

Equality & Disability Duties Screening Template

December 2023 version



Screening flowchart and template (taken from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 - A Guide for public authorities April 2010 (Appendix 1)).

Introduction

Part 1. Policy scoping – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues. This section also includes two questions related to the Disability Duties.

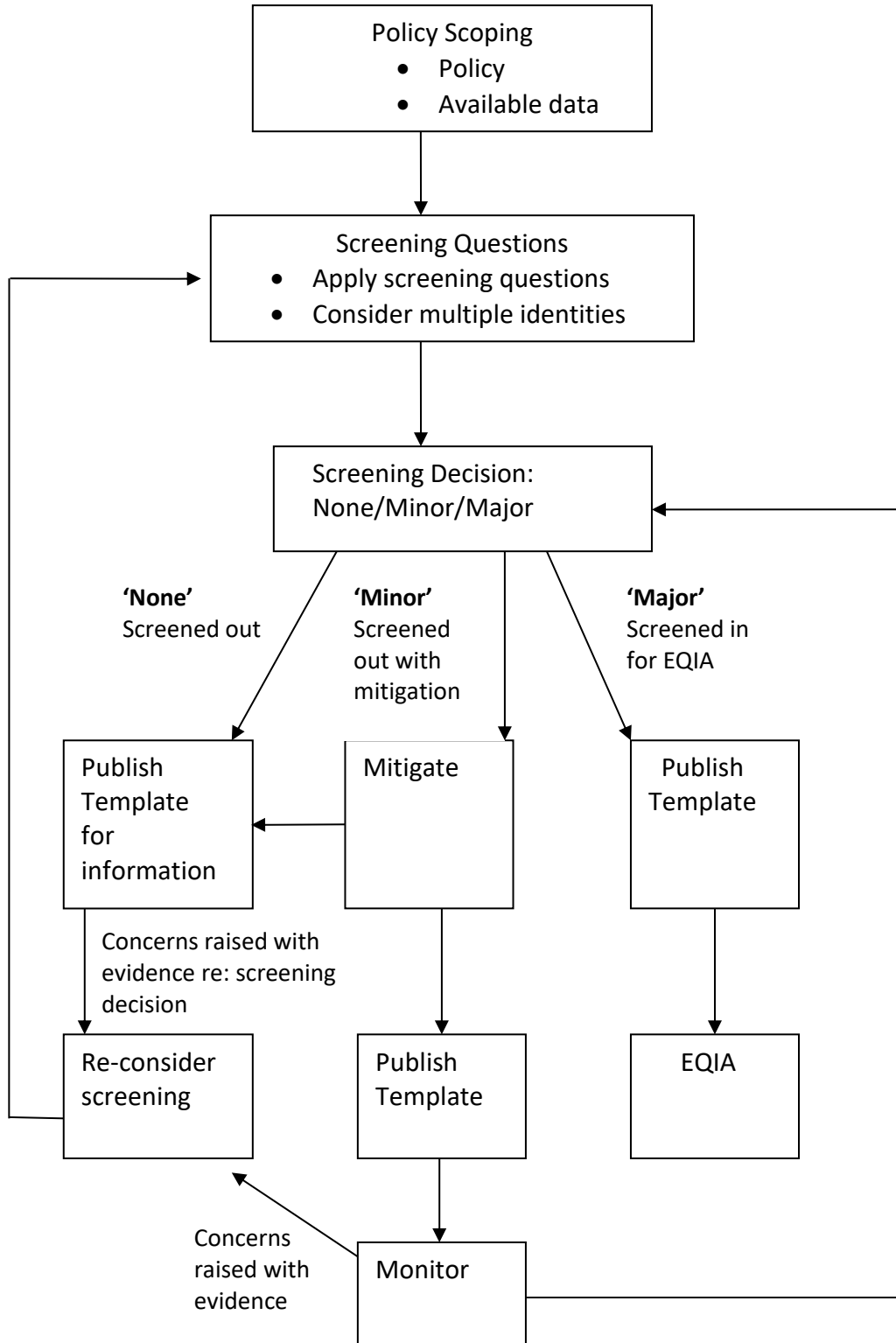
Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 4. Monitoring – provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights – please note this is not a Human Rights Screening form but rather a prompt that impacts on Human Rights should be considered.

