

Brecon Beacons
National Park Authority

Disability Equality Scheme & Action Plan 2006 – 2009

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A summary of this document will also be available.

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1. Foreword by Christopher Gledhill, Chief Executive of Brecon Beacons National Park Authority



We all have a vitally important role to play in placing disabled people's views at the heart of public policy, supporting the Government and influencing those around us to deliver disability equality. Long before legislation was passed in 2006 we, as National Park Authority, were very aware of the issues that disabled people faced when living in, working in or visiting the National Park.

For many years we have built good working relationships with disabled people and groups from inside and outside the Park boundary. Through their experiences and valuable knowledge of the Park we have put procedures in place that show our commitment to making a fundamental difference to the lives of disabled people visiting our Park or accessing our services.

During the summer and autumn of 2006, we endeavoured to engage with as many disabled people, their parents and carers as well as visitors to and residents of the Park, to gather as much information as possible to highlight priorities for the Authority's Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Action Plan. This document now identifies the key priorities that we need to address over the next three years.

The aim of the DES is to promote positive attitudes toward disabled people, encourage greater participation in public life, eliminate discrimination and disability-related harassment and promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

This entire process has provided a great opportunity to break down some of the barriers that disabled people face and we look forward to continuing this good work as we deliver our commitment to disability equality.

On behalf of Brecon Beacons National Park Authority I would like to sincerely thank all those who have contributed toward our DES.

2. Introduction

Equality of opportunity for disabled people is not just about meeting a legal obligation; it is also about fairness and good sense, and a moral duty to challenge discrimination. The purpose of the Disability Equality Scheme (DES) is to make a commitment to take the needs of disabled people into account in everything we do, whether that's providing services, employing people, developing policies, communicating or consulting.

Throughout this document and in everything the National Park Authority does, our definition of "disability" is taken from the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In the DDA, a disabled person is defined as someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term (more than 12 months) impact on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. A person does not have to be registered disabled to fall within this definition. Neither do they need to have a Blue Badge or have a visible physical impairment.

This document is relevant to people who do not consider themselves disabled. It is relevant to people with chronic or progressive illnesses such as long-term depression, cancer, HIV, multiple sclerosis and diabetes. It is relevant to older people who may have difficulty walking or whose eyesight may be deteriorating. It is relevant, because where improvements are made for one group of people; they quite often make things better for everyone.

The Disability Equality Scheme sets out the National Park Authority's overall objectives for improving and addressing disability inequalities, the 6 priority areas that we are concentrating on, and the action plan which will deliver improvements. The 6 priority areas have been identified through an involvement process and consultation and, therefore include the issues which are very real to the disabled people that live in and visit the Brecon Beacons National Park. They are:

1. Employment
2. Training
3. Communication
4. Involvement & Consultation
5. Buildings Access & Environment
6. Service Delivery

3. Putting it all into Context

3.1. Why Have a Disability Equality Scheme?

The Disability Discrimination Act requires all public bodies to develop a Disability Equality Scheme, but the law does not specify what should go into it. The Disability Rights Commission recommends that a Disability Equality Scheme should analyse our practices on access, communication, employment and service delivery. The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Scheme is intended to do more than that, so it also covers all the areas that we consider would meet the requirements of the Brecon Beacons National Parks' communities and visitors.

We hope that this Disability Equality Scheme will help us achieve a number of things:

- Promote equality so that disabled people who live or work in the Brecon Beacons can enjoy their full human, social and political rights free from discrimination
- Meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and make sure that we are taking the needs and views of disabled people into account at all times
- Continuously monitor and improve the ways in which we deliver services to disabled people
- Meet the principles of the Social Model of Disability
- Become an Authority recognised for excellence and good practice

3.2. The Social Model of Disability

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has not yet adopted the "Social Model of Disability". However, the Disability Equality Training received by staff adheres to the Social Model of Disability. This distinguishes between "impairment" and "disability", and recognises that it is social barriers which often disable people and not their impairment. These barriers include people's attitudes to disability as well as physical and organisational barriers. The National Park Authority is therefore working towards identifying and removing as many of these barriers as possible.

One of the positive effects of adopting the Social Model is that issues of disability are seen as quality of life issues, and are not necessarily associated with health and social care.

