

Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Equality Analysis/ Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the statutory review of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.

Please complete this cover sheet, including the Document Control Section, and Part 1 initially.

Part 1 will inform your decision on whether you need to complete Part 2

Part 2 will inform your decision on whether you need to complete Part 3

Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:

The statutory review of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan – taken forward by the Kent Downs AONB Unit for Dover District Council, Shepway District Council, Canterbury City Council, Swale Borough Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Medway Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Gravesham Borough Council, the London Borough of Bromley and Kent County Council.

Brief description of policy, procedure, project or service

The Kent Downs AONB Unit has undertaken a statutory review of the AONB Management Plan in accordance with Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, statutory and other official guidance and the advice of the Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee.

Aims and Objectives

The aim and objective is to complete a full and thorough review of the Plan to ensure that it is up to date and fit for purpose, the plan formulates the Local Authority policies for the management of the AONB and for carrying out their functions in relation to it. The purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape and to promote social and economic wellbeing and the interests of farming and forestry. The Kent Downs AONB covers around a quarter of the land area of the County of Kent.

Document Control

Date Document Updated 02/03/2021

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Revision History

Version	Date	Authors	Comment
V0.1	02/11/17	Nick Johannsen	Early draft for comment from KCC diversity team
V0.2	31/1/17	Nick Johannsen	Second draft following approval of HLF project and JAC – no comments yet received from KCC diversity team
V0.3	12/11/19	Kate Hickey	Updated timelines and owners in Action Plan – now needs to be sent to KCC diversity team
V0.4	16/01/20	Kate Hickey	Updated following Akua Agyepong's feedback
V0.5	27/02/20	Kate Hickey	Updated to clarify that the public consultation will test the assessment of no adverse impact and will explore any more inclusive practices that could be included in the final Management Plan
V.06	11/05/20	Kate Hickey	Updated to add that the questionnaire enables respondents to suggest how the MP could respond to the Covid-19 pandemic.
V0.7	22/01/2021	Kate Hickey	Updated following the public consultation and other consultative research (Kent Downs AONB Access Test and Trial and Kent Downs Trust Diversity and Inclusion Report) ensuring stronger and more evidence-based inclusive practices in the final Management Plan. This version has been reviewed by Helen Forster.

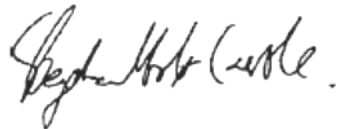
Document Sign-Off (this must be both the relevant Head of Service and the relevant Director) Attestation

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment. I agree with the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

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Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue
		Head of Service	
Stephanie Holt-Castle		Director	

Part 1 - Screening

Regarding the decision, policy, procedure, project or service under consideration,

Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, be reasonably expected to affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent?

Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?

Please note that there is no justification for direct discrimination; and indirect discrimination will need to be justified according to the legal requirements

Protected Group	Please provide a brief commentary as to your findings			High/Medium/Low Favourable Impact
	High Negative Impact	Medium Negative Impact	Low Negative Impact	

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Age	No	No	No	<p>The plan supports improvements to remove barriers to access for the young and the elderly. For example - higher standards of landscape and recreational management, education schemes, accessible visitor facilities and guided walks. The plan notes that the population of Kent is aging and that there are high levels of isolation for the elderly living in rural areas - it supports policies and actions which will benefit the health and well-being of older people. It also notes that children are spending less time outside and that children from black, Asian and minority ethnic, and low income communities are even less likely to do so. 18% of children living in the most deprived areas in the UK never visit the natural environment at all. Initiatives for children, schools and youth groups which encourage interest in and learning about the AONB and reconnection with nature will be pursued. Exciting and engaging education and interpretation schemes for children and young people will be promoted.</p>
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Disability	No	No	No	<p>The Management Plan notes that research from the Kent Countryside Access Improvement Plan has shown that 18% of people with a disability never visit the natural environment, compared with 8% of the non-disabled population. The plan supports and promotes the growing number of wheelchair friendly routes and sites. It seeks to provide co-ordinated information and interpretation for recreation, access, education, and health and well-being across the AONB which is accurate, well presented and appropriate to its setting, readily available in a variety of formats. The establishment of a North Downs Way multiuser route will be supported.</p> <p>It will also seek to support people with non-visible and non-physical disabilities, such as sensory, visual, autism spectrum to access the health and wellbeing benefits of nature.</p> <p>It supports improvements to the</p>