Part 6. Approval and authorisation – verifies the public authority’s approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

A screening flowchart is provided below.



Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

Wildlife Intervention / badger control as an integral measure of the Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) in Northern Ireland Blueprint for Eradication. The department is also seeking views on the overall content of the TBPSG Blueprint for eradication strategy and the proposed extension to Northern Ireland of legislation, currently restricted to Great Britain, which would allow for the licensing of trained lay vaccinators to vaccinate badgers against bTB which would help expand veterinary operational capacity and support long-term disease control efforts.

The TBPSG Bovine TB in Northern Ireland: Blueprint for Eradication document can be viewed at:

[Bovine Tuberculosis in Northern Ireland - Blueprint for Eradication](#)

Is this an existing, revised or new policy?

New

Brief Decision of the Policy / decision being screened and

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The Blueprint eradication strategy sets out the key priorities and actions to be developed further to tackle bTB and identifies those measures where progress must be made in the immediate future across three pillars of people, cattle and wildlife. This document has been endorsed by the DAERA Minister, and the department is seeking views on it through a new public consultation. The Blueprint eradication strategy is a continually evolving document and the department is taking an opportunity to ask for stakeholders' views on our approach to fighting bovine tuberculosis.

The consultation's focus is on options for a wildlife intervention; however, it will also invite views on the broader content of the Blueprint eradication strategy and the proposed use of trained lay vaccinators in Northern Ireland.

The long-term aim is to strengthen the bovine TB (bTB) programme by establishing an intervention that addresses the spread of the disease from wildlife. The aim of a wildlife intervention, as part of a big picture approach that effectively addresses all sources of infection, transmission pathways and factors that contribute to persistence of bovine tuberculosis in the environment, cattle and wildlife, in conjunction with addressing human and behavioural factors, is to achieve a reduction in bTB herd incidence by 2% by 2030, placing NI on a pathway to halve current bTB levels by 2040 and achieve eradication by 2050.

It is essential to ensure the bTB programme remains affordable and continues to be able to support the NI cattle industry. The bTB eradication programme underpins trade in bovines and their products, valued at approaching £3billion (£1,697million beef/sheep and £1,277million milk products).

Scientific evidence shows that badgers can act as a wildlife reservoir for the bacteria that causes bTB and contribute to ongoing disease persistence and transmission to cattle. To make meaningful progress in reducing disease levels, it is necessary to consider how best to address this aspect of bTB spread and maintenance alongside disease control measures outlined within the Blueprint eradication strategy focused on cattle and herd management.

The use of trained lay vaccinators is aimed at reducing the high costs associated with using veterinary surgeons for this purpose, making vaccination a more viable, cost-effective, and flexible alternative or complement to culling.

Fewer breakdowns and consequential losses will help to address the stress, mental health and financial challenges experienced by farming families in dealing with this disease.

A reduction in disease rates will also bring about more efficient production at a reduced cost to industry, leading to a more sustainable and resilient agri-food sector, whilst also creating increased trading opportunities as a result of an improved animal health and biosecurity status for NI. Lower disease rates will also have a significant positive impact on the health and welfare of both livestock and the surrounding wildlife.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If so, explain how.

An intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, as an integral measure of the TBPSG's Bovine Tuberculosis in Northern Ireland: Blueprint for Eradication and the additional resource to use trained lay vaccinators, aims to have a positive impact on the environment across Northern Ireland and, therefore, has the potential to benefit the entire population. These measures are not targeted at any one Section 75 category. All eligible farm businesses will benefit from these policies regardless of which Section 75 category they are in and therefore all Section 75 categories can be expected to benefit from the proposed policies equally.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If yes, are they (please select as appropriate)

Financial

Legislative

other, please specify:

Beyond finance and legislation, agricultural policy outcomes are heavily shaped by environmental realities, socio-cultural traditions, technological adoption and market dynamics.