We recognise that not everyone accepts the Social Model as the best way of approaching issues of disability. Our decision, however, is based on best practice, which encourages statutory organisations to take this approach. The

Social Model is also widely recognised as an improvement on the Medical Model which focuses on medical definitions and impairments.

3.3. Profile of Disability in the Brecon Beacons National Park

Information on the demographics of disability in Brecon Beacons National Park can be found in Appendix 1.

3.4. Profile of Disability amongst National Park Authority Employees and Members

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority is a relatively small public body that employs fewer than 130 members of staff, including full time, part-time and seasonal posts and is governed by 24 committee members. With such a low staffing level it is difficult to retain anonymity during the staff disability equality survey. Therefore, the findings remained broad in their context to ensure individuals' desire for anonymity. According to employment records, only one employee is registered as being disabled. However, the actual figure for employees with an impairment or long-term limiting condition is slightly higher than this because:

- Some employees do not consider themselves to be disabled.
- Some may not have declared a disability due to fear of discrimination.

3.5. Legal Responsibilities

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority must abide by all relevant legal responsibilities including:

- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Building Regulations 2000 and Part 'M' Requirements (Building regulation amendments 2003), when building or making alterations to NPA-owned buildings.
- Fire Precautions Act 1971 and Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 as amended 1999

We will also abide by our duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 to promote disability equality and, when carrying out our functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment that is unlawful under the Act
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

3.6. The Current Situation -2006

For several years, the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has been making progress towards eliminating discrimination towards disabled people, and providing equitable services. A list of some of the activities carried out and relevant initiatives can be found in Appendix 2.

The information gathering survey also highlighted a number of positive experiences by disabled people either visiting the national park or working with members of staff. Some of these are reflected in the disability equality survey responses to the questions listed below:

Question 16 - In your experience what is the general attitude of the national park staff when dealing with disabled people?

- Positive – surprisingly so, as not used to it!
- Both Brecon Park office and the mountain centre have a good attitude to disabled people as far as I am aware.
- Very good – a positive attitude shown by all BBNPA staff that I have had the privilege to work with.
- Positive attitude of staff.

Question 15a - Have any of the services undertaken by the BBNPA had either a positive or negative impact on your life?

- Positive impact – re: policies & strategies – when working in partnership with BBNP on strategic issues, BBNP have a good understanding of equalities issues

3.7. Partnership Working

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority works with several small, local groups including through the BBNPA Disabled Access Steering Group. This group meets quarterly to discuss and progress issues surrounding disabled access.

4. The Priorities or Key Areas

The BBNPA Disability Equality Scheme focuses on 6 key areas which have been identified through consultation with disabled employees and the disabled community. Please note that these key areas are not laid out in any particular order of priority. The Action Plan at the end of this document highlights the practical steps that we will take in each of these areas. It is important to note that these priorities are not the only activity being undertaken. The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority already carries out many initiatives to support disabled people as part of its everyday function, and this work will continue and improve wherever necessary. These initiatives can be found in Appendix 2.

The 6 priorities or key areas are:

- 4.1. Employment – including recruitment and retention of disabled people and striving to become an employer of choice.
- 4.2. Training – ensuring our staff have the right skills to bring about equality of service for disabled people
- 4.3. Communications – including how we communicate with our customers and staff, and providing information in accessible formats.
- 4.4. Involvement and Consultation – making sure that people can actively comment on our policies and practices.
- 4.5. Access - The built environment and access to the countryside – including access to national park premises and other facilities that the national park provides such as country parks.
- 4.6. Service delivery – Understanding how the services BBNPA affects and interacts with disabled people.

Each of these areas is discussed in more detail below.

4.1. Employment

Employment is about advertising for, recruiting, promoting and retaining employees within the National Park Authority. Removing barriers to recruitment is part of this aim.

Why is it a priority?

The National Park Authority has a moral, social and legal obligation to ensure that those in employment reflect the community it serves. Some barriers were highlighted by disabled people through our Disability Equality Scheme involvement process and some issues were

highlighted when the Human Resources Policies were reviewed in 2005.

What are we currently doing?

4.1.1. Recruitment information

National Park Authority recruitment information highlights our commitment to equality and diversity, and is sent to everyone who requests further information about an advertised job. This increases applicants' understanding from the outset of what their responsibilities are, and how seriously the organisation takes its obligations to eliminate discrimination and provide equitable access to employment opportunities.

