

www.defra.gov.uk

Outdoors for All?: Draft Diversity Action Plan

A Consultation Document

May 2006



Outdoors for All?: Draft Diversity Action Plan

A Consultation Document

May 2006

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR
Telephone 020 7238 6000
Website: www.defra.gov.uk

© Queen's Printer and Controller 2006

Copyright in the typographical arrangement and design rests with the Crown.

This publication (excluding the logo) may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright with the title and source of the publication specified.

This document is also available on the Defra website.

Product code PB 11907

Contents

Foreword from Barry Gardiner MP	4
Purpose and how to respond	6
Background – The Diversity Review	8
1. Vision	9
1.1 Outcomes	9
1.2 Objectives	9
1.3 Targets	10
1.4 Partnership	10
1.5 Actions	11
1.6 Milestones and monitoring	11
1.7 Resources	12
1.8 Natural England as champion	12
1.9 Costs and Benefits	12
2. Actions	13
2.1 Training and guidance	13
2.2 Plans and strategies	15
2.3 Forums and networks	18
2.4 Information and marketing	21
2.5 Research	22
2.6 Funding	24
2.7 Service planning and performance measures	26
2.8 Championing, governance and regulation	29
Annexes	32
Annex 1 Diversity Review and action research projects summary/links	32
Annex 2 Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)	40
Annex 3 Summary of Diversity Review Action Plan proposed activities	52
Annex 4 List of consultees	59

Foreword from Barry Gardiner MP

I am delighted to be able to launch this wide-ranging consultation on our draft Diversity Review Action Plan.

Visiting the countryside, which may be a deeply rural area or the green space closer to most people's homes, is a deservedly popular activity. But it is an activity which has been enjoyed by some sectors of the community to a far greater extent than others. The extent of this imbalance seems odd, particularly when you consider that, compared to many other activities, it need not cost very much. The cost of transport can sometimes be a factor, but it is not the only one. We therefore asked the Countryside Agency to investigate the issues.

Between 2002 and 2005 the Countryside Agency, on our behalf, carried out a Diversity Review. The purpose of the review was to gather robust evidence about the needs of groups who are under-represented amongst visitors to the countryside, and the awareness of those needs by providers of recreational activities. As a result of all this work we have drawn up a draft Action Plan, the objective of which is to increase the number of people from under-represented groups who take part in outdoor recreation, and increase their knowledge of where they can go and what they can do when they get there.

There will be some people who simply feel that outdoor recreation is not an activity for them. The Action Plan is not about forcing people to do something that they have no interest in. However, most facilities for outdoor recreation are paid for to some extent by national and local taxpayers and we want to make sure that everyone has the same opportunities and that we reduce any barriers to enjoying what is on offer. We also consider it essential that all children get some outdoor recreation experience so that they know what it is about and can make their own decisions as adults. In short, the Action Plan is all about demonstrating what outdoor recreation has to offer so that people can make an informed choice about whether it is for them.

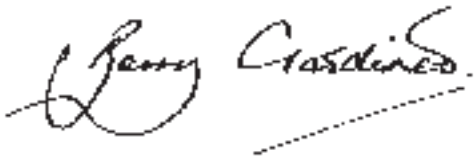
Although we are primarily concerned about ensuring equal opportunity, research has suggested that there may well be significant economic benefits to the providers of outdoor recreation opportunities if they can attract and retain a more diverse customer base. Rural areas have a limited future in isolation, their future prosperity depends on better engagement with centres of population. Urban populations equally can improve their quality of life through accessing the countryside, and improved understanding of our landscape that is the inspiration for much of our English culture.

We appreciate that the Plan may be incomplete. The purpose of this consultation is to fill those gaps and ensure that a comprehensive and effective Action Plan can be put into operation early next year. Furthermore, changing behaviours takes time. The Plan extends over a 10-year timescale, but even this may be ambitious. We should know more from our periodic reviews of how it is working.

Foreword

Central Government alone cannot deliver this objective. The engagement and support of those who provide outdoor opportunities for recreation is essential. This is why we are particularly targeting the consultation at local authorities and the voluntary sector as well as those groups who are under-represented as participants in outdoor recreation.

As Defra's Minister for Diversity I am determined that we should do everything possible to give all sectors of the community equal opportunity to participate in outdoor activities and enjoy the many advantages that this brings, not only in terms of health, well-being and citizenship, but also for the economic benefits that will arise. We are at an early stage in the process, but I am confident that the draft Action Plan is a good start. With your help we can make it better so that in 2007 we can launch an Action Plan that will make a real difference.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Gardiner". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal dashed line.

Barry Gardiner

Purpose and how to respond

The purpose of this document is to invite your comments on our Diversity Review Action Plan. To help you in responding there are a number of questions set out in the text of the document.

Responses should be received by 30 September 2006.

Please send your response to:

Email: diversity.review@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Alternatively, if you do not have access to email please send your response by post to the following address:

The Outdoor Recreation Team
Sponsorship, Landscape and Recreation Division
Defra
Zone 1/04 Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6EB

For information about opportunities to take part in consultation events, including one for young people, visit www.countryside.gov.uk/diversity for details.

In line with Defra's policy of openness, at the end of the consultation period copies of the responses we receive will be made publicly available through the Defra Information Resource Centre:

Defra Information Resource Centre
Lower Ground Floor
Ergon House
Horseferry Road
London SW1P 2AL

If you do not consent to this, you must clearly request that your response be treated confidentially. Any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system for an email response will not be treated as such a request. You should also be aware that there might be circumstances in which Defra will be required to communicate information to third parties on request, in order to comply with its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations.

The Information Resource Centre will supply copies of consultation responses to personal callers or in response to telephone or email requests (telephone: 020 7238 6575, email: defra.library@defra.gsi.gov.uk). Wherever possible, personal callers should give the Information Resource Centre at least 24 hours notice of their requirements. An administrative charge will be made to cover photocopying and postage costs. A summary of responses will also be made available on Defra's website at the consultation link above.

Purpose and how to respond

This consultation has been prepared in line with the Government's code of practice which requires that we:

- I. Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy;
- II. Be clear about what the proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses;
- III. Ensure that consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible;
- IV. Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy;
- V. Monitor the department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation co-ordinator;
- VI. Ensure the consultation follows better regulation practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.

Any comments or complaints about the consultation process (as opposed to comments about the issues which are the subject of the consultation) should be sent to Liz Ambekar, Defra's Consultation Co-ordinator:

- **Email:** consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- **Post:** Liz Ambekar
Defra
Area 7C
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR
- **Tel:** 020 7238 6284
- **Fax:** 020 7238 6447

Background – The Diversity Review

Between September 2002 and December 2005 the Countryside Agency carried out a review of the diversity of people who access outdoor recreation in the countryside.

“By 2005, we will carry out a full diversity review of how we can encourage more people with disabilities, more people from ethnic minorities, more people from the inner cities, and more young people to visit the countryside and participate in country activities. Initially, we will do this by seeking their views on what they need to enjoy the countryside. Then we will draw up a plan of action.”

Rural White Paper 2000: ‘Our countryside: the future. A fair deal for England’

The review included:

- Research with under-represented groups to establish their needs and perceptions of what is available for them;
- Research with providers of outdoor recreation experiences assessing their awareness of the needs of the under-represented groups targeted in the Rural White Paper.

The research concluded that:

- All the groups researched clearly expressed a desire to enjoy the benefits of outdoor recreation;
- A lack of information and concern about not being made welcome will undermine people’s confidence to access outdoor recreation and those without access to a car found transport a major barrier;
- A lack of confidence in engaging with diverse groups is also apparent amongst recreation providers.

A summary of the review findings and links to the research can be found in Annex 1. As a result of the review this draft Action Plan has been drawn up and the following sections set out the overall vision, the outcomes that we want to achieve, our objectives, the actions that are required and the activities that we are proposing.

For the purpose of this consultation, the under-represented (“target”) groups referred to are, people with disabilities (physical and mental), people from ethnic minorities, people from the inner cities, and young people.

Part 1: Vision

We want to reach a position where all groups in society have the opportunity to discover the joys of the outdoors. In this context the outdoors includes the stunning landscapes of our National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the woods and green spaces closer to where most people live and even areas of urban open space that people use for informal recreation. Indeed any area that can offer people fresh air, exercise or contact with nature is included. Central to realising this vision is action to enable the under-represented groups identified in the Diversity Review to make informed decisions about visiting the countryside and taking advantage of the recreational opportunities it provides – for example, a quiet walk, family fun with the children, or more adrenaline-fuelled adventure activities.

**Q1 Is this a vision that your organisation can subscribe to?
How can you help us to achieve it?**

1.1 Outcomes

We want to see:

- New customers for outdoor recreation from under-represented groups who know what the natural environment has to offer, enjoy a wide range of recreational activities and confidently return for more;
- Providers, including rural businesses and land managers, skilled in working with under-represented groups, sensitive to their needs and keen and able to provide an enjoyable experience;
- Constructive relationships between providers and organisations representing under-represented groups;
- Readily accessible information in a form which meets the requirements of under-represented groups;
- Accessible, affordable transport available, together with accessible transport information.

Q2 Are these outcomes realistic and are any missing?

1.2 Objectives

To help achieve these outcomes, we need to:

- Embed diversity and equality principles into the planning and practice of service providers in the outdoor recreation sector so that the needs of under-represented groups are understood and met;

Part 1: Vision

- Create a climate of confidence in under-represented groups about visiting the countryside and local green spaces;
- Contribute to cross-cutting Government agendas on social justice;
- Have sound and up-to-date evidence to inform action by all those involved.

Q3 Are these objectives ones which your organisation can subscribe to and help deliver?

1.3 Targets

Between 2006 and 2016, we want to achieve a sustained and measurable increase in:

- Awareness by under-represented groups of what the natural environment has to offer, and where to go to enjoy it;
- The numbers of people in under-represented groups enjoying the natural environment.

Q4 Are these targets realistic and ones that your organisation is able to work towards, with others, to achieve?

Q5 We do not think a quantified national target for the increase in under-represented groups is appropriate. Do you agree? Should individual service providers set targets? If you are a service provider, what level of increase do you think it would be feasible to achieve?

1.4 Partnership

The Diversity Review Action Plan will need the full support of a wide range of organisations including those representing target groups on the one hand, and those providing access to outdoor opportunities on the other.

The stakeholder engagement process for developing the draft Diversity Review Action Plan has included a broad range of partners. We expect this engagement to continue and broaden to include as wide a range of partners as possible throughout the consultation and implementation process.

1.5 Actions

We have identified eight areas where action is required either by Defra, its 'family' of Agencies (especially Natural England), other Government Departments and Agencies, Local Authorities, or other bodies. These are:

Training and guidance – investing in improving skills of recreation providers, resulting in better delivery;

Forums and networks – sharing good practice on improving delivery;

Plans and strategies – influencing a range of plans, including for example, Local Transport Plans and Rights of Way Improvement Plans;

Information and marketing – key to raising awareness and confidence;

Research – needed to test different approaches;

Funding – to facilitate some of the above actions and, particularly, initial contact with what the natural environment has to offer;

Service planning and performance measures – to monitor progress;

Championing, governance and regulation – creating a focus for action.

Each area is addressed in more detail in the next section. We envisage action being joined up, and being taken at all administrative levels – national, regional and local – with organisations representing the target groups and providers of outdoor recreation at the core.

1.6 Milestones and monitoring

Achieving a measurable increase in participation in outdoor recreation activity relies upon knowing what the baseline is. We intend the Action Plan to be underpinned by a participation survey in 2007, possibly as part of a future England Day Visits Survey.