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please select as appropriate)

Staff

Service users

Other public sector organisations

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Other, please specify

Farmers and Agricultural Businesses: Beef and dairy farmers.
The Agri-Food Supply Chain: Organisations and processors and local meat processing firms.
Rural Communities and Consumers: Rural populations, the hospitality sector, and consumers.
Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations (eNGOs)

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are they?

- Programme for Government 2024-2027 ‘Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most’ <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/programme-government-2024-2027-our-plan-doing-what-matters-most-documents>
- Vision for Sustainable Agriculture Programme in Northern Ireland www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/sustainable-agriculture-programme-vision
- Future Agricultural Policy Decisions for Northern Ireland www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/future-agricultural-policy-decisions-northern-ireland

Who owns them?

- Programme for Government 2024-2027 ‘Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most’ – NI Executive
- Vision for Sustainable Agriculture Programme in Northern Ireland – DAERA
- Future Agricultural Policy Decisions for Northern Ireland – DAERA

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Please ensure all data used is the most current and up to date available. You should verify this by contacting the Departmental Statisticians.

Religious belief evidence/information:

Consideration has been given to

- The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland ([2021 Census | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#));
- The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (2023) ([Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey: 2023](#)); and
- The 2018 Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report ([Equality indicators Report | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)).

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland found that 43.5% of the population belongs to one of the main Protestant Christian Churches, 45.7% of the population belongs to the Catholic Church and 9.3% do not belong to either religious belief. In rural areas, the make-up is 43% Protestant and other Christian, 45% Catholic, 12% other or non-stated.

The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report found that overall 42% of farmers were members of the Catholic community and 51% were members of the Protestant and other Christian community.

This Report also found differences within farm size categories by farmer religion as detailed below:

- 48% of Catholics farm very small farms compared to 46% Protestant and other Christian farmers;
- Catholics were more likely than Protestants to farm on very small farms, with 85% of Catholics farming small farms compared to 68% of Protestants; and
- Only 2% of Catholics have large farms compared to 10% of Protestant farmers.

Differences were also reported in relation to farm type. Catholic farmers were more likely to be engaged in cattle and sheep farming in Less Favoured Areas, with over three quarters (77%) involved in this type of farming compared to 45% of Protestant farmers. More Protestant farmers (25%) were lowland farmers compared to Catholics (12%). A higher proportion of Protestant farmers (16%) were dairy farmers compared to Catholic farmers (5%).

Political Opinion evidence/information:

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2023 found that 28% of the NI population describe themselves as nationalist, 30% as unionist and 43% held neither political opinion/other/don't know. The Survey found that 37% of those surveyed considered themselves Irish, 36% British, 17% equally Irish and British, and 11% other/don't know.

Information on political opinion was not collected in the Population Census 2021, however, it did include a question on national identity. The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report suggested that national identity is a reasonable proxy indicator for the Unionist/Nationalist statistics.

In the Population Census 2021, 42.8% of people living here identified solely or along with other national identities as 'British', 33.3% identified solely or along with other national identities as 'Irish'. 31.5% identified solely or along with other national identities as

'Northern Irish'. It also stated that the most numerous person-based national identities were 'British only' - 31.9%; 'Irish only' - 29.1%; and 'Northern Irish only' - 19.8%.

Looking in more detail shows marked variation in national identity across Local Government Districts. Key findings are listed below:

- Six areas (Ards and North Down; Mid and East Antrim; Lisburn and Castlereagh; Antrim and Newtownabbey; Causeway Coast and Glens; and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon) have markedly more people identifying as British (solely or in combination) than Irish (solely or in combination);
- Four areas (Derry City and Strabane; Newry, Mourne and Down; Mid Ulster; and Fermanagh and Omagh) have markedly more people identifying as Irish (solely or in combination) than British (solely or in combination); and
- Belfast Local Government District has broadly similar numbers of people identifying as British (solely or in combination) or Irish (solely or in combination).