4.1.2. Flexible working

The National Park Authority operates a flexi-time scheme and has a Flexible Working Policy to enable employees to work flexibly where possible, whilst taking into account service delivery issues. These policies were highlighted in the Employee Disability Survey as particularly helpful to disabled members of staff.

Requests for alternative work practices such as home working, job share, and a range of other ways to work flexibly are always considered carefully, and accommodated wherever possible.

4.1.3. Reasonable Adjustments

The National Park Authority complies with legislation which requires us to make reasonable adjustments to allow disabled people to attend interviews and to take up jobs within the authority. National Park Authority recruitment literature makes this commitment clear so that we encourage applications from disabled people.

4.2. Training

Training refers both to the training received by National Park members, employees and volunteers, and to providing equitable access to training opportunities for all members, employees, and volunteers where applicable.

Provision of training and development is a key strength of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, and it is keen to ensure that diversity training is targeted and appropriate to people's needs and the expectations of the authority.

Why is it a priority?

1. Training National Park employees in disability equality issues was highlighted in the Disabled Access Steering Group Action Plan in 2005 and again through the Disability Equality Scheme process as vital to ensure that employees understand the needs of disabled customers and can work to eliminate discrimination. The need for disability equality training for members and volunteers was also identified.
2. Equal access to training opportunities is key to ensuring that all employees can take advantage of opportunities to develop careers, maintain and enhance skills.

What are we currently doing?

4.2.1. Recruitment & Selection Training

All managers who participate in recruitment and selection are required to undergo training. This training includes relevant equality and diversity information.

4.2.2. Monitoring of National Park Authority Training

The National Park Authority currently monitors all training to ensure that there is no evidence of disadvantage or discrimination against particular groups of employees.

4.2.3. Provision of Training

The National Park Authority currently provides training and development opportunities in the area of diversity.

4.3. Communication

Communication covers many different areas, for example:

- The language we use to explain our services
- The format in which documents are available
- How we design signs & information boards
- How we layout our documents
- The images we use
- How we communicate face-to-face and over the telephone
- How we promote and advertise our services
- How we use the internet

Why is it a priority?

It is vital that we communicate clearly so that people understand how to access services and what other opportunities are available to them.

Issues around communication were a very high priority during public involvement sessions, with people highlighting that jargon is still being used, and that they have difficulty finding information.

What are we currently doing?

4.3.1. Communications Strategy

The National Park Authority has a Communications Strategy which sets out how we should communicate both internally and externally. Our communication should consistently reflect our awareness and understanding of disability equality issues. The Strategy highlights a need to: Create communications systems for both internal and external communications that are easy for everyone to access and understand.

4.3.2. Use of the Internet

The National Park Authority is committed to providing services over the internet as well as in other ways. We will make these services accessible to people with particular needs, for example people who use specialised software, or partially sighted people.

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority website goes further than just complying with its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act but reflects our commitment to incorporate high levels of web accessibility whenever possible. We will take a proactive approach to meeting this objective by using automated tools to monitor the site. These alert us to areas of concern which we then take steps to put right.

4.4. Involvement and Consultation

Involvement and Consultation is about finding out what disabled people think about our services and what their needs are, and using this information to improve their quality of life.

Why is it a priority?

As a public body, we need to involve and consult disabled people in the decisions which affect their life, so that we can shape services according to their needs. Involving and consulting disabled people on specific projects is a requirement of the Disability Equality

Scheme. We will meet this need by undertaking a Disability Equality Impact Assessments on existing and new policies, services and initiatives.

The frequency and methods we use to consult with disabled people are very important. Firstly, people want to be involved and consulted in a manner they find appropriate, and there are many people who want to be involved who feel they are not being listened to.

What are we currently doing?

Amongst the general population, the National Park Authority consults in a number of ways:

- Community Liaison Meetings: An opportunity for local people in different areas of the Brecon Beacons to learn about National Park Authority initiatives and raise local issues.
- Tourism Surveys: The National Park Authority consults on a regular basis on a large number of topics and issues.
- Unitary Development Plan
- Local Development Plan
- National Park Development Plan

Consultation with disabled people takes place as part of the overall survey and consultation process, as well as on more specific issues through the Disabled Access Steering Group. However, specific involvement and consultation with the wider disabled community has only taken place since 2005 in order to develop the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and more recently the Disability Equality Duty.

