



**High Weald
National
Landscape**

High Weald AONB Management Plan

Review 2024-2029

Equality Impact Assessment

Final Version – February 2024

Prepared by:

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Name of the strategy or policy
High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029

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Contents

Part 1 – Aims and implementation of the Management Plan 2

Part 2 – Consideration of data and research 5

Part 3 – Assessment of impact 7

Part 4 – Measures to mitigate disproportionate or negative impact or improve on neutral or positive impacts 15

Part 5 – Conclusions and recommendations 16

From November 22nd 2023 all AONBs are to be known as National Landscapes. This change is endorsed by Natural England. The High Weald National Landscape is the new name for this protected landscape. The High Weald National Landscape remains an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty insofar as all policy, legislation and guidance applies to the designated landscape. For this reason, this document still refers to the High Weald AONB Management Plan. Reference is made in the document.

The statutory purpose of the designated landscape "to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the designated landscape" remains unchanged.

Part 1 – Aims and implementation of the strategy or policy

1.1 What is being assessed?

a) Name of the strategy or policy.

High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029

b) Is this new or existing? (Please delete as appropriate)

Review of High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

c) What is the main purpose or aims of the strategy or policy?

The High Weald AONB Management Plan identifies and sets management goals for the key features of the landscape that have survived and form the essential basis of its natural beauty. Local authorities with land in an AONB, acting jointly in the case of AONBs crossing administrative boundaries, are legally obliged under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to prepare and publish a plan which 'formulates their policy for the management of the area and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it', and to review this plan every five years.

d) Manager(s) and section or service responsible for completing the assessment.

Sarah Brotherton, Landscape Officer High Weald AONB Partnership.

1.2 Who is affected by the strategy or policy? Who is it intended to benefit and how?

The Management Plan should influence the actions of all those who manage land and/or impact on the natural beauty of the High Weald AONB.

The main stakeholders are:

- 1) The 15 local authorities with land in the High Weald AONB*,
- 2) The other members of the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee,
- 3) Other public and statutory bodies operating in the High Weald AONB,
- 4) Landowners in the High Weald AONB,
- 5) All those who live in, work in, or visit the High Weald AONB.

* Note not all local authorities within High Weald AONB boundary are in East Sussex, a number are in West Sussex, Kent and Surrey. However, the ESCC Equalities Impact Assessment is equivalent to the Equalities Impact assessments of West Sussex and Kent. All authorities assess on a core seven areas.

1.3 Does the subject of this assessment impact positively or negatively on any of the following areas of people’s lives (human rights)?

	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Life (capability to be alive)		x	
Physical Security (e.g., free from violence/fear)		x	
Health	x		
Education (learning and skills etc.)	x		
Standard of Living (independence, dignity and respect)		x	
Productive and valued activities (work, care and leisure)	x		
Individual, family and social life		x	
Participation, influence and voice (decision making)	x		
Identity, expression and self-respect		x	
Legal security		x	

1.4 How does the strategy or policy contribute to better community cohesion?

The High Weald AONB Management Plan encourages everyone to learn about, appreciate and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB. Involvement in activities such as volunteer conservation groups and farm clusters can bring people of different backgrounds and ages together to discuss and engage in a mutual interest, contributing to better community cohesion.

1.5 How is, or will the strategy or policy, be put into practice and who is, or will be responsible for it?

The High Weald AONB Management Plan is primarily a document owned by the 15 local authorities with land in the AONB. However, it also encourages participation by anyone who lives in, works in, or visits the High Weald.

1.6 Are there any partners involved? E.g., Primary Care Trusts, NHS Trust, voluntary/community organisations, the private sector?

The following partners are involved:

East Sussex County Council
Kent County Council
Surrey County Council
West Sussex County Council

Ashford Borough Council
Crawley Borough Council
Hastings Borough Council
Horsham District Council
Mid Sussex District Council
Rother District Council
Sevenoaks District Council
Tandridge District Council
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Wealden District Council

Action in rural Sussex
Country Land & Business Association
Forestry Commission
National Farmers Union
Natural England

1.7 If yes, how are partners involved?

They are members of the High Weald National Landscape Partnership (formally known as the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee)
<https://highweald.org/about-us/joint-advisory-committee/>

1.8 Is this project or procedure affected by joint commissioning or strategic planning activity e.g., Children's Act, Corporate Area Assessment etc?