The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report indicated that 44% of farmers reported their identity as British only, 26% as Irish only and 23% as Northern Irish only, with 8% stating another identity or a combination of more than one identity. However, the national identity profile varied across farm characteristics, with the proportions indicating a British only identity increasing with farm size, from 40% of those in very small farms to 65% of those in large farms, with Irish only decreasing from 29% in very small farms to only 9% on large farms.

High proportions of dairy farmers (62%) and those engaged in mixed farming (63%) stated a British only identity, while only 13% of dairy farmers and 11% of those involved in mixed farming stated that they held an Irish identity.

More than three quarters of those describing their identity as Irish only (77%) and two-thirds of those with a Northern Irish only identity (68%) were engaged in cattle and sheep farming in Less Favoured Areas, compared to less than half (48%) of farmers of British only identity.

In contrast, those stating a British only identity were much more likely to be engaged in farming cattle and sheep in lowland areas, dairy farming, or other types of farming activity, than those stating an Irish only or Northern Irish only identity. Farmers with an Irish only identity were almost twice as likely to farm in Severely Disadvantaged Areas (55%) than farmers with a British only identity (28%). The proportion of those with a Northern Irish identity farming in Severely Disadvantaged Areas was also very high at 48%. On the other hand, the proportion of those describing themselves as British only who farmed in lowland areas (39%) was more than twice that of those with an Irish only identity (15%) and higher than those with a Northern Irish only identity (24%).

These statistics are similar to those of religious belief, in that any schemes which appealed to dairy farms, large farms or lowland cattle and sheep farms would be likely to be skewed in favour of farmers that identify as British only.

Racial Group evidence/information:

The 2021 Census reported that the number of All Usual Residents who stated that they were from a White Ethnic group was 1,837,575 (96.55%) of the total population. In total, 65,604 (3.45%) of All Usual Residents belonged to ethnic minority groups. The ethnic minority groups with the highest prevalence were those belonging to the Mixed Ethnicity (14,382) categorisation, followed by those belonging to the Indian (9,881), Chinese (9,495), and Black African (8,069) ethnicity categorisations. Irish Travellers accounted for 0.14% (2,609) of the All Usual Resident population and Roma 0.08% (1,529).

The 2001/02 Social Survey of Farmers and Farm Families across Northern Ireland (most recent) ([Farmers and farm families in Northern Ireland](#)) outlined that the farming population was overwhelmingly white and that there was no difference in racial group by type or size of farm. This survey was conducted nearly 20 years ago and the racial group statistics in both the 2021 census and 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report reflect the original findings of the 2001/02 survey.

2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report stated the proportion of farmers stating an ethnicity other than white was too small to examine differences by farm characteristics. This would support the view that the Farming with Nature Transition Scheme policy set out in this document is likely to affect largely white beneficiaries, reflecting the makeup of the population.

NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland 2021 ([NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland](#)) figures indicate there are around 53,000 people living here in 2019 who were born in the rest of the EU (excluding UK and Ireland). A small number of migrant workers are employed within the farming industry.

Age evidence/information:

The age distribution of the farming community varies from that of the general population, with a much higher proportion of older people involved in the farming sector.

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland states that over the decade since the 2011 Census the population increase was greatest in the older age groups. The number of people aged 65 or more rose by over 60,000, to nearly one third of a million people in Census 2021. This is nearly a 25 per cent increase on 2011 and demonstrates the scale of population change due to ageing. The share of the Northern Ireland population represented by people aged 65 years and over stood at 17.2 per cent in 2021.