Through the Action Plan we propose to set out possible milestones for 2 and 5 years, and a review of outcomes at the end of the 10-year period. We see the Plan as a living document, with ownership shared between bodies both within and outside government at all levels and its agencies, particularly those bodies who provide recreational opportunities. We expect to revise it in the light of increased knowledge and experience gained during implementation of the Plan.

Q6 Do you think that the milestones are realistic and the timescales for change appropriate?

Q7 What would be the best mechanism for keeping you up to date as the plan is implemented and reviewed?

1.7 Resources

The evidence from the Diversity Review revealed that:

- Resources – people and money – are already being spent directly on actions which can make a difference to the diversity of people who are able to enjoy the natural environment, but that significant added value can be achieved through improved co-ordination and co-operation.
- A major information campaign and programme of events is needed to provide new audiences with the chance to have a first experience of getting outdoors, which will give people the opportunity to see the real benefits for them of contact with the natural environment.

1.8 Natural England as champion

The Government will look to Natural England to champion this agenda, both with and through stakeholders. In the light of the responses to this consultation, it will look to Natural England to include implementation of the final agreed Action Plan in its Corporate Plans for 2007/8 onwards.

1.9 Costs and benefits

Costs and benefits are considered in the partial Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), which is at Annex 2. We would welcome comments on the questions posed at the end of the Assessment. This will assist us in drawing up a final RIA for publication with the agreed Action Plan next year.

Part 2: Actions

2.1 Training and guidance

The Diversity Review research¹ identified a lack of confidence amongst the target groups in being assured a welcome or in having sufficient information about what to do and where to go, due to a lack of customer focus by service providers. Further research² also suggested that this was due to a lack of confidence in engaging with the target groups amongst outdoor recreation providers.

The new Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the existing Race Relations Act 2000 and other legislation places duties upon public bodies to raise awareness of diversity and equality in the delivery of their services. The provision of training and guidance are important tools in meeting these duties, addressing the lack of confidence and bringing about the required changes in behaviour. In addition to public sector training and guidance many voluntary sector organisations, such as the National Trust, are following this lead and are engaged in the preparation of guidance and delivery of training for their staff and volunteers.

2.1.1 Topics

The Diversity Review identified a need for training and guidance on the following topics:

- Evidence gathering
 - Visitor and catchment survey techniques
 - Evaluation as a process and the use of evaluation frameworks
- Diversity awareness training
 - Engaging and working with under-represented groups
 - Engaging young people in outdoor recreation

2.1.2 Audiences

The review has identified a wide range of audiences for training which include:

- Local authority staff managing sites and routes
- Voluntary sector staff managing sites and routes
- Members of local access forums who support the delivery and promotion of Rights of Way and Open Access Land and access to land for recreation more generally
- Natural England staff managing sites and routes
- Staff and volunteers of under-represented groups

¹ Countryside Agency, January 2005, "What About Us?" Diversity Review evidence – part 1 Challenging perceptions: under-represented groups' visitor needs, by Ethnos Research and Consultancy

² Countryside Agency, July 2005, "What About Us?" Diversity Review evidence – part 2 Challenging perceptions: provider awareness of under-represented groups, by University of Surrey

Part 2: Actions

County and regional forums and networks, which bring together providers of outdoor recreation and under-represented groups, play a strategic role in the delivery of effective training and guidance. They are able to review current and planned provision, identify gaps and map local delivery where this is most appropriate. They also function as informal training mechanisms in themselves through raising awareness of the needs and perceptions of the target groups and, conversely, what the countryside and local green space has to offer. The next section, 2.2, discusses forums and networks in more detail.

2.1.3 Delivering training

The purpose of training and guidance is to provide participants with information that they do not have, the opportunity to explore issues and ask questions and to test new approaches. Training can be delivered through a range of techniques such as distance learning, mentoring and secondments, as well as training events and workshops and other events. The Council for National Parks is developing a programme of mentoring for black and ethnic minority community leaders within National Parks.

Experience tells us that training is often best delivered locally and a review of locally available training is proposed through county level forums. The review would also identify gaps, potential providers for local delivery and where there was a need for regional or national delivery.

The Diversity Review identified a lack of welcome as a specific barrier for some under-represented groups. Forums and networks will consider how to engage with local businesses in rural areas to increase their awareness of the needs of the target groups and will consider the role of local tourism strategies in addressing this need. Nationally and regionally we will consider working with the Regional Development Agencies, Business Link, the Learning and Skills Council and Sector Skills Councils to tackle this need. The re-design of the European Regional Development Fund for funding environmental benefits might be able to include this aspect of increasing visitor diversity.

2.1.4 Delivering guidance

There will be a programme of nationally produced guidance, covering the topics listed above and developed through engagement with organisations working at the local level, including organisations representing target groups. The expectation is that training programmes and guidance will be closely linked and mutually supporting.

Part 2: Actions

2.1.5 Activities

We propose in the Action Plan to publish guidance and provide training for staff across all sectors. Priority will be given to: increasing awareness of diversity issues; how to engage with under-represented groups and provide for them; how to undertake evaluations; and how to carry out visitor surveys which provide good baseline information on under-represented groups. We are proposing the following activities (see Annex 3 for more detail):

- Reviewing the media, format and distribution of existing guidance to see if it meets the needs of staff, volunteers and customers
- Preparation and distribution of national guidance based on the above review
- A nationally funded training programme linked to guidance
- Local training delivery plans based on reviews undertaken by diversity forums
- Training provided to landowners and managers through the England Rural Development Programme
- A training package delivered to local businesses through Business Link and the Learning Skills Council

Q8 Do you agree with these priorities for guidance and training?

Q9 Do you have a preference for how these are delivered?

Q10 Can we link this work to existing training or guidance in this area?

2.2 Plans and strategies

Nationally, Government departments and their agencies have a range of strategies which can contribute to delivering the Action Plan. These can operate at a high level, for example the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, or be more concerned with delivery, for example the Department of Health's physical activity delivery plan derived from the Public Health White Paper.

ODPM PSA 1 "Tackle social exclusion and deliver neighbourhood renewal, working with departments to help them meet their PSA floor targets, in particular narrowing the gap in health...and liveability outcomes...with measurable improvement by 2010"

Part 2: Actions

At a regional level, economic, tourism and transport strategies have the potential to contribute to delivery of the Diversity Review Action Plan. Diversity action in terms of outdoor recreation also has the potential to provide benefits to regional economies. Disseminating information on the economic case and bringing bodies together to review plans and strategies is an important ingredient.

Local Area Agreements (LAA) have potential to deliver the Diversity Review Action Plan targets. An LAA is an agreement between central government (in the form of the Government Office) and a local area (represented by a local authority and Local Strategic Partnership). LAAs are part of the Government's 10-year strategy to improve public services by focusing on agreed outcomes, indicators and targets shared by local delivery partners. These could include measures to increase participation in outdoor recreation. LAAs are also likely to involve relevant stakeholders, including the voluntary and community sector, in helping to identify, shape and deliver local services. We will explore the potential for these agreements to contribute to delivery of the Diversity Review Action Plan.

Local authorities are required, under the Local Government Act 2002, to prepare Community Strategies and these incorporate local cultural strategies. Prepared by Local Strategic Partnerships of local authorities, businesses and the local communities, they provide a single co-ordinated framework to deliver local neighbourhood renewal. Part of the approach is to promote well being and social inclusion through engagement with local culture and they can be used to engage with transport planning.

For members of under-represented groups local green spaces are likely to provide their main, and often first, opportunity to enjoy the benefits of outdoor recreation. Local authority green space strategies could play a major role in promoting the use of high quality green spaces to more diverse groups.

Bristol Parks and Green Space Strategy

What the strategy will do:

- It will identify a Bristol standard – a clear vision for the future of parks and green spaces in the city
- It will set guidelines for creating more equal access to various types of green space and park facilities
- It will provide a blueprint for parks and green spaces for the next 20–30 years.

The absence of readily available transport to enable under-represented groups to visit the countryside has been identified as a major barrier and some people need basic information and support to introduce them to the public transport system and gain confidence in its use. Local Community Transport Groups (CTGs) are delivering essential transport services in both rural and urban areas and many are members of the Community Transport Association (CTA), which provides support and training. We will need to work with the

Part 2: Actions

CTA and the CTGs who already have experience in working with and providing transport for many of the under-represented groups. We will work with the Department for Transport and their Mobility and Inclusion Unit to identify the scope for measures to improve transport links between urban and rural areas and the quality of information and support available. We will also see if the guidance and emphasis of the third round of LTP objectives and schemes can help to meet the Action Plan objectives. Collaboration between local authorities in developing their Local Transport Plans may provide one avenue of approach.

Local transport authorities are expected to take greater account of accessibility issues in their Local Transport Plans, following the inclusion of 'accessibility planning', which was introduced in the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) report '*Making the Connections*' (February 2003). The process focuses on improving access to job and essential services, such as healthcare, education and food shops, for those most in need, although other destinations such as access to the countryside, and activities such as leisure and tourism may also be relevant locally. It aims to improve peoples' ability to reach services they need and participate in activities through improvements to transport and changes in the way that services are located, designed or delivered, and encourages partnership working between local transport authorities and other delivery agencies.

Middlesbrough Council Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006–2011 states: Objective – Accessibility (Policies):

- To ensure that the needs of people with disabilities and mobility impairments are taken into account in any future development
- To improve accessibility to the rural areas for people with disabilities
- To actively promote social inclusion by advertising strategic routes so as to enable access to a range of activities and facilities
- To develop and improve the rights of way network so as to reduce its fragmentation
- To develop strategic routes so as to enable access to a wide range of activities and services.

Highways Authorities have to complete Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs) by 2007 and these will be progressively integrated with Local Transport Plans. Guidance issued by the Department for Transport³ states that ROWIPs will:

- Provide an assessment of the need to which rights of way meet the present and future needs of the public;
- Provide an assessment of the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and recreation; and

³ Department for Transport, August 2004, "Full guidance on Local Transport Plans", (Second edition).

Part 2: Actions

- Provide an assessment of the accessibility of local rights of way to all members of the community, including those with visual impairment or mobility problems

Since the publication of the guidance, and following enactment of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, it is clear that the needs of all disabled people, not only those with visual impairment or mobility problems, should be considered. Guidance published by the Countryside Agency addresses this need.⁴

By All Reasonable Means: Inclusive access to the outdoors for disabled people (Countryside Agency 2005)

“Accessibility is addressed in its widest sense, including people with physical, sensory or intellectual impairments and mental health problems. The guide looks at how to make routes, sites and facilities more accessible and how to improve the experience at places that are already accessible. It details how to assess an existing site for access provision, how to plan access improvements and how to undertake the work.”

2.2.1 Activities

The Action Plan seeks to embed diversity and equality principles into the planning and practice of service providers as well as contributing to cross cutting Government agendas on social justice. We are proposing the following activities (see Annex 3 for more detail):

- That when they are reviewed, the following plans are assessed to ensure that they meet the needs of the Diversity Review target groups: Regional Transport Strategies, Regional Sustainable Tourism Strategies, Regional Economic Strategies, Local Area Agreements, Local Transport Plans, green space strategies, National Park and AONB Management Plans and Rights of Way Improvement Plans.

Q11 Are there any further activities that would help embed diversity and equality principles?

2.3 Forums and networks

Forums and networks are an important way of creating a climate of confidence for both outdoor recreation providers and organisations representing target groups. They are also means of exchanging information and ideas. Research on regional sustainable development frameworks⁵ found that the process requires organisations to work together and gain a greater understanding of each other's viewpoint.