- The Disability Equality Duty has specifically included:
Public Disability Equality Survey (Summer 2006): A survey targeted at disabled people to find out how we interact with the disabled community.
- Attendance at the Powys County Council & the combined Monmouthshire County Council, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Torfaen County Borough Council Information Gathering Events (summer and autumn 2006): Meetings to gather practical ideas from disabled people, parents, carers and professionals on how the Councils and National Park could make improvements to move forward.
- National Park Authority Employee Disability Survey (Autumn 2006): A survey of disabled National Park Authority employees on their experience in the workplace.
- Disability Equality Scheme Consultation and Focus Group Sessions (October - November 2006): A three-week period when members of the public and members

of disability access and disability advocacy groups were invited to submit feedback on the draft Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

4.5. Access

People are frequently disabled by the way buildings and the environment are designed or constructed. For example, reception desks too high for wheelchair users, or lack of contrast in design causing difficulties for partially sighted people. We are committed to improving physical access across all of our services to ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged. This could include NPA offices, NPA-owned and managed public toilets, Public Rights of Way, country parks and open spaces. This is not always about making alterations to buildings – it may be as simple as making small adjustments to fixtures and fittings such as doors, toilets and light switches in buildings through to developing barrier-free routes in the countryside.

Why is it a priority?

The public involvement aspect carried out in preparation for the BBNPA Disability Equality Scheme highlighted information provision, public toilets, shortfalls in the development control process and physical access as key access priorities.

What we currently do

4.5.1. Rights of Way

Through the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan, the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has suggested that all Rights of Way Improvement Schemes are assessed for their ability to improve disabled access before they are implemented. Annual reports and other publicity will be produced highlighting where improvements have been made.

4.5.2. Access Audits

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has only undertaken informal access surveys on its' buildings to date. In the past these have been undertaken with the invaluable help of local disabled access group members. The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority recognizes that it must now undertake the more formal approach of Access Audits. Access Audits will be used to formally identify physical barriers and determine what reasonable adjustments are required to buildings and equipment.

Using these audits, Access Plans will be put into place, which are designed to record

adjustments that are made for improving accessibility and are used by service providers to identify short, medium and long term targets for addressing problems. Many building issues identified within the Access Plans (lighting, heating, door furniture, colour contrasts, etc.) will be improved as part of an on-going general maintenance and future improvement plan. These will be identified accordingly within the Access Plan.

4.5.3. Projects to Alter Physical Barriers

The National Park Authority has made an on-going commitment to make improvements to the physical environment at every opportunity.

4.5.4. Standards for New and Existing Buildings

All new National Park Authority buildings will comply with all relevant legislation to meet the needs of disabled people.

Existing National Park buildings, including leased buildings, shall, where it is reasonable to do so, be accessible to Building Regulations: Approved Document M standards. In some cases it may be that services could be delivered in a different way, rather than adapting buildings.

4.6. Service Delivery

Service delivery is about all the services that the National Park Authority delivers and making sure that they are fair and equitable and take into account the needs of disabled users.

Why is it a priority?

Service delivery can cover many different areas. It is a priority for residents of the Brecon Beacons and visitors to the area, as it will take into account many of the issues they have raised throughout the involvement and consultation process for this document.

What are we currently doing?

The National Park Authority is developing initiatives across its various services which aim to ensure that disabled people enjoy equitable access. Many of these are detailed in Appendix 2.

However, we do need to ensure that core standards are adhered to across the whole organisation. All sections will need to carry out Disability Impact Assessments over the

next three years (see Section 5.3.) and any gaps identified will be turned into practical actions which make clear reference to specific disability equality objectives, priorities and outcomes. Each section will produce a Section Action Plan where applicable. Key actions will be incorporated into the Key Work Targets within the Business Improvement Plan. These are monitored by the performance management process within the National Park Authority.

However there is more we can do to improve the services delivered to disabled customers, and these are detailed in the Action Plan.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

It is vital that we monitor, evaluate and review this Scheme in order to meet our duties under the Disability Discrimination Act. In addition, we need to ensure that the Scheme is effectively implemented in order to achieve the targets.