The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report found the average age of farmers in Northern Ireland was 59 years. Only 8% of farmers were aged under 40 years, and more than a third (36%) were aged 65 years or older. There was little variation in the age profile of farmers by farm size, although farmers of very small farms (which account for three-quarters of all farms in Northern Ireland) had a slightly older age profile than those of larger farms. There was also little variation in age across farming activity type. However, farmers engaged in cattle and sheep farming, general cropping and horticulture had the oldest age profiles, while pig and poultry (with 63% and 70% respectively under 59) farmers had the youngest age profiles. Poultry farmers were around twice as likely to be aged under 40 as other farmers. There was virtually no difference in age profile across land type. However, farmers aged under 40 were slightly more likely to farm in Severely Disadvantaged Areas than older farmers.

Marital Status evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland states that 46% of the population aged 16 and over were married or in a civil partnership in Census 2021. In contrast 577,000 adults (38%) were single (never married/civil partnered).

The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report found that almost three quarters (73%) of farmers were married, with the proportion of married farmers increasing with farm size; 84% of farmers of large farms were married, compared to 71% of farmers of very small farms. Twice as many farmers of very small farms (18%) were single compared to farmers of medium sized (9%) or large farms (9%). Across farm activity types, a very high proportion of pig farmers (88%) and poultry farmers (88%) were married. Lowland farmers were slightly more likely to be married (77%) than farmers in Disadvantaged (73%) or Severely Disadvantaged (71%) Areas.

Sexual Orientation evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland states that 2.1% (31,600) of the population aged 16 and over identified as 'lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+)' and 90.0% (1,363,900) identified as 'straight or heterosexual'. Almost 8% of our population aged 16 and over (119,300) either ticked 'prefer not to say' or chose not to answer the question. Taken together, these are labelled 'No sexual orientation stated'.

There is no data specifically available on the sexual orientation of farmers in the DAERA Equality Indicators Report.

In 2016 The Rainbow Project presented the initial findings from the first specific study on the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGB&T) people in Northern Ireland reviewed based on whether they live in a rural or urban area. The report was supported by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) with a view to scoping and exploring the issues faced by LGB&T people in rural areas of Northern Ireland.

The report showed that LGB&T people living in a rural area are less likely to be 'out' than those living in an urban area, and are more likely to report needing the support of an LGB&T community-based organisation but not accessing services compared to those living in an urban area. Additionally, LGB&T people living in a rural area are twice as likely not to access the services they need because they are not 'out' compared to those living in an urban area. LGB&T people living in a rural area were three times as likely not to access services they are aware of because it is too far to travel compared to those living in an urban area. Seven in every eight LGB&T people living in a rural area feel that it is important to have access to an LGB&T support service in their local area.

There are also a number of new and emerging inequalities, for which evidence is limited but would include issues such as inequalities experienced by transgender people. As further evidence becomes available DAERA will consider the relevance for future agricultural policy development.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to sexual orientation issues will be reviewed as the method of wildlife

intervention is further developed and the use of lay vaccinators is rolled out, in line with future policy decisions by the Minister.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Men & Women generally evidence/information:

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) held a public consultation ([Topic consultation | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#)) on the questions to be included in the 2021 Census in 2015/16. At that time there was limited demand for a question on gender identity - therefore no gender identity question was included in the 2021 Census form.

At 30 June 2019, Northern Ireland's population was estimated to be 1.89 million people. Between mid-2018 and mid-2019, the population of Northern Ireland increased by 12,000 people (0.6 per cent). Just over half of the population (50.7 per cent) were female, with 961,000 females compared to 932,700 males (49.3 per cent).

The Agricultural census in Northern Ireland June 2018 (published Jan 2019) states that 92.5% of Northern Ireland farmers are male and 7.5% female.

The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report found that 81% of main farmers were male and 9% were female. 98% of large farms were owned by males, and 90% of very small farms (2% and 10% female respectively). A higher proportion of female farmers farmed very small farms than their male counterparts - 87% of women farmers had very small farms and only 2% had large farms, compared to 75% of male farmers with very small farms and 7% had large farms. Farmers engaged in 'Other types' of farming (such as running specialist horse farms) were twice as likely to be women as were farmers engaged in other activity types (20% female compared to the 2nd highest of cattle sheep LFA of 10%).