⁴ Countryside Agency, October 2005, “By All Reasonable Means: Inclusive access to the outdoors for disabled people” CA215

⁵ English Regions Network, June 2003, “Research into regional sustainable development frameworks. Final report” by CAG consultants and Oxford Brookes University School of Planning

Part 2: Actions

Local access forums, as well as other types of county-based forums and networks, bringing together local organisations representing target groups and recreation providers and are key delivery tools. In the short to medium term it is through these forums and networks that:

- Plans and strategies can be reviewed;
- Service planning and performance measures are compared and improved;
- Further evidence of what works and what doesn't is gathered through the use of evaluation;
- Training and guidance needs are assessed, together with the availability of local training opportunities.

The aim is to build on existing forums. For example, local access forums are generally organised at county level, with their secretariat provided by highway authorities or national parks. There may be an opportunity to include within their forward work programmes the review and provision of advice on local delivery of the Diversity Review Action Plan. Many local access forums have considered and advised on diversity related issues already and it is important that they should continue to do so. However, local access forums have limited time available and a potentially wide remit, so there may be areas where new types of forum need to be created.

Forums also operate at the regional level and we will want to see existing forums address the needs of a diverse population for access to outdoor recreation.

The South West Protected Areas Forum brings together Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks and the Areas of Outstanding National Beauty in the South West. They commission joint research, hold joint briefing and training events and feed into other regional networks. They are commissioning research to gather baseline data about visitor diversity and draw together short, medium and long-term action plans that can guide those working in SW Protected Landscapes.

Nationally, there are forums and networks that exist to make a difference to the representation of participants in outdoor recreation. They include the Black Environment Network, Countryside for All and Tourism for All. Other networks bring together service providers and have the potential to engage them with this Diversity Review Action Plan.

Part 2: Actions

Tourism for All provides:

- Information to people with disabilities and older people in relation to accessible accommodation and other tourism services.
- Expertise and support to the tourism and hospitality sector to provide accessible services for all.
- A network for organisations and individuals who wish to support our objectives⁶.

Engaging with national forums is a role that Natural England and others already fulfil. Forums at a local, regional and national level will contribute to:

- The design and promotion of guidance;
- National training provision where there is a need;
- Research to gather further evidence and the findings from evaluation;
- The design of information for a national campaign.

Worcestershire County Council Pledge event, 2004

As a primary objective Worcestershire CC put land managers in touch with user groups and those who serve as advocates for under-represented groups in order to bridge the gap between service providers and diverse groups. Through this informal network further aims of the event were met, chiefly to increase land managers' awareness of under-represented groups in Worcestershire, barriers to participation, how to remove them and to inspire land managers to initiate projects that will increase participation.

2.3.1 Activities

The Action Plan aims to build on forums that already exist at a national, regional and local level. It also proposes new forums where appropriate to provide a platform for the exchange of information and development of good practice. It is hoped that these networks will bring together both outdoor recreation providers and under-represented groups to help create a climate of confidence. We are proposing the following activities (see Annex 3 for more detail):

- Provision of guidance and training for local access forum members
- The establishment, where appropriate, of other county level forums of representative groups and service providers to share good practice, review training needs and delivery

⁶ Tourism for All, 2006

Part 2: Actions

- The creation of a database of existing and planned diversity and social inclusion projects
- The sharing of information about diversity through the forums

Q12 Is it practical for existing forums to assist and develop the diversity agenda? Which ones do you consider to be potentially the most effective?

Q13 Are new types of forum needed, at what level should they be created and how would they work?

2.4 Information and marketing

The need for better information for the public about outdoor recreational opportunities was identified in the Rural White Paper⁷ and this was underlined by the Diversity Review. The Review also found a lack of marketing targeted at specific groups, and identified an urgent need for information for service providers in order to raise their confidence in working with under-represented groups. This has clear links to the provision of guidance, covered in the training and guidance section (Section 2.1).

All the participants who took part in the research on the needs of under-represented groups mentioned the importance of readily available information as a key criterion in any decision to explore the outdoors. The information that is available tends to assume a level of basic confidence and knowledge about outdoor recreation that is often absent from people in the target groups. It also reflects the existing audience profile rather than being designed to attract new customers. For some members of the black and minority ethnic population, providing a mother tongue version of a publication and/or offering translation facilities may be appropriate. For some disabled people there is a specific need to make audio and large print versions of publications available and to consider colour and text contrasts in signage etc. For people with learning difficulties, 'Easy Read' is a useful format and, to build confidence, creating documents that are similar to 'Making Decisions'⁸ may help. 'By All Reasonable Means' guidance on increasing access for disabled people published by the Countryside Agency describes an inclusive process for engaging disabled people and representative bodies.

The development of information with representative groups and a period of trialling can be very beneficial. The information many disabled people argue for is an online database providing details of terrain, surface, gradient and obstacles, which would enable them to make their own decisions about whether a particular route or site is suitable.

⁷ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2000, Rural White Paper "Our countryside: the future – A fair deal for rural England"

⁸ Department for Constitutional Affairs, 1999, "Making Decisions" The Government's proposals for making decisions on behalf of mentally incapacitated adults.

Part 2: Actions

In conjunction with all the relevant agencies we propose to improve the amount, range, and quality of information on recreational opportunities. We need to achieve national coverage for marketing, delivered through local campaigns to promote existing and new opportunities. This will be coupled with regional and more locally delivered campaigns to promote existing opportunities. We will explore the possibility of working with both public broadcasters and a private sector partner with a geographic presence at all levels. The need for appropriate, targeted information for outdoor recreation providers will be met in a range of ways, through the county level forums and through the provision of a dedicated online information and evidence portal. This will make information readily available across the sector and enable good practice to be widely shared and built upon.

2.4.1 Activities

In response to the evidence published in the Diversity Review the Action Plan proposes national marketing campaigns to promote existing and new opportunities for outdoor recreation and to improve the amount, range and quality of information on recreational opportunities specifically targeting under-represented groups. We are proposing the following activities (see Annex 3 for more detail):

- The provision of an online access database which in particular includes the information that disabled people have said that they need
- The development of a national promotional campaign targeted at under-represented groups, underpinned by local delivery

**Q14 What other types of information might target groups find helpful?
Are there other formats in which it could be presented?**

**Q15 What assistance or guidance would your organisation need
to develop or improve its own marketing information to
under-represented groups?**

2.5 Research

The scoping research carried out in 2002 at the start of the Diversity Review process emphasised the lack of available evidence for effective policy development. The gaps identified included the:

- Needs and expectations of under-represented groups;
- Perceptions and awareness of service providers towards under-represented groups;
- Relevant statistical data at national, regional and local level;

Part 2: Actions

- Evidence from effective project evaluation of the benefits to participants and successful project design.

The review has covered the first two gaps (see Annex 1). But the lack of relevant statistical data at local, regional and national level remains a challenge. This plan proposes to address this gap through a review of local and regional data and by refining the England Day Visits Survey to provide more information about the leisure habits of the identified groups. A separate participation survey will also be carried out to establish a benchmark against which to measure future change over the timescale of the Action Plan.

Yorkshire Dales⁹

In 2004, Yorkshire Dales National Park conducted research into the perceptions of 1,000 local residents of the Yorkshire Dales National Park catchment area. White Bradford residents took 7 trips to the park each year whilst Bradford Asian residents took an average of 4. Only 8% of Bradford Asian residents cited the National Park as an area to visit on a day trip. The main reasons for not visiting the park were “not aware of the Yorkshire Dales” and “not knowing what to see and do”.

An evaluation framework and toolkit has been designed by the Countryside Agency for use across the sector. Its promotion and the creation of a collecting point for project evaluations are needed to ensure that the full range of evidence is available and disseminated on an annual basis.

The Diversity Review has begun the process of gathering qualitative evidence of the desire of the groups identified in the Rural White Paper for access to outdoor recreation and the countryside. However, the Review also identified that there is little coverage for carers of the elderly and of children and young people living in inner cities.

In the light of the scoping study completed by the Countryside Agency at the end of 2005 we need to undertake further work to develop the business and economic case for visitor diversity across all targeted groups.

Yorkshire Forward

“Yorkshire Forward recognises that a thriving region, with a sound economy, depends on having a healthier more equal society. The team works across Yorkshire Forward to help ensure that our investments in business development and rural and urban renaissance, deliver the maximum benefit to those groups and communities most in need of support.”¹⁰

⁹ Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, 2004, “Awareness and Understanding in Bradford and Keighley”

¹⁰ Yorkshire Forward, 2005, “Race Equality Scheme 2005 – 2008”

Part 2: Actions

We aim to establish an online portal to bring together evidence from project evaluations and research projects. This proposal is described in Section 2.4 on information and marketing. We will make use of this information to publish an annual report of aggregated evidence gathered from effective project evaluations.

2.5.1 Activities

The Action Plan recognises the need for up to date relevant statistical participation data at local, regional and national levels to inform the Action Plan commitments. We are proposing the following activities (see Annex 3 for more detail):

- Undertaking a participation survey to provide a benchmark against which progress can be measured
- Refining the England Day Visits Survey to gather more information about diversity
- Creating an on-line portal to bring together research and project evaluation findings
- Carrying out further research to build on the “What about us?” findings (See Annex 1)

Q16 Do you agree that there is a need to improve the baseline data on participation in outdoor recreation?

**Q17 Does your organisation collect data on visitors and/or the awareness of provision by under-represented groups?
If so, in what form?**

Q18 Should the Action Plan be extended to cover carers for the elderly and children and young people in inner cities?

Q19 What should the priorities for any further research be?

2.6 Funding

A theme running through this plan is that a great deal of added value can be achieved through improved co-ordination, joint working, the smart sharing of existing information and project planning. New funding will be necessary though, to deliver all the proposals set out in the Action Plan, once the improved co-ordination and joint working is put in place. For example funding is needed:

- To provide the initial support needed by under-represented groups to acquire a ‘taste’ for outdoor recreation.

Part 2: Actions

- To enable highway authorities in partnership with local authority disability access officers and local representative groups to meet the needs of disabled people beyond the statutory requirements;
- To achieve a step change in the diversity of visitors by working across tourism, transport, green space and cultural and recreation strategies – building on the proposed regional test beds.

It may be possible to use existing forms of funding to resource some of these initiatives. For example, diversity is a priority for the Big Lottery Fund. For other funding sources a broadening of their priorities may be required. There are also opportunities to devise new partnerships, for example the England Rural Development Programme. Within this, Environmental Stewardship enables farmers and landowners applying for higher-level grants under the Environmental Stewardship scheme to seek support for permissive access to land for:

- Educational access
- Access to previously inaccessible features of interest
- Improvement of countryside access for people with disabilities
- The creation of new open access where this is a local priority.

Other funding programmes will also be explored, such as Department for Education and Skills' opportunity cards scheme and any programmes arising from the Russell Commission recommendations on young people and volunteer activity.

2.6.1 Activities

Improved co-ordination, sharing of information and project planning will add real value to existing budgets. However, funding is likely to be necessary to deliver all the proposals set out in the Action Plan. We are proposing the following activities (see Annex 3 for more detail):

- Developing a nationally funded programme of actions/projects, locally delivered and linked to a marketing campaign
- Forums at a local and national level advising on the delivery of a nationally funded programme
- Reviewing the possibility of tailoring England Rural Development Programme funding to provide training in diversity awareness for landowners and managers
- Exploring opportunities to work through other funding programmes such as DfES's opportunity cards scheme and any arising from the Russell Commission recommendations on young people and volunteer activity.