No.

Part 2 – Consideration of data and research

2.1 List all examples of quantitative and qualitative data or any consultation information available that will enable the impact assessment to be undertaken.

Census 2021

2.2 Equalities profile of users or those intended to benefit from the strategy or policy.

In both the High Weald and England and Wales, there is a fairly even split of females and males – however there is a slightly higher number of females.

The High Weald has an older population compared to England and Wales with 26.5% of people aged 65+ in the High Weald, compared to 18.6% in England and Wales. This corresponds to the highest percentage bracket of the population in the High Weald are aged between 50 and 64.

The High Weald has a larger percentage (95.8%) of people classified as White, than the rest of England and Wales. This includes ethnicities that are classed under the broad category of White: English, Irish, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, Gypsy or Irish Traveller and Other White.

There is a consistently lower proportion of population in the High Weald who fall into other ethnic groups, compared to England and Wales. This is particularly evident in the Asian / Asian British and Black / African / Caribbean / Black British ethnic groups.

The majority of people (72.8%) in the High Weald have religious beliefs, of which the majority are Christian. However, the proportion of Christians is smaller in the High Weald than for England and Wales as a whole (42.2% and 46.2% respectively).

The proportion of the population with different religions does differ greatly between the High Weald and England and Wales. There is a far greater proportion of Muslims and Hindus in the High Weald, than England and Wales.

The High Weald has a higher proportion of people who are married (56.8%) compared to England and Wales as a whole. Nine percent of the High Weald population are divorced, with 6.6% widowed. There is a lower number of people who are single in the High Weald in comparison to England and Wales.

The majority of people in the High Weald (85%) are not limited in their day-to-day activities by a long-term health problem or disability under the Equalities Act. This is slightly higher than the proportion of the population affected in the whole of England and Wales.

Only 0.7% of the High Weald population report their health as 'very bad' which may limit their day-to-day activities. This is less than in England and Wales.

2.3 Evidence of complaints against the strategy or policy on grounds of discrimination.

None.

2.4 Have you carried out any consultation or research on the strategy or policy?

Yes: early public survey in spring 2022.

Formal Public Consultation ran from September 2023 to early November 2023, including publishing the Equalities Impact Assessment Issue 1.

If No, go to [Part 3](#)

2.5 What does the consultation, research and/or data indicate about the negative impact of the strategy or policy?

No negative impacts on equalities identified in consultation.

2.6 What does the consultation, research and/or data indicate about the positive impact of the strategy or policy?

No positive impacts on equalities identified in consultation.

Part 3 – Assessment of impact

3.1 Ethnicity: Testing of disproportional, negative, neutral or positive impact

a) From the evidence available, does the strategy or policy affect or have the potential to affect ethnic groups differently?

No

If No, go to 3.2

b) Identify the effect of this strategy or policy on different ethnic groups from information available.

c) How is the target group reflected in the take up of the strategy or policy?

d) If yes, do any of the differences amount to?

	Reason, evidence, comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination	
Neutral Impact	
Positive impact	

e) If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one ethnic group or for another legitimate reason?

3.2 Gender/Transgender: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact

a) **From the evidence available, does the strategy or policy affect or have the potential to affect men, women or transgender people differently?**

No

If No, go to 3.3

b) **Identify the effect of this strategy or policy on different gender groups from information available.**

c) **How are men, women and transgender people reflected in the take up of strategy or policy?**

d) **If yes, do any of the differences amount to?**

	Reason, evidence, comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination	
Neutral Impact	
Positive impact	

e) **If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one gender or for another legitimate reason?**

3.3 Disability: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

- a) **From the evidence available, does the strategy or policy affect or have the potential to affect disabled people differently?**

No

If No, go to 3.4

- b) **Identify the effect of this strategy or policy on disabled people from information available.**

Those with disabilities may find it harder to participate in actions that conserve or enhance the High Weald – for instance volunteering opportunities.

- c) **How are disabled people reflected in the take up of the strategy or policy?**

If yes, do any of the differences amount to?