The Scheme and its Action Plan will be continuously monitored by the Equalities Working Group (an internal group of officers from all areas of the National Park Authority) and the Business Improvement Plan: Performance Management Review.

Performance against the action plan will be regularly reviewed and reported to the National Park Authority every six months. All actions in the Action Plan have a named officer in order to make this process easier to monitor.

In addition, by law, we are required to fully review the Scheme and Action Plan every three years. Both the annual reviews and updated Disability Equality Schemes are public documents and will be available in hard copy, alternative formats as required, and on the internet.

5.1. Involvement and Consultation

The Disability Equality Scheme has been developed by involving people living in and around, as well as visitors to, the Brecon Beacons National Park.

These include individual members of the public, National Park employees and National Park Authority committee members who have declared a disability as well as representatives from voluntary and community organisations. All of these have contributed their time and expertise to help define and develop the Scheme.

Involvement and consultation with the disabled community will be ongoing (refer to the Action Plan for further details), and will continue to be a key feature of our three-yearly Disability Equality Scheme review.

5.2. Monitoring

Equality does not mean providing the same service for everyone or treating every person in the same way. It is about adapting the service when and where appropriate to meet the needs of diverse groups of people. If the National Park Authority does not know who its customers are, it will not know whether disabled people have equitable access to services and information.

Monitoring the people who use our services enables the National Park Authority to assess if the service is discriminating against certain groups and whether people are getting what

they want and need. It is a means of ensuring high quality, appropriate services. The National Park Authority has used a monitoring form as part of the information gathering exercise, which will continue to be used by all the different services. It is a tick-box form which asks questions about ethnicity and nationality, disability, sexual orientation, gender, age, and religion and belief. This will help to give us a clear picture of who our customers are, and to identify if there is higher or lower uptake by certain groups of people (e.g. disabled people).

There is also an opportunity and a need for disabled people to comment on and to help independently monitor the initial 3-year scheme. All feedback will be noted and taken into account at each of the annual reporting stage.

5.3. Disability Impact Assessments

A Disability Impact Assessment is an analysis of a service or policy. Its purpose is to ensure that every service and policy for, or delivered to, the general community is appropriate and accessible and does not, however unwittingly, disadvantage or discriminate against any group.

By law, we are now required to assess all services and policies for possible disability discrimination. Disability Impact Assessments help us to identify any possible areas where discrimination or disadvantage may occur. This leads to actions which help us to prevent this happening. The actions will be added to each individual Section Action Plan, and monitored by the Head of Department. The establishment and implementation of Disability Equality Impact Assessments will involve disabled people throughout the process.

5.4. Building Access Action Plans and Access Statements

The Action Plans and Access Statements that are being developed at service level will include the involvement of disabled service users in monitoring access solutions. These plans will need to be produced as evidence in Health and Safety audits and in inspections to provide evidence of compliance with the DDA and impact assessments related to the Disability Equality Duty.

6. Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan Brecon Beacons National Park Authority December 2006 – December 2009

Corporate Actions

Priority: Produce, monitor, report and review Disability Equality Scheme

Ref	Action	Outcome	Lead officer / Responsibility	Timescale
DES1	Gather information from disabled people to form priorities for the BBNPA Disability Equality Scheme	DES is designed to meet the priorities of disabled people	Corporate Management Team	September 2006
DES2	Consult on draft DES & redraft if required	DES reflects the comments made by disabled people	Corporate Management Team	October/November 2006
DES3	Publish & promote BBNPA Disability Equality Scheme	Establish and reflect the needs of disabled people Authority will roll out and launch the DES to ensure that people are aware of BBNPA commitment to DED	Corporate Management Team	By December 4 2006
DES4	Monitor Disability Equality Scheme	DES is implemented, on target and updated as appropriate	Corporate Management Team	6 monthly from December 2006
DES5	Publish report on Disability Equality Scheme	Progress against targets is met & shortcomings in service provision assessed	Corporate Management Team	December 2007 December 2008 December 2009
DES6	Review Disability Equality Scheme	Specific groups, people and organisations are involved in updating the existing scheme and the development of the new scheme.	Corporate Management Team	June – December 2009