Part 2: Actions

- Broadening the priorities of existing funding streams to support diversity initiatives

Q20 Which existing funding programmes do you consider to be the most relevant for helping deliver the diversity agenda?

Q21 What should the priorities be for spending in this area?

2.7 Service planning and performance measures

Service planning and performance measures are easily forgotten by organisations eager to make a difference. However, they are the essential architecture on which action can be based and have been identified through the Diversity Review as having an important role to play. Treasury Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets provide a means of setting specific objectives and measuring progress towards achieving them. The Defra PSA target 3 for example drove the delivery of public access to mountain, moor, heath, down and registered commons.

Defra PSA 3

Care for our natural heritage, make the countryside attractive and enjoyable for all and preserve biological diversity by:

- Reversing the long-term decline in the number of farmland birds by 2020, as measured annually against underlying trends, and
- Bringing into favourable condition by 2010, 95% of all nationally important wildlife sites;
- Opening up public access to mountain, moor, heath and down and registered commons by the end of 2005.¹¹

The Treasury is currently working with Government Departments to seek ways of improving the performance management framework and we will consider the scope for any further targets in light of the outcome of those discussions.

Local authorities, including National Park Authorities, are required under the Local Government Act 1999 to deliver Best Value in their services. The ODPM Circular 03/2003, stresses that Best Value Performance Plans should consider the role of sport and active recreation in delivering key aspects of local policy, including health and education. Specific guidance for the National Park Authorities is covered in ODPM Circular 10/2003 and Defra Circular 03/2003. The Statement of Shared Priorities within the Circulars lists the following key priorities:

¹¹ HM Treasury, July 2004, "Spending Review Public Service Agreements 2005–2008"

Part 2: Actions

- Improving quality of life for children, young people, families at risk and older people;
- Promoting healthier communities and narrowing health inequalities;
- Creating safer and stronger communities;
- Transforming the local environment.

Many local authorities prepare equality and diversity statements to describe how they meet legislative requirements and their Best Value Performance Indicators. They also measure their performance against an agreed range of benchmarks in the Equality Standard for Local Government. These statements have the potential to include monitoring of under-represented groups' access to outdoor recreation in natural open space and the countryside.

Kent County Council Equality and Diversity Policy Statement Strategic Equalities Plan, 2006

"To achieve Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government we need to demonstrate that we:

- Have engaged in impact and service needs/requirements assessments (currently on disability, gender and race)
- Have engaged in consultation with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups"¹².

The Audit Commission inspects and monitors local authority performance through the Best Value Performance Indicators on behalf of Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Their report in 2002¹³, provided evidence that councils have a long way to go to meet their best value principles and their statutory duties on equal opportunities.

The report also suggested that in order for local authorities to translate their equality policies into mainstream activities, and embed diversity and equality principles into routine service planning, they should be "consulting local communities and redesigning services appropriately to meet the diverse needs of those communities." One avenue for this consultation process could be through Local Strategic Partnerships.

The Audit Commission suggests five critical factors for improving equality and diversity:

- **Commitment** – understanding the concept, owning and leading the work at the highest levels, and committing adequate resources
- **Involving users** – consulting the actual and potential users of services about their needs and requirements

¹² Kent County Council, 2005, "Strategic Equalities Plan"

¹³ Audit Commission, 2002, "Equality and Diversity"

Part 2: Actions

- **Mainstreaming equality and diversity** – integrating equality and diversity into day-to-day work, and translating policy into practice
- **Monitoring performance data** – ensuring that data gathering and analysis on equality and diversity is part of core performance monitoring systems
- **Sustainability** – continuously keeping up the momentum to counter discrimination and promote diversity, reviewing performance and setting new targets

Further work has followed between the Audit Commission, Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), the equality commissions and other bodies to develop a set of local performance indicators, specifically on equality and diversity. At the moment, the proposed indicators are voluntary measures for local authorities to consider in improving their services, although the Audit Commission does monitor compliance against the LA's statutory obligations around equality and diversity, e.g. Disability Discrimination Act & Race Relations Act. The Audit Commission offers advice on what the implications of compliance are in these areas, where the local authority currently sits within the process and how they can move forward if required.

We will work with the Audit Commission to investigate whether performance indicators might be effective in securing increased access to outdoor recreation. For example, the percentage area of parks and open spaces accredited with the Green Flag Award is an indicator to consider.

This award scheme, which is managed by the Civic Trust and steered by CABESpace, sets a benchmark of standards for the management and provision of green spaces across a number of factors: environmental, community, landscape and safety. It is also a good example of how to improve access for all the target groups through the inclusion of visitor diversity in the judging process. The award scheme benefits from being flexible enough to cover urban and rural green spaces while maintaining standards through renewal every 12 months. It also asks the applicants to have some knowledge of who accesses their recreation spaces, thus prompting a move towards keeping visitor data. As an indicator the award scheme could show the extent to which parks and open spaces managed by the local authority meet standards in providing a quality facility to benefit the whole community.

The benchmarks for the **Green Flag Award** scheme include:

- Equal access for all members of the community
- Knowledge of user community and levels and patterns of use
- Evidence of community involvement in management and/or developments and results achieved
- Appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for all sectors of the community.

Part 2: Actions

2.7.1 Activities

All those involved in delivering outdoor recreation should be encouraged to improve performance. Treasury PSA targets and Audit Commission guidance potentially provide a practical means of setting specific objectives and measuring progress. We are proposing the following activities (see Annex 3 for more detail):

- Consider the scope for a diversity performance management target
- Working with government departments where targets overlap
- Refining performance indicators to secure a link between open space access, diversity and community cohesion
- Developing the social justice dimension of the Sustainable Development Strategy
- Reviewing National Park Authority and local authority Best Value Performance Indicators
- Reviewing current diversity and equality statements

Q22 Does your organisation have specific targets for diversity and do they cover access to outdoor recreation as a service?

Q23 Where would the introduction of new diversity targets make most impact?

2.8 Championing, governance and regulation

2.8.1 Championing

The kinds of changes we are looking for will require champions – that is people acting mostly, but not exclusively, in organisations to energise change. Their ability to bring change about will be much stronger if the governance of their organisations recognises the importance of encouraging and promoting diversity amongst customers for outdoor recreation. This is, of course, far from being uncharted territory. Champions will have the support of existing legislation requiring organisations providing services to recognise and provide for the varied needs of their customers.

Many organisations providing and promoting outdoor recreation will have a senior executive charged with promoting equality and diversity across the whole organisation. We believe there will be additional benefits where organisations identify such a champion specifically for their work on outdoor recreation. As part of our proposals on training and guidance, we propose to support such champions with information and access to networks to share experience and good practice.

Part 2: Actions

We further propose to build on initiatives such as the Mosaic Community Champions to develop a scheme to support local diversity champions. This would identify leaders in local communities who have the information and practical experience to enable them to make the case to local businesses for welcoming a wider range of customers.

2.8.2 Governance

Promoting good governance is one of the guiding principles for sustainable development¹⁴. We need to continue working so that the profile of management board members and staff of national, regional and local bodies across the sector reflects the diversity of the English population. Improving managers' understanding of the needs of under-represented groups will be a key part of securing change during the 10-year target period. The process for appointments to all public bodies already reflects the need to secure a diverse range of applicants. Local Access Forums, one of whose key roles is to advise local authorities on Rights of Way Improvement Plans, should in particular expect to draw on an active pool of informed, engaged and able people from diverse backgrounds.

Employee – and volunteer – profiles also need to reflect the diversity of the population in the catchment area for the facilities they provide. The closer they match the easier it is for services to be sensitive to the needs of all their customers, and to make everyone welcome. We propose that Natural England carries out a sample survey of employee and volunteer profiles. This will establish a baseline from which to measure change.

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers Strategic Plan 2004

BTCV wish to: Encourage marginalised people including those from black and minority ethnic communities (BME), to improve their local environments and to provide opportunities to do so that were culturally and socially attuned to their needs.

Make BTCV itself more representative of society, both in the profile of its staff and volunteers and in the way it is run.

Reach an increasingly diverse range of people defined by culture, geography or personal circumstances, by listening and responding to their needs.

"BTCV is sensitive to people's needs, their environmental awareness, personal values and beliefs, and is striving to be accessible to all"¹⁵

¹⁴ Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, March 2005, "Securing the future – delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy"

¹⁵ BTCV Strategic Plan 2004–2008 "Inspiring People, Improving Places" 2004

2.8.3 Regulation

There are significant legal obligations on providers of services to make sure they are accessible to all groups in society. It is important all providers understand these obligations, and discharge them in relation to providing and promoting outdoor recreation. The Countryside Agency, English Nature and the Rural Development Service acting as a Confederation have recently updated their advice on providing for access by the disabled⁴.

Race Equality Schemes are being used by local authorities to provide increased access for under-represented groups and Disability Equality Schemes hold similar potential. We will work with the Home Office and Department for Work and Pensions to monitor the effectiveness of such schemes. We propose to discuss with DCLG and the Local Government Association whether local authority Best Value Performance Indicators, monitored by the Audit Commission, would be a good way of promoting access for all to outdoor recreation.

2.8.4 Activities

The Action Plan recognises that effective change is more likely to take place where organisations have an identified respected senior champion. In addition to those discussed in the text we are proposing the following activities (see Annex 3 for more detail):

- A sample survey of the employee and volunteer profile of the sector to provide baseline data against which change can be measured
- Developing and using grant and contract conditions to deliver diversity and equality

Q24 Are champions needed?

Q25 Does your organisation have a diversity champion that we could keep in touch with during the delivery of this plan? If not, are there any barriers to identifying such a person for us to work with?

Annex 1: The Diversity Review

The Diversity Review commenced in 2002 and included:

1. A project to **scope** the literature, review existing projects and identify the need for further research. This took place between July 2002 and May 2003 and is reported in CRN 75.
2. Development of an **evaluation framework and toolkit** for the sector between December 2003 and October 2004. This is published as CRN 90.
3. A review of **policy and legislation for outdoor recreation** providers, undertaken as part of the research below, but reported separately as 'Diversity Review: Policy and legislation for providers'.
4. Research into the **needs and perceptions of under-represented groups** for access to the outdoors and countryside was carried out between December 2003 and April 2005. This is summarised in CRN 94.
5. Research into the **awareness of organisations providing access** to outdoor recreation of the needs of under-represented groups, plus their current and future plans for meeting those needs. This is summarised in CRN 95 and took place from April 2004 until April 2005.
6. Four **action research projects** commenced in August 2004, testing novel ways of increasing people's access to the benefits of outdoor recreation and the countryside that they can sustain independently. The first year's evaluation forms part of the research findings. The projects will conclude in August 2007, with the final evaluation available at the end of 2007.

Diversity Review findings

1. Scoping research

The scoping research was undertaken for the Countryside Agency by OPENspace with Heriott Watt University who were asked to investigate:

- a) Under-representation in accessing the countryside for enjoyment;
- b) The relationship between under-representation, cultural background and social exclusion; and,
- c) The potential role of countryside access and recreational opportunities to address social exclusion.

Annex 1: The Diversity Review

The research identified the need for:

- i) Improved evidence of the benefits of accessing the outdoors through effective evaluation and research;
- ii) Improved data collection and monitoring of change through visitor and catchment surveys;
- iii) Information on the needs and perceptions of people for accessing the outdoors from the groups identified as under-represented;
- iv) Research on the awareness amongst providers about the under-represented groups identified and their needs;
- v) The inclusion of the elderly and women as under-represented groups alongside those already identified in the Rural White Paper 2000.