	Reason, evidence, comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination	
Neutral Impact	
Positive impact	

- d) **If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people or for another legitimate reason?**

3.4 Age: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact

a) **From the evidence available, does the strategy or policy affect or have the potential to affect age groups differently?**

No

If No, go to 3.5

b) **Identify the effect of this strategy or policy on different age groups from information available.**

c) **How are the different age groups reflected in the take up of the strategy or policy?**

d) **If yes, do any of the differences amount to?**

	Reason, evidence, comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination	
Neutral Impact	
Positive impact	

e) **If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one age group or for another legitimate reason?**

3.5 Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Heterosexual: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact

- a) **From the evidence available, does the strategy or policy affect or have the potential to affect gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual people differently?**

No

If No, go to 3.6

- b) **Identify the effect of this strategy or policy on gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual groups from information available.**
- c) **How is sexual orientation reflected in the take up of the strategy or policy?**
- d) **If yes, do any of the differences amount to?**

	Reason, evidence, comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination	
Neutral Impact	
Positive impact	

- e) **If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual people or for another legitimate reason?**

3.6 Religion, Belief: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact

a) **From the evidence available, does the strategy or policy affect or have the potential to affect religious, belief groups differently?**

No

If No, go to 3.7

b) **Identify the effect of this strategy or policy on different religious, belief groups from information available.**

c) **How are religious and belief groups reflected in the take up of the strategy or policy?**

d) **If yes, do any of the differences amount to?**

	Reason, evidence, comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination	
Neutral Impact	
Positive impact	

e) **If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one religious, belief or for another legitimate reason?**

3.7 Carers: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impacts

a) **From the evidence available, does the strategy or policy affect or have the potential to affect carers differently?**

No

If No, go to 3.8

b) **Identify the effect of this strategy or policy on carers from information available.**

c) **How are carers reflected in the take up of the strategy or policy?**

d) **If yes, do any of the differences amount to?**

	Reason, evidence, comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination	
Neutral Impact	
Positive impact	

e) **If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another legitimate reason?**

3.8 Other: Additional groups that may experience impacts - testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

a) **From the evidence available, does the strategy or policy affect or have the potential to affect other groups differently?**

No

If No, go to [Part 4](#)

b) **Identify the effect of this strategy or policy on different other groups from information available.**

c) **How are other groups reflected in the take up of the strategy or policy?**

d) **If yes, do any of the differences amount to?**

	Reason, evidence, comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination	
Neutral Impact	
Positive impact	

e) **If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for other group or for another legitimate reason?**

Part 4 – Measures to mitigate disproportionate or negative impact or improve on neutral or positive impacts

3.9 If there is any negative impact on any target equality group identified in Section 3, is the impact intended or legal?

No negative impacts have been identified.

3.10 Specify measures that can be taken to remove or minimise the disproportionate or negative effect identified in Section 3. If none were identified in Section 3; identify how disproportionate impact or adverse effect could be avoided in future.

No disproportionate impact or adverse effect likely as the Management Plan just sets objectives for conserving and enhancing the landscape.

3.11 If there is no evidence that the strategy or policy promotes equality, equal opportunities or improves relations within equality target groups, what amendments could be made to achieve this?

None proposed.

3.12 If a neutral or positive impact has been identified, can that impact be improved upon (continuous improvement)? What are the improvements that can be made? Can they be applied elsewhere in the ESCC?

Projects coming forward that seek to implement the objectives in the Management Plan should have their own EqlA, especially where they involve public participation or access.

3.13 How will any amended strategy or policy be implemented, including any necessary training?

The Management Plan will be launched in 2024 with accompanying communications and training to be decided.

Part 5 – Conclusions and recommendations

3.14 Does the strategy or policy comply with equalities legislation, including the duty to promote race, disability and gender equality?

Yes
(please delete as appropriate)

3.15 What are the main areas requiring further attention?

None identified.

3.16 Summary of recommendations for improvement

N/A

3.17 What equality monitoring, evaluation, review systems have been set up to carry out regular checks on the effects of the strategy or policy? (Give details)

AONB management plans is reviewed every five years.

3.18 When will the amended strategy or policy be reviewed?

The High Weald AONB Management Plan will be reviewed before 2024.

Date completed:	29/2/2024	Signed by (person completing)	Sarah Brotherton
		S Brotherton	Landscape Officer for the High Weald AONB Management Plan
Date:	29/2/2024	Signed by (Manager)	Sally Marsh Co-director
			