equality, equal opportunities and improving relations within equality target groups.*

*(b) The project could have a negative impact on any of the equality target groups, i.e. disadvantage them in any way.*

***If the impact is high, or the policy will impact significant amounts of people, a full EqIA should be completed.***

Equality Target Group	a) Positive impact		b) Negative impact		Reason/Comment
	High	Low	High	Low	

<b>Men</b>		x			Green exercise and access activities e.g. WHI initiatives, will target 'unhealthy' groups
<b>Women</b>		x			Green exercise and access activities e.g. WHI initiatives, will target 'unhealthy' groups
<b>Asian or Asian British people</b> <b>Black or Black British people</b> <b>White people (including Irish people)</b> <b>Chinese people</b> <b>Mixed Race people</b> <b>Other racial/ethnic group (please specify)</b>		x			Likely bring about increased access and connections to nature within the South Downs for everybody, including all race groups.
<b>Disabled and deaf people</b>	X		X	X	Likely as a result of the project there will be a range of locally produced branded products, including wood fuel and we will influence the location of sales outlets to ensure accessibility for all.  Transport access issues will be addressed around links between local communities and schools and visits to local farms. The project will take into account disability needs.  Provisions will be made to aid and influence improved access routes onto the South Downs on Local Authority owned land
<b>Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual people</b>		x			Likely bring about increased access and connections to nature within the South Downs for everybody, including Gay and lesbian community
<b>Transgender people</b>		x			Likely bring about increased access and connections to nature within the South Downs for everybody, including transgender people
<b>Older people (50+)</b>	x				Given the use of volunteers on South Downs failing sites tends to occur on weekdays this will favour the involvement of retired citizens.
<b>Younger people (17-25) and children</b>	x				Schools education pilot projects will target local schools making links to sustainable farming and food and healthy schools promotions.
<b>Working patterns (P/T or part year)</b>		x			When selecting staff to work on these projects, staff working part time will be treated equally.
<b>Faith groups (please</b>		x			The project will bring about increased access and connections to nature within the South Downs for everybody, including various faith groups.

specify)					
Beliefs				X	Project will support production and promotion of local meat supply incl. Cattle, sheep and deer; staff that have strongly held beliefs not compatible with meat production will not be expected to have a hands-on role. Plus provision of livestock related infrastructure e.g. abattoirs.

**8. Please give a brief description of how this project benefits the equality target groups identified in the above table, i.e. promotes equality?**

- All aspects of the project that involve access, either the provision of new access, or an event that requires access, will be accessible to people with disabilities where possible.
- Activities that target areas of health deprivation will target men and women equally.
- The location of fuel wood outlets etc will ensure easy access for less mobile people,
- Volunteering events and groups are often favoured by older, retired people with more time on their hands,
- The education pilot project will favour younger people

*Please see table under section 7 for more detail.*

**9. If there is a negative impact on any equality target group, is the impact intended or legal?**

The low negative impact has been added to take into account the 'belief' area of diversity, under the assumption there is potential for staff involved, to object to aspects of the project associated with developing branding and marketing of local livestock (i.e. meat). The impact is not intended but rather a potential consequence.

**10. What actions could be taken to amend the project to minimise the negative impact?**

The process of allocating staff resource for the project will ensure that if staff members are not comfortable with any aspects of the project, such as livestock marketing and infrastructure, they will not be expected to work on such a particular action.

**11. If there is no evidence that the project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improves relations within equality target groups, what amendments could be made to achieve this?**

It is anticipated that the outcomes of this project will actively promote equality out of a consequence of delivery, particularly around the actions on encouraging more people to enjoy the outdoors (see question 8).

We will seek to influence partners to maximise equal opportunities, particularly around the recruitment of volunteers, the creation of tasks they could carry out and accessibility to sites. This will be reviewed as the project moves to implementation stage and the level of influence over partner activities becomes clearer.

**12. How will the project be implemented including any necessary training?**

The project's work programme does not necessitate any further training in relation to Equality and Diversity implementation.

**Full assessment necessary?**

**Yes/No**

**Is this Project:**

A new project

**Yes/No**

A change to an **existing** project

**Yes/No**

An existing project

**Yes/No**

**Is this Equality Impact Assessment:**

Predictive

**Yes/No**

Retrospective

**Yes/No**

**Date completed:** 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008

**Signed by Line/Project Manager: Emily Ball**

**Approved by Senior Management /Project Management Team:**

**Signed by Diversity lead within OD: Jo Collinge**