The scoping research recommendations were to:

- Develop an evaluation framework
- Research people who are under-represented and/or socially excluded, including an exploration of their perceptions, needs and preferences
- Research providers of services for these groups in England
- Analyse the extent to which 'visiting' the countryside can address social exclusion
- Undertake a mix of action research projects to meet the needs of specific groups and using less commonly employed outreach methods. These should be evaluated and form the basis of future good practice guides.

All the recommendations have been acted upon, with subsequent research designed to address the identified gaps in knowledge and information. The timescale for reporting to Defra, by December 2005, has necessitated a prioritisation of research. Where this has not been possible because of the scale of the issues or the need to prioritise, the gaps are addressed in the Diversity Review Action Plan. Also, the set of four action research projects are still in progress, concluding in August 2007.

2. Evaluation framework and toolkit

The framework and toolkit were developed under contract by Ecotec and are being used to evaluate the four action research projects (see below) and will be updated through application by Michael Bell Associates (MBA), who are evaluating the action research projects. The framework includes:

Annex 1: The Diversity Review

- Evaluation of processes and outcomes
- Gathering baseline data against which evaluation data can be measured
- Tracking methods for monitoring project progress against objectives
- Qualitative and quantitative methods

The framework and toolkit, part funded by the Forestry Commission, emphasises a long-term approach to evaluation. It was launched at a Countryside Recreation Network event in October 2004.

3. Review of policy and legislation for outdoor recreation providers

A review of relevant diversity and equality policy and legislation formed part of the initial review in the research examining the awareness of under-represented groups held by providers, which is reported below. It has been published separately to address a gap in the knowledge of outdoor recreation providers and organisations and will be periodically updated.

4. Research into the needs and perceptions of under-represented groups

The qualitative research into the needs and perceptions of under-represented groups for access to the outdoors and countryside was undertaken by Ethnos, jointly funded with the Forestry Commission (England) and is summarised in CRN 94, "What about us? Diversity Review evidence – part one"

Key findings

- Lack of information and confidence have significant barriers
- All groups keen to access outdoor recreation once 'tasted'
- Key barriers confirmed as lack of transport and information
- Lack of a sense of welcome for young people and black and minority ethnic community
- Lack of continuity of provision or none a barrier for disabled people.

Annex 1: The Diversity Review

The researchers investigated the views of three under-represented groups:

- People from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, including Indian, Pakistani and Black-Caribbean people;
- Disabled people, including people with mobility impairments, people who were blind or had visual impairment, and people with mental ill-health;
- Young people aged 14–16 and young adults aged 17–24.

All the research participants were from inner city areas in London, Birmingham and Bradford, with 300 people taking part in the research.

The top level finding is that, contrary to assumptions, all the groups are keen to access outdoor recreation once they have ‘tasted’ the experience. This is aside from inner city young people who need more engaging activities. That lack of experience, lack of appropriate, targeted information and lack of confidence are key barriers. Lack of transport impacts on independent, self-sustained access. For some, racism and discrimination are experienced.

The main findings covered what the countryside represented, perceived benefits of countryside use and factors limiting use.

Representations of the countryside

People from all the groups shared a common underlying representation of the countryside in that they:

- Contrasted the city and the countryside;
- Construed the environment of the countryside as natural and green, vast and open, healthy, clean and far away from cities;
- Interpreted the way of life of people living in the countryside as slow and simple, based on traditional English values, close knit, elderly and conservative.

There were differences, though, between the under-represented groups in their attitudes towards these common representations. People from ethnic minority backgrounds valued the dimensions related to the natural environment and the slow and simple life of rural communities. However, they also expected to feel excluded and conspicuous in what they perceived as a solely white social environment.

Disabled people valued the way of life of rural communities and generally anticipated being made to feel welcome. Like people from ethnic minority backgrounds, they also valued the natural or physical environment, but expected to feel vulnerable because of the inherent unpredictability of the landscape. In contrast, young people had very mixed views in relation to the natural environment. They were very negative about the way of life in

Annex 1: The Diversity Review

the countryside and believed there was nothing for young people to do, since it lacked anything of interest or excitement for their age group. However, there are a wide range of successful and popular youth activities based on outdoor adventure which meet this need, but which the inner city participants were unaware of.

Perceived benefits of countryside use

Across all under-represented groups, people thought that making more use of the countryside and green outdoor spaces would be good for them.

People from ethnic minority backgrounds perceived benefits in relation to physical health (breathing fresh air and taking light exercise); psychological health and emotional well-being (getting away from the stresses and strains of everyday urban life, reconnecting with nature, finding inner peace, and recreating with family or friends); personal identity (reminiscing about life 'back home' and establishing psychological continuity between their former and current 'self'); and social inclusion and civic participation (meeting people from other social and cultural backgrounds, learning about English society, and feeling integrated, respected and empowered as ethnic minorities).

Disabled people also perceived physical health benefits (breathing fresh air and taking light exercise); plus psychological health and emotional well-being (getting away from the stresses and strains of everyday urban life, reconnecting with nature, having new and varied sensory experiences, finding inner peace, and recreating with other people); personal identity (establishing psychological continuity between people's non-disabled and disabled days, having a sense of achievement); social inclusion and civic participation (meeting non-disabled people, and feeling integrated, respected and empowered as disabled people).

Young people identified benefits for their physical health (breathing fresh air, taking light exercise and engaging in sports and challenging physical activities); psychological health and emotional well-being (getting away from various social pressures – family, peer, school and work, finding inner peace, and recreating with friends); personal identity (establishing psychological continuity between their childhood and early adulthood, exploring new identities, developing new skills). While young people themselves did not discuss benefits of countryside use in relation to social inclusion and civic participation, there were some references to these in the literature and in interviews with experts.

Factors limiting use of the countryside

Amongst people from ethnic minority backgrounds, these involved the cost of visiting the countryside and problems linked to transport; a lack of knowledge of the English countryside and lack of 'cultural habit' of visiting the countryside. The fear of discrimination was a real issue, but different patterns of use and a lack of culturally appropriate provision also played their part.

Annex 1: The Diversity Review

Amongst disabled people, problems linked to transport and the cost of visiting were also found to be important factors restricting use of the countryside. A lack of knowledge of available facilities for disabled people, as well as a basic lack of provisions for disabled people, were also significant. Social isolation and a feeling of vulnerability due to the inherent unpredictability of the countryside were also cited.

The factors restricting young people's use of the countryside, on the other hand, were different again. Issues such as their negative perceptions of the countryside were important, as well as other priorities competing for their time, peer pressure and dependency on adults. A lack of appropriate facilities for young people hindered access, plus problems linked to transport and the expense of visiting the countryside.

It is important to note that the research focused on people's views and experiences in relation to 'the countryside'. The perceived benefits and factors limiting use of the countryside were therefore discussed with the remote and open countryside in mind. Many of the views expressed may have been very different had research participants been asked to consider 'outdoor green spaces' more generally.

5. Awareness of outdoor recreation providers

This comprehensive quantitative research was carried out by the Environmental Psychology Research Group, University of Surrey and reported as "What about us? Part 2". It surveyed nearly 800 organisations including government agencies, local authorities, funding bodies and direct access providers, and policy makers. The organisations were assessed over the degree to which they were aware of the need to address the diversity of people using their service.

Key findings

- Majority of organisations lack confidence in engaging target groups
- 'Resource focus' or 'people focus' division apparent
- 'Customer' focus is absent – impact on information content and media
- Needs of majority of disabled people overlooked, focus on physical impairment
- Poor and insufficient project evaluation impacts on evidence base lack of local site and wider catchment survey data.

6. Action research projects

Four action research projects began in August 2004, testing novel ways of increasing access to outdoor recreation in the countryside that can be independently sustained. A short description of each of the projects follows. The first year's evaluation, carried out between August and October 2005, has informed the review and action plan.

Beyond the Boundary – Yorkshire Dales National Park

This project which twins Yorkshire Dales National Park and Bradford youth cricket teams is managed by the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It is testing whether twinning two culturally distinct communities, one urban and Asian, the other rural and white, around a shared interest in cricket leads to mutual understanding, increased confidence in accessing both the Yorkshire Dales and Bradford and a self-sustaining habit of outdoor recreation.

Finding Common Ground – Plymouth Groundwork

About bringing inner city and rural people living in economically poor areas of Plymouth, and those living in rural Devon. The shared experience is regeneration, and Plymouth Groundwork manages the project.

Stepping Out – Warwickshire Wildlife Trust

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust manage this project which brings together social care and mental health professionals with environmental management professionals, to provide access to Coventry's open space and countryside for carers of people with mental health problems. The project is testing ways of introducing carers to places on their doorstep, which they can return to independently.

By All Means – Kent County Council

This project is managed by Kent County Council who are testing ways of fully engaging with disability representative organisations to provide information and confidence for disabled people to feel informed and confident enough to access the outdoors independently.

Annex 1: The Diversity Review

Action Research Projects: Summary

Participants

- Meeting a need, often previously unknown
- Offering confidence through group visits
- Ethnic groups mixing
- Information gap being filled
- Sharing a common experience

Organisations

- Outdoor recreation helps deliver health and social care
- Mixing social and environmental professionals
- Diversity may not be getting embedded – ‘project culture’
- Sharing experience and expertise in collecting diversity data

Sustained access

- Transport is a challenge
- Independent, repeat visits commencing
- Lack of existing visitor data frustrating

Further information about the Review and the research projects can be found at <http://www.countryside.gov.uk/diversity>

Annex 2: Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

1.1 Outdoor Recreation: Rural White Paper 2000, Diversity Review Action Plan

The draft Action Plan implements the findings of the Rural White Paper Diversity Review. The objective of the Review is to provide opportunities for more people to enjoy the benefits of outdoor recreation. The Review and the Action Plan apply only to England.

No new legislation, primary or secondary, will be required to implement the Action Plan, as the actions identified in the Plan are voluntary.

1.2 Purpose and intended effect

The purpose of the Action Plan is to map out a detailed strategy to enable people from all walks of life to have the opportunity of participating in outdoor recreation, whether in remote areas of countryside or the woods and green spaces closer to where they live. The target is:

Between 2006 and 2016, to achieve a sustained and measurable increase in:

- Awareness by under-represented groups of what the natural environment has to offer, and where to go to enjoy it;
- The numbers of people in under-represented groups enjoying the natural environment.

1.3 Background

The Rural White Paper published in November 2000 argued that the countryside should be a source of enjoyment for people from all sectors of society. It expressed concern that most outdoor recreational pursuits such as walking are largely the preserve of the white, middle-aged, middle-class and able-bodied. The White Paper committed the Government to undertake a review to spread the benefits of countryside recreation more equally in ways which protect the countryside, benefit local communities, and secure recreational opportunities for a more diverse cross-section of the population. The White Paper also committed the Government to prepare an action plan based on the findings of the review.

These commitments were reinforced in the Rural Strategy 2004, the UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005, and Defra's Five Year Strategy 2004, which includes the strategic outcome:

"More and better access to the natural environment for recreation, especially for those who find it difficult to enjoy the health and well-being benefits which access to nature can bring."

Annex 2: Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

Significant numbers of people are involved. For example 8.7 million people in England are disabled in some way (18% of the population)¹⁶ and 4.5 million are black or from minority ethnic communities (9%)¹⁷. With this in mind, and because of its previous research in this area, the Government commissioned the Countryside Agency to undertake the review.