				<p>Rights of Way Network to enhance countryside access, installation of disabled friendly furniture, health and wellbeing opportunities, including connecting with NHS social prescribing, enhanced way-marking, signposting and maintenance.</p> <p>The plan supports nontypical investments such as paying for community engagement champions, facilitators, transport and training.</p> <p>The plan notes that future users should be involved in the design of new access schemes, so they are stakeholders from the start and the improvements are more likely to meet their needs.</p> <p>The plans notes that investments for access need to be long term.</p>
Sex	No	No	No	No
Gender identity/ Transgender	No	No	No	No
Race	No	No	No	It is noted that the BAME population

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				<p>of Kent is predicted to increase significantly and that 20% fewer Visibly Minority Ethnic (VME) children go out into green spaces weekly compared to white, middle class children. The plan supports measures that would remove barriers for a wider diversity of people to benefit from access, understanding and enjoyment of the AONB.</p> <p>The plan supports nontypical investments such as paying for community engagement champions, facilitators, transport and training.</p> <p>The plan notes that future users should be involved in the design of new access schemes, so they are stakeholders from the start and the improvements are more likely to meet their needs.</p> <p>The plans notes that investments for access need to be long term.</p>
Religion and Belief	No	No	No	No
Sexual Orientation	No	No	No	No

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Pregnancy and Maternity	No	No	No	The plan supports developments to infrastructure that would enable easier access to nature for those caring small children. See above.
Marriage and Civil Partnerships	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Carer's Responsibilities	No	No	No	The plan supports developments to infrastructure that would enable easier access to nature for those caring small children, disabled people and elderly people. See above.

No adverse impacts were found, the review of the Management Plan has strengthened Kent Downs AONB aims for inclusivity and outlines evidence-based approaches for inclusive practices.

Part 2 - Full Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment

Brief description of policy, procedure, project or service

Context

(What we do now)

Aims and Objectives

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(What we are planning to do and why?)

Protected groups

(Who will be affected by the changes?)

Information and Data used to carry out your assessment

(Please list your data source and if you have it provide a link to source. Please highlight any gaps)

Who have you involved consulted and engaged with?

(Please list stakeholders)

Analysis

(What have you found out and what does it tell you about protected groups)

Adverse Impact,

(What is the effect on the protected group? Please state mitigation in the action plan provided in Part 3, if an action is intended)

Positive Impact:

(Please highlight any positive impacts in relation to protected groups)

JUDGEMENT

Set out below the implications you have found from your assessment for the relevant Protected groups. If any negative impacts can be justified please clearly explain why.

Next Steps

1. Having completed Part 2, if you have identified potential for adverse impact on particular groups and **have found scope to improve the proposal**, then move to Part 3
2. Having completed Part 2, if you have identified potential for adverse impact on particular groups but **no scope to improve the proposal** (remembering that there is no justification for direct discrimination; and indirect discrimination will need to be justified according to the legal requirements) then please provide the form to diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk who will provide any comments which require to be considered and implemented.
3. The Head of Service and Director must then sign this document off and it be finally sent to GETcsp@kent.gov.uk. It will then be logged and published on the KCC Intranet as well as available to external customers upon request.
4. Please note that the EqIA will need to be repeated within three years or at a time of significant change to the decision, policy, procedure, project or service, whichever is sooner. If the decision, policy, procedure, project or service is closed then GETcsp@kent.gov.uk should be advised immediately.
5. If the activity will be subject to a Cabinet decision, the EqIA must be submitted to Democratic Services democratic.services@kent.gov.uk along with the relevant Cabinet report.
6. The original signed hard copy and electronic copy should be kept with your team for audit purposes.

Part 3 - Action Plan

Document the range of options and identify the effects of each. Identify the option(s) chosen and document the reasons for this.

Next Steps

1. Having completed Part 3, then please provide the form to diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk who will provide any comments which require to be considered and implemented.
2. The Head of Service and Director must then sign this document off and it be finally sent to GETcsp@kent.gov.uk. It will then be logged and published on the KCC Intranet as well as available to external customers upon request.
3. Please note that the EqIA will need to be repeated within three years or at a time of significant change to the decision, policy, procedure, project or service, whichever is sooner. If the decision, policy, procedure, project or service is closed then GETcsp@kent.gov.uk should be advised immediately.⁴ Please also forward a final signed electronic copy to the Equality Team by emailing diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk
4. If the activity will be subject to a Cabinet decision, the EqIA must be submitted to Democratic Services democratic.services@kent.gov.uk along with the relevant Cabinet report.
5. The original signed hard copy and electronic copy should be kept with your team for audit purposes.