6.1. Employment

Priority: Ensure better employment opportunities for disabled people

Ref	Action	Outcome	Lead officer / Responsibility	Timescale
6.1.1	Ensure job vacancies are advertised in appropriate (disabled peoples') media	Increased awareness of job vacancies at BBNPA amongst disabled people	Human Resources Manager	March 2007
6.1.2	Improve job packs to include options for colour contrast; access statements for interview processes building / room / workplace, etc	Information on vacancies, interviews and work places are accessible. Interviewers receive appropriate training.	Human Resources Manager	December 2007
6.1.3	Promote existing working practices that encourage disabled people to apply for vacancies i.e. continue to promote the Disability Two Ticks symbol and Human Resources Policy	Disabled people feel confident when applying for BBNPA job vacancies	Human Resources Manager / Communications Officer	Ongoing
6.1.4	Monitor number of job applicants declaring a disability, including satisfaction with process	Data gathered on numbers of disabled people applying for vacancies	Human Resources Manager	Six monthly from January 2007
6.1.5	Monitor Human Resources Policies & support procedures to ensure needs of disabled employees are taken into account	Disabled employees are not discriminated against. Interviewers receive appropriate training.	Human Resources Manager	Six monthly from January 2007

6.2. Training

Priority: Understanding of disability equality issues by National Park members and staff

Ref	Action	Outcome	Lead officer / Responsibility	Timescale
6.2.1	NPA member development training to incorporate Disability Equality and Disability Awareness Training	- Members understand disability equality - Improvements in the organisational culture	Democratic Services Manager / Training Officer	January 2007 & ongoing
6.2.2	Review all corporate training events to ensure that disability equality issues are taken into account	All training opportunities are accessible and fully supported where required	Human Resources Manager / Training Officer	Ongoing
6.2.3	Staff induction programme to include Disability Equality and Disability Awareness Training	All staff and volunteers understand disability equality – improved quality of service & organisational culture	Human Resources Manager / Training Officer	From January 2007 onwards
6.2.4	Continue to offer British Sign Language training for staff and monitor effectiveness	Front line members of staff achieve introductory levels of BSL and deaf awareness	Human Resources Manager / Training Officer	Ongoing
6.2.5	Volunteer induction programme to include basic Disability Equality and Disability Awareness Issues	Volunteers understand disability equality – improved quality of service & organisational culture	Wardens Service / Visitor Services Manager	Ongoing

6.3. Communications

Priority: Better communications and improved attitudes

Ref	Action	Outcome	Lead officer / Responsibility	Timescale
6.3.1	Write guidance on formats required for communication with Visually Impaired People	All published / public information material to be available in accessible formats	Communications Officer	March 2007
6.3.2	Press releases to be sent to accessible media	BBNP news reaches the wider community	Communications Officer	January 2007
6.3.3	Website to exceed minimum standards of visual accessibility	Website to be accessible & easy to read for visually impaired people	IT Manager / Communications Officer	March 2007
6.3.4	Frontline staff & key volunteers to receive hearing impairment training, monitor progress and assess effectiveness	Staff & key volunteers understand how to work with hearing impaired people	Human Resources Manager / Training Officer	September 2007
6.3.5	Incorporate the needs of Hearing Impaired People in NPA audio-visual projects	All new BBNP audio-visual projects to be subject to a Disability Impact Assessment	Communications Officer / Information Officer	April 2008

6.4. Involvement and Consultation

Priority: Encourage involvement of disabled people in national park objectives

Ref	Action	Outcome	Lead officer / Responsibility	Timescale
6.4.1	Create, utilise and maintain a database of disabled people living in the BBNP	Disabled people are involved and participate in NPA consultations and surveys	Strategy & Policy Officer	June 2007
6.4.2	Create, utilise and maintain a database of disabled people that visit the BBNP	Visitor Services Manager	Visitor Services Manager	June 2007
6.4.3	Involve disabled people in the review, planning, development & implementation of existing practices, policies and new initiatives (Disability Impact Assessments)	NPA services & initiatives are designed to meet the needs of disabled people	Head of Departments	Prioritise DEIAs by February 2007. Disability Equality Impact Assessments to be undertaken on existing services by June 2009. Findings to be implemented by December 2009.
6.4.4	Write guidance for all NPA surveys and consultations to ensure staff are aware of the needs of disabled people	NPA staff understand how to effectively involve disabled people in consultations and surveys	Strategy & Policy Officer / Visitor Services Manager	June 2007