Key elements of the work have included:

- i. Surveys to determine the factors affecting participation by under-represented groups, the levels of current provision and the attitudes of service providers;
- ii. Action research projects to test new approaches to increasing participation by under-represented groups in recreational visits to the countryside; and,
- iii. The establishment of a common evaluation framework to monitor past and current projects including the action research projects.

Much of the research is now complete and a draft Action Plan has been drawn up for public consultation. A final plan is scheduled to be in place by early 2007.

The timing of this work coincides with legislation to create a new agency – “Natural England” – which will bring together English Nature, the landscape and recreation elements of the Countryside Agency, and Defra’s Rural Development Service. This will unite in a single organisation the responsibility for enhancing biodiversity and landscapes in both rural and urban areas, improving public access to land and promoting outdoor recreation. A new, over-arching recreational strategy is being developed for the new body and work on the Diversity Review Action Plan will form an important part of that strategy.

1.3.1 Rationale for Government intervention

People make over 1 billion visits to the English countryside every year¹⁸ enjoying a wide range of recreational opportunities including access to land which traditionally has been free at the point of use. The public sector plays a critical role in the provision, management and regulation of this infrastructure and financial support for land managers is increasingly oriented towards providing public benefits such as a high quality, accessible countryside. But not everyone benefits from this investment. For example, people from black and ethnic minority communities are 2–3 times less likely to visit the countryside than white people¹⁸ and 97% of visitors to National Parks are white¹⁹. Other groups with low rates of use, for example those living in disadvantaged urban areas, have the potential to benefit the most from opportunities to enjoy the natural environment but that potential is largely unrealised.

Publication of the Rural White Paper coincided with enactment of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which has since provided new public access to more than

¹⁶ Department for Work and Pensions, 2004, “Review of Disability Estimates and definitions”

¹⁷ The Office for National Statistics, 2001, “Social Focus in Brief – Ethnicity”

¹⁸ Countryside Agency, 2004, “Great Britain Day Visits Survey 2002/3” CAX14

¹⁹ Countryside Agency, 2005, “State of the Countryside Report”

Annex 2: Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

800,000 hectares of land. We can expect the benefits of this legacy to continue to be underutilised by substantial sections of the community unless Government provides the stimulus for action. Evidence from the diversity review shows that service providers lack the confidence and skills to engage with under-represented groups². It also shows that participants from those groups who have had a taste of what the countryside has to offer are keen to return but face a number of barriers if they are to do so¹.

The public sector can take action to remove barriers and facilitate use but it is clear from the evidence that there will be little progress on implementing the findings of the Diversity Review unless Government provides the leadership necessary for change.

There are several existing legislative drivers but none would need amending. They include:

- i. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 which makes it unlawful to discriminate against a disabled person by refusing to provide services to them which are available to other members of the public – even if the services are free, for example access to a public park or any countryside which is open to the public;
- ii. The Race Relations Act 2000 which makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origin, and requires over 300 public bodies, including local authorities, to take action to promote racial equality;
- iii. Article 13 of the EU Treaty of Amsterdam, which codifies a set of social rights based on the premise that all citizens should be able to participate to the full in the social heritage of their country and live according to the standards prevailing in society.

In addition, new powers to tackle discrimination and promote social justice are proposed in the Equality Bill which will create a new body, the Commission for Equality and Human Rights, to replace the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission, and the Equal Opportunities Commission.

1.4 Consultation

1.4.1 Within Government

Widespread consultation with other Government Departments is a prerequisite for securing diversity review outcomes and we have invited the views of all Departments who appear to have an interest. These include, Department for Communities and Local Government, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Home Office, Department for Education and Skills, Department of Health, Forestry Commission, Ministry of Defence (Defence Estates), Department for Transport, Department for Work and Pensions, Department of Trade and Industry (Equality Unit) and Cabinet Office.

Annex 2: Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

1.4.2 Public Consultation

A public consultation exercise on the draft Action Plan is being undertaken, which will include a number of regional events. These follow a series of events previously organised by the Countryside Agency during the review process. These included:

- Presentation and workshop seminar on the scoping research findings for national stakeholders – February 2003;
- Presentation and workshop seminar on the provider research findings April 2004;
- Programme of five regional road shows with workshops alongside presentations on the research findings – February and March 2005;
- Action Plan Forum involving key national stakeholders which met 4 times between October 2004 and the end of 2005;
- Three target group specific workshop sessions with representative groups for disabled people (July 2005), black and minority ethnic community (October 2005) and young people (January 2006).

1.5 Options

1.5.1 Option 1: do nothing

Effectively this would result in Government failing to meet the commitments made in the 2000 White Paper and, more recently, in Defra's Five Year Strategy. It would run counter to the Government's equality and social justice agenda of which the diversity review has been a part. Without the necessary political leadership little progress would be possible other than on an ad hoc basis. There would be no coherent strategy, no baseline for measuring progress towards the target, and engagement with local authorities would be more difficult. Given the current Ministerial commitment to delivery of the diversity review this is not a realistic option but it is included as a baseline.

1.5.2 Option 2: pilot the action plan in discrete areas

This would have the advantage of engaging with selected local authorities and other service providers who have shown an interest in working with groups of under-represented people to pursue the objectives of the diversity review. Typically these might be local authorities who have entered into Local Strategic Partnerships and perhaps Local Area Agreements. However, a narrow focus would exclude activity by other service providers and groups. This would risk losing the cohesion and inclusiveness which has been a central feature of the diversity review. Moreover, the review is already testing the effectiveness of various interventions in four pilot areas and the lessons learnt from these will be fed into the action plan.

1.5.3 Option 3: Develop the Action Plan for national application

This would provide a strategic framework for action by service providers and stakeholders, including representatives of the target groups, throughout England. It would build firmly on the review findings, in particular recommendations arising from the research into the attitudes of service providers and the needs of participants. Key areas would include: issues of governance and compliance (the latter in connection with the requirements of existing legislation); guidance and training; plans and strategies; provision of information; the contribution to be made by existing forums and networks; and additional research, in particular to fill gaps in current datasets. Involvement of other Government Departments would be a prerequisite.

1.6 Risks

1.6.1 Barriers to participation

Key factors inhibiting recreational use of the outdoors by all under-represented groups are a lack of information about where to go in the countryside and what to do when they get there. Even if this information were readily available poor transport links in some areas make it difficult for under-represented groups to reach places which offer outdoor recreational opportunities away from where they live.

On the first we propose that Government at all levels and the relevant agencies should work together to improve the amount, range, and quality of information on recreational opportunities. On the second, the scope for measures to improve transport links between urban and rural areas will be investigated, for example by encouraging more collaboration between local authorities and other potential partner organisations in developing their Local Transport Plans.

1.6.2 Role of local government

Delivery of the Action Plan will largely depend on the willingness of local authorities, as the major service providers in the outdoor recreation sector, to work with Government on this project. The voluntary and private sectors have a role to play but local government commitment is essential if we are to mainstream the findings of the diversity review. We have no powers to direct local government to participate but a number of local authorities are using their Race Equality schemes to provide recreational opportunities for under-represented groups. Disability Equality Schemes provide similar potential. We will explore these and other mechanisms such as Local Area Agreements to encourage local authorities to contribute to delivery of the Action Plan.

1.6.3 Funding

There is currently no discrete source of Government funding to implement all the recommendations. Some of these recommendations involve organisational changes within service providers and would not require extensive programme funding. But others will – for example funding for selected catchment area surveys at local authority level. The Countryside Agency has a modest amount of funding available but by no means enough to furnish the sums required. A degree of external funding will be necessary if all of the activities likely to feature in the action plan are to be undertaken and this will have a bearing on timing. It will be necessary to begin with those tasks which are immediately affordable and roll out more costly interventions over an extended period.

1.6.4 Nanny state

There will be those who consider that Government intervention is an inappropriate use of taxpayers' money and that people should be left to decide for themselves how to spend their leisure time. The Diversity Review itself provides a counter argument. The evidence shows there are those who have not discovered what the countryside has to offer and therefore have not been able to make an informed decision about whether countryside recreation is for them. A key objective of the Action Plan is to provide that opportunity.

1.6.5 Discrimination

Research showed that fear of discrimination among black people and those from ethnic minorities was an issue for participants. A lack of culturally appropriate provision by service providers was also a factor. There is some evidence of concern by people in rural areas about the potential impact of increased numbers of visitors from different cultural backgrounds who may be unfamiliar with the ways of the English countryside²⁰ although similar concerns may be found in urban areas as well. There is also counter evidence that black people and people from ethnic minorities have received a warm welcome in the countryside²¹. External stakeholders, including representatives of the tourist industry, land managers, and under-represented groups have been involved in discussions and events throughout the review process and we will continue to draw on their views and experiences in developing the Action Plan.

²⁰ Neil Chakraborti and Jon Garland, 2004 "Rural Racism"

²¹ Mosaic Partnership, 2006, www.mosaicpartnership.org

Annex 2: Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

1.7 Costs and Benefits

1.7.1 Costs

The cost of implementing the Action Plan might be in the region of £25m over the 10-year period. Most of these costs would fall on Government. This figure can be broken down amongst the 8 action themes as follows:

Theme	Cost (£m)
Training and Guidance	1.45
Forums and Networks	1.0
Plans and Strategies	
Information and Marketing	2.5
Research	3.3
Funding	16.0
Service Planning and Performance Measures	
Championing, Governance and Regulation	
Total	24.25

These figures represent a very broad indication of cost, which will need to be refined. A scoping study to assess the economic case for increasing the number of people from under-represented groups participating in outdoor activity concluded that it would be possible to draw up such a case.

A decision on whether to undertake further research on the economic case to quantify the likely costs and benefits will be taken as part of the consultation exercise and recorded in the full Regulatory Impact Assessment. An alternative might be to get this data by implementing the Action Plan via pilot studies in selected areas (i.e. via Option 2 above).

We will also look to responses from service providers to try and draw a closer link between the costs and benefits.

1.7.1.1 Economic

Under **option 1** costs would be minimal and largely confined to initiatives developed by service providers, business, and the voluntary sector of their own volition. Government would need to maintain some form of overview in concert with Natural England but abandonment of the White Paper commitment would carry a high risk that even this modest investment would be vulnerable to other programmes with a higher priority.

Under **option 2** expenditure by service providers, business and representatives of the target groups would continue to be discretionary. Similarly, there would be no additional burden on local authorities or other statutory service providers in so far as their duties to comply with current legislation are concerned, for example, the Race Relations Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. However, we would expect those local authorities and other organisations who were willing to participate in pilots to make a firm commitment to see the process through to completion and be prepared to disseminate the outcome to

Annex 2: Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

others. There would be costs to local authorities in terms of planning and supporting service provision and improving organisational structures and training. In part these would be offset if authorities were to draw on existing plans and strategies such as statutory Community Strategies and Local Transport Plans. However, gathering local data to establish baselines would carry additional costs if authorities were unable to find the necessary funds from elsewhere in their budgets or to secure external funding.

Option 3 is more in keeping with the Rural White Paper commitment. It would effectively be a national version of option 2 with a greater role for central Government and a wider field of operations. It would be more costly than options 1 and 2 but it would be possible to prioritise activities and build in sufficient flexibility to regulate the speed of progress. An initial outline of the main players, the delivery tools and costs of a ten-year programme (circa £25m) is at Annex 3.

1.7.1.2 Environmental

We would not expect there to be significant environmental costs. The most popular form of outdoor recreation is walking (eight times more popular than mountain biking)¹⁸ but the evidence indicates that, with the exception of motorised use, outdoor recreation generally causes little significant damage, even to the finest landscapes in England's National Parks²² landowners and managers should not be affected because the action plan will apply only to land to which the public has a right of access.