A higher proportion of female (86%) than male farmers (78%) were engaged in cattle and sheep farming, and a much lower proportion (4% of female compared to 12% of male farmers) were dairy farmers. Female farmers were also more likely to farm in Less Favoured Areas. Forty-four percent of women farmers farmed in Severely Disadvantaged Areas compared to 39% of male farmers. Some of the gender differences in farm characteristics may be partly due to the differing age profiles of male and female farmers. Female farmers had an older age profile than their male counterparts, with 4% of female farmers aged under 40, compared to 8% of male farmers, and 45% of female farmers aged 65 or over, compared to 35% of male farmers.

Disability evidence/information:

The Northern Ireland Census 2021 included a question on limiting long-term health problem or disability. One person in four (24.3% or 463,000 people) had a limiting long-term health problem or disability. The number of people with a limiting long-term health problem or disability increased from the 2011 to 2021 Census. The increase, from 374,600 people in 2011 to 463,000 people in 2021 (an increase of 23.6%), will be driven partly by our ageing population.

The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report found that almost a third (30%) of farmers stated that they had a long-term illness or disability which limited their daily activities with the incidence of disability inversely related to farm size. The proportion of farmers of very small farms stating that their activities were limited a lot (16%) was twice that of farmers of large farms (8%). Farmers in disadvantaged areas (16%) were slightly more likely than lowland farmers (12%) to state that their activities were limited. The incidence of those reporting that their activities were limited either a little or a lot rises steeply with age.

NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland 2021 ([NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland](#)) reports that one in five people have a disability or limiting long-term illness. With 12% of people claim Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment.

The Department for Communities, in partnership with the NI Executive and disabled people, has developed the draft NI Executive Disability Strategy 2025-2035 to tackle societal barriers and advance the rights of Deaf and disabled people. The 14-week public consultation on this 10-year framework closed in March 2026. The draft strategy notes that “Deaf and disabled people living in rural areas can face greater difficulties in accessing transport than those who live in cities and towns. The lack of transport in rural areas has highlighted as a barrier in our engagement with Deaf and disabled people. A lack of suitable transport can make it harder for people to be independent, deny them shared experiences and prevent them from taking part in activities that others take for granted.”

Dependants evidence/information:

According to the 2021 Census 30.7% of households contained dependents (dependent children 0-18).

The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report found that two fifths (40%) of all farm households contained children under 18 years old, elderly disabled people, or both. Households of medium sized farms were slightly more likely than smaller or larger farms to contain dependants as were the households of farmers engaged in pig, poultry or mixed farming. Farm households in Disadvantaged Areas (41%) were slightly more likely than those in lowland areas (38%) to contain dependants.

NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland 2021 ([NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland](#)) reports that one in three households have a dependent child. NISRA Women in Northern Ireland 2020 report ([Women in Northern Ireland 2020-2021](#)) indicates that over the past 10 years there have been consistently more economically inactive women than men. The most common reason for inactivity among women was family and home commitments. 76% of women with dependent children were economically active, compared with 92% of men with dependent children.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Religious belief

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland ([Consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)), stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality. Forty-three responses were received (in response to all Future Agricultural Policy Proposals, including the Farming with Nature Package). No specific issues were raised in relation to religious belief and the Farming with Nature Package.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as the method of wildlife intervention is further developed and the use of lay vaccinators is rolled out, in line with future policy decisions.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Political Opinion

A consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland was launched on 21 December 2021 and closed on 15 February 2022.

There were 47 responses to equality issues resulting from this consultation. The responses to equality issues during the Future Agricultural Policy consultation in Northern Ireland highlighted the varying economic impacts of the proposed policy across farm sizes, types, and designations, and identified a need for further evidence regarding its effect on farmers with different political opinions and varying accessibility needs.