6.5. Access

Priority: Tackle barriers in relation to NPA buildings and activities

Ref	Action	Outcome	Lead officer / Responsibility	Timescale
6.5.1	Undertake access audits, with the help of disabled people, for all BBNPA buildings & create action plan for findings.	Action plan setting out access improvements to BBNPA buildings	Head of Business Unit / Visitor Services Manager	December 2007
6.5.2	Publish access statements for all NPA buildings	Disabled people know what to expect when they arrive at NPA buildings	Head of Business Unit / Visitor Services	June 2007
6.5.3	Bring buildings up to accessible standard wherever possible	Disabled people can independently access NPA buildings	Head of Business Unit / Visitor Services Manager	December 2009
6.5.4	Monitor and review access statements once in place	Identified access improvements are followed up and implemented	Head of Business Unit / Visitor Services Manager	Ongoing
6.5.5	Ensure all national park events are accessible (Disability Equality Impact Assessments)	Equality of access to national park services	Visitor Services Manager	Ongoing
6.5.6	All BBNPA supported walks / routes to have a disability equality impact assessment & access statements	Walks and routes are properly researched to ensure maximum accessibility where possible	Head of Countryside / Area Wardens	Ongoing
6.5.7	All BBNPA meetings to be held at accessible venues – create database of accessible venues	BBNPA meetings are accessible to disabled people	All staff	March 2007
6.5.8	Improve signage on all easier access sites & routes	All BBNPA easy access routes are easy to follow	Area Managers	December 2008

6.6. Service Delivery

BBNPA DES 2006-2009

Priority: Ensure disabled people have equality of access & opportunity to all BBNPA services

Ref	Action	Outcome	Lead officer / Responsibility	Timescale
6.6.1	All sections to undertake a Disability Equality Impact Assessments on their Policies & services. Prioritise timescales for Disability Impact Assessments	NPA Policies and services take into account the needs of disabled people	Corporate Management Team / Heads of Department / Section Managers	Prioritisation of services to take place in January 2007 Rolling programme of Disability Impact Assessments to be completed and the issues implemented by December 2009
6.6.2	Write guidance notes to ensure that all contractors and partners are committed to the BBNPA's values of treating people with fairness courtesy and respect	Contractors and partners understand the basics of disability equality		December 2007
6.6.3	Adopt social model of disability (in line with Disability Equality Training)	BBNPA to adhere to the principles of the social model of disability	Corporate Management Team / National Park Authority members	December 2007

Note: The following issues were highlighted during the involvement process and will need to be prioritised as part of either a Disability Equality Impact Assessment or an Access Audit.

Development Control				
Ref:	Issue	Action	Outcome	Lead officer / Responsibility
6.6.4	Disabled people unable to access planning files effectively	Consult and assess the access to planning files (Disability Impact Assessment on Development Control)	Inclusion and consultation process will be open to all	Head of Development Control, DC Planning Officers
6.6.5	Shortfalls in provision of disabled access in Planning Applications & developments	Review Development Control processes (Disability Impact Assessment)	Inclusion and consultation process will be open to all	Head of Development Control, DC Planning Officers

6.6.6	Recommendations made by disabled access groups and individuals are not always taken into account on planning applications	Monitor representations against officer recommendations and final outcome regarding disabled access issues on planning applications	Developments meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act	Head of Development Control, DC Planning Officers
Visitor Services				
Ref:	Issue	Action	Outcome	Lead officer / Responsibility
6.6.7	Disabled toilet at NPVC not accessible to powered mobility scooters	Review disabled toilet access at NPVC and as part of proposed development – Access Audit for needed at NPVC		Visitor Services Manager / Visitor Centres Manager
6.6.8	Access problems inside Café at NPVC	Review furniture and layout of Café - Access Audit for needed at NPVC		Visitor Services Manager / Visitor Centres Manager
6.6.9	RADAR locks on disabled toilets	Doors to remain unlocked until after hours (where feasible)		Visitor Services Manager / Visitor Centres Manager / Area Managers
Wardens Service				
Ref:	Issue	Action	Outcome	Lead/Responsibility
6.6.10	Too many stiles in the countryside	Implement findings in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan	More routes are opened up to disabled people	Area Managers
6.6.11	Poor signage for visually impaired people	Improve contrast on signposts on easier access routes and sites	Easier navigation on easier access routes	Area managers