1.7.1.3 Social

The programme is designed to promote social objectives and there are unlikely to be any adverse social impacts.

1.7.2 Benefits

Benefits are common to all three options differing only in degree and the extent of the commitment, which is voluntary to deliver the Action Plan.

1.7.2.1 Economic

There would be some savings to the National Health Service. Between 1993 and 2004 the proportion of adults categorised as obese increased from 13% to 24% (men) and 16% to 24% (women)²³. Low levels of physical activity are a significant factor in this increase. The annual costs of physical inactivity in England, including the contribution of inactivity to obesity, are estimated to be £10.7 billion. The Chief Medical Officer has indicated that, in theory, a reduction of 5% in current levels of inactivity would save £300 million a year²⁴.

¹⁸ Countryside Agency, 2004, "Great Britain Day Visits Survey 2002/3" CAX14

²² Sheffield Hallam University, 2004, "Demand for outdoor recreation in the English National Parks"

²³ Department of Health, December 2005, "Health Survey 2004: update of trend tables"

²⁴ Department of Health, 2004, "At least five a week: Evidence on the Impact of Physical Activity and its Relationship to Health" by The Chief Medical Officer

Annex 2: Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

This is based on estimates, which show that, in western countries, some 2.5% of total national healthcare costs arise from inactivity. The Department of Health's physical activity action plan includes a number of separate PSA targets for increasing levels of physical activity although there is no overall trajectory other than a broad aim to achieve a 1% increase every year. At present it is not possible to quantify the savings, which would be attributable to outdoor recreation alone although there are proposals to commission research into this.

Expenditure by day visitors to the countryside generates almost £11 billion a year to local economies¹⁸ and some 300,000 jobs depend directly on the quality of the natural environment²⁵. Overall disposable income of disabled people in England is estimated to be £16 billion a year²⁶. The annual purchasing power of young black and Asian consumers in the UK as a whole is estimated to be £32 billion after tax but black and Asian consumers as a whole are said to earn £156 billion after tax²⁷. There is, therefore, considerable potential for additional income for rural communities if more people from under-represented groups visit the countryside, although this may of course just displace expenditure in other areas.

1.7.2.2 Environmental

These are difficult to quantify but it is possible that an increase in demand for outdoor recreation could lead to an improvement in the quality and quantity of public green spaces including local authority country parks and the wider countryside – in particular the drivers of CAP reform and diversification provide land managers with a wider choice of business opportunities which can include outdoor recreation.

1.7.2.3 Social

People who are physically active have a 20–30% reduced risk of premature death and up to a 50% reduced risk of developing major chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancers²⁴.

The countryside and urban green spaces provide a wide range of recreational activities for people of all ages and abilities and there is evidence that links the natural environment with both good physical health and psychological well-being²⁸. In line with Defra's Five Year Strategy we are contributing to delivery of the Department of Health's physical activity plan and the diversity review has a role to play in so far as it encourages more people from the target groups to participate in outdoor recreation.

²⁵ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2004, "The Rural Strategy"

²⁶ Disability Rights Commission, July 2002, "Promoting a Positive Response within Health & Social Care Services" by Michael Brothers

²⁷ Business in the Community, 2004, "The Changing Face of Britain: Ethnic Minorities in the UK"

²⁸ Countryside Recreation Network, 2005, "A countryside for health and well being"

Annex 2: Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

Other social benefits include: appreciation of the natural beauty of the English countryside and its cultural and social history; new opportunities to have fun with family and friends; direct contact with and a greater understanding of the natural environment and its potential for providing a wider range of experiences than the more traditional forms of outdoor recreation; personal development (for example the challenge of participating in adventure sports); opportunities to understand and gain respect for the natural environment in terms of, for example, the interaction between production, distribution and consumption of food and more widely our dependence on the sustainable management of natural resources; and opportunities to engage in voluntary conservation work, helping to develop stronger links between town and country in the process.

In summary, we believe that although the benefits deriving from the Action Plan are to some degree intangible and uncertain, the potential qualitative benefits provide a sound basis for proceeding.

1.8 Equity and Fairness

By its nature the Action Plan is designed to correct an imbalance between those who have some knowledge of the countryside and the means to take advantage of what it has to offer and those who are less well equipped to do so because they lack the information to make informed decisions and the means to follow them up.

1.9 Small Firms Impact test

We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on small businesses. Action under the Plan would be entirely voluntary.

1.10 Competition Assessment

None required.

1.11 Enforcement, sanctions and monitoring

No enforcement of the Action Plan itself will be required as it is entirely voluntary. Enforcement of existing legislation, such as the Race Relations Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, is not an issue for this Assessment.

Arrangements for monitoring and review will be developed for inclusion in the final RIA but a framework and toolkit have been developed and are being used to evaluate the four action research projects mentioned in paragraph 1.3 above.

Annex 2: Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

The framework includes:

- Evaluation of processes and outcomes;
- Gathering baseline data against which evaluation data can be measured;
- Tracking methods for monitoring progress against objectives; and,
- Methods of evaluating qualitative and quantitative data.

The framework will be also be applied to eight groups of actions set out in Chapter 2 of the consultation document.

1.12 Summary

In the past there has been some work done to look at ways of meeting the needs of under-represented groups, particularly people with disabilities. But these older projects tended to be one-off and lacked a strategic context. Neither were they effectively evaluated. As a consequence, there has been a paucity of reliable, quantitative data on the extent and nature of under-representation of visitors to the countryside, and even less on the awareness among service providers of the case for attracting new audiences. Opportunities to demonstrate the value of access to the countryside for a wider cross section of communities and individuals have been missed, with fewer opportunities for promoting understanding between urban and rural communities.

The Diversity Review was the first serious attempt to tackle this subject at a national level with a defined SMART target and an extensive programme of research backed up by common systems for monitoring and evaluating projects. It represents a significant opportunity for a joined-up approach with other agencies and organisations, including local government, and we believe the Action Plan should reflect the national dimension on which the review has been based.

1.13 Information requested

We would very much appreciate your comments on this partial Regulatory Impact Assessment, to enable us to draw up a final Assessment for publication with the final Action Plan. In particular, we would welcome your views on the following questions:

- Q1 Do you agree with the rationale for Government intervention (para 1.3.1)?
- Q2 Do you consider there are other options the Government should consider for implementing the Action Plan (para 1.4)?
- Q3 Which of the options do you prefer, and why (para 1.4)?
- Q4 Are you aware of any existing research or other data that would help us to quantify the costs and benefits of the Action Plan (para 1.6)?
- Q5 Have we missed any qualitative benefits of the Plan (para 1.6.2)?

Annex 3: Summary of Diversity Review Action Plan Proposed Activities

Training and Guidance

Proposed Activities	Proposed Actions – Government and Agencies	Proposed Actions – Service Providers	Timescale and funds
Review media, format and distribution of guidance to meet needs of disabled staff, volunteers and customers	Review existing guidance Diversity-proof all new guidance Diversity-proof Natural England publications, make available the review, in Easy Read and ensure website accessibility	Engage with activity	Year 1/2 £0.25 million
Prepare and publish guidance on increasing awareness of diversity issues, how to engage with under-represented groups and provide for them, how to undertake evaluations and visitor surveys	Prepare and publish guidance	Engage with activity	
National funded training programme linked to guidance	Co-ordinate Local Access Forum training programme Fund and manage national training programme	Engage with activity both participating and delivering	Year 2/3 onwards
Local Training delivery plans	Co-ordination and support	Local Diversity Forums review training needs	£1.2 million
Training delivered to landowners/managers through revised ERDP package	Design and deliver training	Engage with training package design and delivery	
Training package delivered through Business Link and Learning and Skills Councils	Liaise with Regional Development Agencies, Business Link and Learning and Skills Councils to develop training package	Engage with training	

Annex 3: Summary of Diversity Review Action Plan Proposed Activities

Plans and Strategies

Proposed Activities	Proposed Actions – Government and Agencies	Proposed Actions – Service Providers	Timescale and costs
Review of National Park and AONB Management Plans to ensure that they meet the needs of the Diversity Review target groups	Update National Park and AONB Management Plan guidance where necessary	Engage in 5 year reviews of AONB and National Park Management Plans	From year one onwards according to the review dates for the plans and strategies listed
Review of Regional Transport Strategies to ensure that the needs of the target groups are met and that outdoor recreation destinations are included in transport planning	Work with Department for Transport and their Mobility and Inclusion Unit Influence through regional activity	Review and compare through diversity forums	No cost, undertaken as part of required reviews
Review potential of Local Area Agreements to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation for under-represented groups	Work with DCLG	Review the content of LAA pilots for access to outdoor recreation	
Review Local Transport Plans	Work with Department for Transport and their Mobility and Inclusion Unit Influence through local activity by working with Community Transport Groups and the Community Transport Association	Engagement with reviews through Local Access Forums/diversity forums	
Review of green space strategies to secure equality of access to spaces and places	Work with DCLG and CABESpace and investigate potential of Green Flag Awards to deliver	Engage with the review	
Review Rights of Way Improvement Plans	Support and provide guidance to Local Access Forums. Local Access Forums review ROWIPs	Engage with reviews and implement guidance	

Annex 3: Summary of Diversity Review Action Plan Proposed Activities

Forums and Networks

Proposed Activity	Proposed Actions – Government and Agencies	Proposed Actions – Service Providers	Timescale and cost
Build on existing forums	<p>Look at guidance for Local Access Forums and consider broadening their remit to include delivery of parts of the Diversity Review Action Plan</p> <p>Engage existing forums at a regional and national level in delivery of the Action Plan</p>	<p>Engage with existing Forums</p>	<p>Year 1 onwards</p> <p>£0.75 million</p>
Where required establish new county-level forums of representative groups and service providers to share good practice, review training needs and delivery	<p>Where appropriate develop new forums</p>	<p>Fully support the forums</p>	
Create a database of existing and planned diversity and social inclusion projects	<p>Government Offices engaged as appropriate</p> <p>Co-ordination of project database</p>	<p>Share information through forums and contribute to database</p>	<p>Year 2 onwards</p> <p>£0.25 million</p>
Sharing of information about diversity	<p>Ensure Government Offices assist in data supply and gathering</p> <p>Drive the effective collection of data through influence and support</p> <p>Liaison with Regional Observatories</p>	<p>Review data and plan for improved data gathering and dissemination</p>	

Annex 3: Summary of Diversity Review Action Plan Proposed Activities

Information and Marketing

Proposed Activity	Proposed Action – Government and Agencies	Proposed Activities – Service Providers	Timescale and cost
Online access data base developed	Secure funding for the development and maintenance of a national countryside access database	Stakeholders in project, data provision and quality assurance	Year 2 £1.5 million
Promotional campaign targeted at under-represented groups	Develop promotional campaign. Consider engagement of public sector broadcaster in campaign Investigate possibility of private sector sponsor	Stakeholders in promotional campaign(s) through local (existing or new) forums	Year 3 £1.0 million

Research

Proposed Activity	Proposed Action – Government and Agencies	Proposed Activities – Service Providers	Timescale and cost
Undertake a participation survey	Work with DCMS and ONS to design and manage participation survey	Contribute to survey design and make use of data gathered	Year 1 £1.0 million
Refine the England Day Visits Survey to gather more information about diversity	Work with DCMS, and Visit Britain to refine the EDVS to provide more information about diversity	Include the collection of diversity data in all relevant surveys	Year 1 £0.3 million
Create an online portal to bring together research and project evaluation findings	Develop and manage an online portal Promote and review evaluation framework and toolkit	Adoption and use of a common evaluation framework and toolkit	Year 3/4 £0.75 million
Carry out further research to build on the “What about us?” findings	Design and commission research to fill the gaps identified working across Government Departments and Agencies where appropriate	Engage in research and consider becoming a partner	Year 1 onwards £1.25 million

Annex 3: Summary of Diversity Review Action Plan Proposed Activities

Funding

Proposed Activity	Proposed Action – Government and Agencies	Proposed Activities – Service Providers	Timescale and cost
Develop a nationally funded programme of actions/projects, locally delivered and linked to a marketing campaign	Effective Comprehensive Spending Review bid Explore lottery funding and sponsorship	Partnership working with local authority disability access officers and local representative groups to identify suitable programmes and projects	Year 3 onwards £16 million
Forums at a local level advise on the delivery of a nationally funded programme	Involve local forums at early stage of programme development	Work with representative groups on joint programmes and projects	
Review ERDP and higher level Environmental Stewardship grant programme	Undertake review	Advise on targeting where appropriate and develop programmes and projects suitable for funding	Year 3, no cost part of required review
Explore opportunities to work through other funding programmes, such as DfES's opportunity cards scheme and any programmes arising from the Russell Commission recommendations on young people and volunteer activity	Work across Government Departments	Advise on local and regional joint working needs	Year 2 onwards, costs with existing funding streams
Consider the potential of existing funding schemes to support diversity initiatives	Work across Government Departments and Agencies to look at fund criteria	Advise where appropriate	Year 1 onwards as and when schemes are reviewed

Annex 3: Summary of Diversity Review Action Plan Proposed Activities

Service Planning and Performance Measures

Proposed Activity	Proposed Action – Government and Agencies	Proposed Activities – Service Providers	Timescale and costs
Consider the scope for diversity performance management target	Discuss possible diversity target in light of review of performance management framework	Advise where appropriate	Year 1, no costs
Work with Government Departments where existing targets overlap	Liaison with DCLG, the Home Office and other government departments	Advise where appropriate	Year 2, no costs
Review and where appropriate refine National Park Authority and Local Authority Best Value Performance Indicator(s) to secure link between open space access, diversity and community cohesion	Work with Audit Commission, LGA, CNPA, ANPA and DCLG	Positive response to performance indicators	Year 3, no costs
Develop social justice dimension of Sustainable Development Strategy	Liaise across Government to develop the strategy further		Year 3, no costs
Review current diversity and equality statements	Through the appropriate national forums and through local forums at a local level	Share existing statements and offer critical support for development	From year 1 onwards depending upon review dates for plans, no costs

Champion, Governance and Regulation

Annex 3: Summary of Diversity Review Action Plan Proposed Activities

Proposed Activity	Proposed Action – Government and Agencies	Proposed Activities – Service Providers	Timescale and cost
Senior diversity champions identified	Senior champions identified across Government Departments and Agencies	Organisations publicly identify champions at a senior level	Year 1, no costs
Support local champions	Develop a scheme to support and guide local champions building on existing initiatives	Advise on need for support and identify local champions	Year 1, no costs
Continue to work to ensure that profile of management board members and staff of national, regional and local bodies reflect the diversity of the English population	Continue existing work across Government Departments and Agencies	Advise where appropriate	Year 1 onwards, an ongoing activity, no costs
Undertake sample survey of sector employee and volunteer profile	Undertake sample survey and disseminate results	Organisations to help with survey	Year 2, costs for this included under heading of research
Develop and deploy grant and contract conditions to deliver diversity and equality	Ensure all grant schemes and contracts apply appropriate conditions	Comply with conditions and set own grant and contract conditions	Year 2, no costs

Annex 4: List of Consultees

1990 Trust
Action in Rural Sussex
Action with Communities in Rural England
Advantage West Midlands
Albion Water Ltd
All County, District and Unitary Authorities in England
All Local Access Forums
Anglian Water Services Ltd
AONB Arnside and Silverdale
AONB Blackdown Hills
AONB Cannock Chase
AONB Cornwall
AONB Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs
AONB Dedham Vale
AONB Dorset
AONB East Devon
AONB Forest of Bowland
AONB High Weald
AONB Howardian Hills
AONB Isle of Wight
AONB Isles of Scilly
AONB Kent Downs
AONB Lincolnshire Wolds
AONB Malvern Hills
AONB Mendip Hills
AONB Nidderdale Moors
AONB Norfolk Coast
AONB North Devon
AONB North Pennines Partnership
AONB North Wessex Downs
AONB Northumberland Coast
AONB Quantock Hills
AONB Shropshire Hills
AONB Solway Coast

Annex 4: List of Consultees

AONB South Devon
AONB Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit
AONB Surrey Hills
AONB Tamar Valley
AONB Wye Valley
Arts Council
Artswork
Association for AONBs
Association of National Park Authorities
Barnardos
Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity
Big Lottery Fund
Black Environment Network
Bournemouth & West Hampshire Water Plc
Bristol Water Plc
British Canoe Union
British Deaf Association
British Dyslexia Association
British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association Ltd
British Heart Foundation
British Horse Society
British Institute of Learning Disabilities
British Mountaineering Council
British Orienteering Federation
British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
British Waterways
British Youth Council
Broads Authority
Buckinghamshire Community Action
Business in the Community
Byways and Bridleway Trust
CABESpace
Cambridge Water Company Plc
Capacity Global

Annex 4: List of Consultees

Carers UK
Carnegie United Kingdom Trust
Central Council for Physical Recreation
Centre for Local Policy Studies
Cheshire Community Council
Chichester Harbour Conservancy
Chilterns Conservation Board
Chinese in Britain Forum
Commission for Racial Equality
Community Action
Community Action Hampshire
Community Council for Berkshire
Community Council of Devon
Community Council of Lincolnshire
Community Council of Northumberland
Community Council of Shropshire
Community Council of Somerset
Community First
Community First Partnership
Community Futures
Community Service Volunteers
Community Transport Association
Confederation of British Industry
Confederation of Indian Organisations
Cornwall Rural Community Council
Cotswold AONB Conservation Board
Council for Environmental Education
Council for National Parks
Country Land and Business Association
Countryside Access and Activities Network
Countryside Agency
Countryside Alliance
Countryside Foundation for Education
Countryside Management Association

Annex 4: List of Consultees

County Council Network
Crown Estates
Cyclists Touring Club
Dartmoor National Park Authority
DeafBlind
Defence Estates
Department for Communities and Local Government
Department for Education and Skills
Department for Work and Pensions
Department of Culture, Media and Sport
Department of Health
Department of Trade and Industry
Department of Transport
Derbyshire Rural Community Council
Disability Action
Disability Rights Commission
Disability Sport England
Disabled Living Foundation
Disabled Ramblers' Association
Dorset Community Action
Down's Syndrome Association
Durham Rural Community Council
East Midlands Development Agency
East Midlands Regional Assembly
East of England Development Agency
East of England Regional Assembly
Employers Organisation
England's Community Forests
English Heritage
English Nature
Environment Agency
Ethnic Minority Foundation
Exmoor National Park Authority
Farm and Countryside Education

Annex 4: List of Consultees

Farms for Schools
Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
Federation of Small Businesses
Field Studies Council
Fieldfare Trust
Folkestone & Dover Water Services Ltd
Forest Enterprise England
Forest Research
Forest School Camps
Forestry Commission
Forward North West
Girlguiding UK
Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
Government Office For London
Government Office for the East Midlands
Government Office for the East of England
Government Office for the North East
Government Office for the North West
Government Office for the South East
Government Office for the South West
Government Office for the West Midlands
Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber
Green Lanes Association
GreenSpace
Groundwork UK
Help the Aged
Heritage Council
Heritage Lottery Fund
Home Office
Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council
Inland Waterways Association
Interfaith Network for the United Kingdom
Isle of Wight Rural Community Council
Kent Rural Community Council

Annex 4: List of Consultees

Kids

Lake District National Park Authority

LANTRA

Learning and Skills Council

Learning Through Landscapes

Leonard Cheshire

Linking Environment and Farming

Local Government Association

London 21 Sustainability Network

London Development Agency

Manna Environment Network

MENCAP

Mental Health Foundation

Mid Kent Water Plc

MIND

Ministry of Defence

Minorities of Europe

Moorland Association

Multiple Sclerosis Society

Muslim Council of Britain

National Association of Local Councils

National Children's Bureau

National Council for Voluntary Organisations

National Council for Voluntary Youth Services

National Farmers Union

National Federation of Anglers

National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs

National Forest Company

National Playing Fields Association

National Rural Enterprise Centre

National Youth Agency

Nationwide Foundation

Natural Environment Research Council

New Forest National Park Authority

Annex 4: List of Consultees

Norfolk Rural Community Council
North East Assembly
North West Multi-faith Association
North West Regional Assembly
North York Moors National Park Authority
Northumberland National Park
Northumbrian Water Ltd
NorthWest Development Agency
Nottinghamshire Rural Community Council
One NorthEast
Ordnance Survey
Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
Parkinson's Disease Society
Peak District National Park
Pony Club
Portsmouth Water Plc
Princess Royal Trust for Carers
RADAR
Ramblers' Association
Refugee Council
RETHINK
Riding for the Disabled Association
Royal National Institute of the Blind
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Rural Community Council of Essex
Rural Community Council of Leicestershire and Rutland
Rural Development Service
Rural Youth Network
SANE
Scope
Sea Cadets
Sensory Trust
Severn Trent Water Ltd
Shebeen

Annex 4: List of Consultees

Small Business Service
South Downs Joint Committee
South East England Development Agency
South East England Regional Assembly
South East Water Plc
South Staffordshire Water Plc
South West of England Regional Development Agency
South West Regional Assembly
South West Water Ltd
Southern Water Services Ltd
Spinal Injuries Association
Sport England
St John's Ambulance
Staffordshire Community Council
Sussex Downs Conservation Board
Surrey Voluntary Service Council - Surrey Community Action
Sustrans
Sutton & East Surrey Water Plc
Tees Valley Rural Community Council
Tendring Hundred Water Services Ltd
Thames Water Utilities Ltd
The British Council of Disabled People
The Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire
The Duke of Edinburgh's Award
The Environment Council
The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
The National Autistic Society
The National Deaf Children's Society
The National Trust
The Prince's Trust
The Runnymede Trust
The Scout Association
The Stroke Association
The Woodland Trust

Annex 4: List of Consultees

Three Valleys Water Plc
Tourism Alliance
Tourism Board Cheshire and Warrington
Tourism for All
Tourism South East
Tourism South West
Tourist Board Cumbria
Tourist Board East of England
Tourist Board Heart of England
Tourist Board Lancashire and Blackpool
Tourist Board Yorkshire
Transport 2000
UK Youth
UK Youth Parliament
United Utilities Water Plc
Visit Britain
Vitalise
Voluntary Action Cumbria
Volunteering England (London)
Warwickshire Rural Community Council
Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
Wessex Water Services Ltd
West Midlands Regional Assembly
Wheel Power
Whizz-Kidz
Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
Wildlife Trusts Partnership
Woodcraft Folk
Yorkshire and Humber Regional Assembly
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
Yorkshire Forward
Yorkshire Rural Community Council
Yorkshire Water Services Ltd
Young Explorers Trust

Annex 4: List of Consultees

Young People Now

Youth Access

Youth Action

Youth Hostels Association

Youth Sport Trust

YouthNet

PB 11907

Nobel House,
17 Smith Square,
London SW1P 3JR
www.defra.gov.uk