During the Future Agricultural Policy consultation in Northern Ireland, responses identified varied economic impacts across farm sizes, types, and designations, while highlighting a critical gap in socioeconomic data. Consequently, the Department of Agriculture,

Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) committed to gathering more evidence to prevent adverse impacts on vulnerable Section 75 groups.

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on the Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework ([Stakeholder responses on the Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework: Stakeholder Engagement | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)) from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors the Department received one comment in relation to political opinion that indicated that future agricultural policy should ensure that it does not disproportionately discriminate against one community over the other (nationalist and unionist).

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland ([Consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)), stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to political opinion.

The implications of the proposed policies for the farming sector across Northern Ireland will range from little or no impact to a very significant impact depending on the specific farm size, type and designation.

Farms of differing size, type and land designations and thus differing political opinions will have corresponding variation in needs, experiences and priorities in relation to the policies. Thus, it can be expected that there will be little or no impact on those of different political opinion.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to political opinion issues will be reviewed as the method of wildlife intervention is further developed and the use of lay vaccinators is rolled out, in line with policy decisions.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Racial Group

2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report stated the proportion of farmers stating an ethnicity other than white was too small to examine differences by farm characteristics.

After taking the needs of this group into consideration it has been determined that nothing in the policy proposals will disadvantage any racial group over another. The proposed wildlife intervention options have been designed to be as accessible as possible with regards to farm type, farm size, and therefore different types of farm workers, and there is no data to suggest that any particular racial group will be disadvantaged by the policy proposals.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to racial group will be reviewed as the method of wildlife intervention is further developed and the use of lay vaccinators is deployed, in line with future policy decisions.

Age

A consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland was launched on 21 December 2021 and closed on 15 February 2022.

There were 47 responses to equality issues resulting from this consultation.

The responses to equality issues during the Future Agricultural Policy consultation in Northern Ireland highlighted the varying economic impacts of the proposed policy across farm sizes, types, and designations, and identified a need for further evidence regarding its effect on farmers with different political opinions and varying accessibility needs.

During the Future Agricultural Policy consultation in Northern Ireland, responses identified varied economic impacts across farm sizes, types, and designations, while highlighting a critical gap in socioeconomic data. Consequently, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) committed to gathering more evidence to prevent adverse impacts on vulnerable Section 75 groups.

Specific issues and commitments raised during the consultation include:

- **Demographic Needs:** Respondents highlighted the need for targeted support to encourage women and younger individuals into the agricultural sector.

The future agricultural policy decisions on 'Knowledge and Innovation' and 'Farming for the Generations' measures provide a direction of travel for policy development that will address the concerns raised.

Those farmers engaged in cattle and sheep farming, general cropping and horticulture with the oldest age profiles will be likely to have different needs, experience and priorities to pig and poultry farmers with much younger age profiles. Poultry farmers are around twice as likely to be aged under 40 as other farmers. There was virtually no difference in age profile across land type.

Farmers aged under 40 were slightly more likely to farm in Severely Disadvantaged Areas than older farmers and this will also have potential impacts on their needs, wants and experiences of the policy. These younger farmers in SDAs may be more likely to be impacted by interventions concentrated on a specific geographic area rather than applied uniformly.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to age will be reviewed as the method of wildlife intervention is further developed and the use of lay vaccinators is deployed, in line with future policy decisions.

Marital status

There is variation between different farm sizes, types and designation in the proportion of farmers who are married. Thus, there will be variable impacts for those of differing marital status.

Detailed consideration will be required of potential impacts of the implementation of wildlife intervention on the needs, experience and priorities of citizens as a result of their marital status.

After taking the needs of this group into consideration it has been determined that nothing in the policy proposals will disadvantage anyone who is married or not.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Sexual orientation

In 2016 The Rainbow Project presented the initial findings from the first specific study on the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGB&T) people in Northern Ireland reviewed based on whether they live in a rural or urban area. The report was supported by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) with a view to scoping and exploring the issues faced by LGB&T people in rural areas of Northern Ireland.

The report showed that LGB&T people living in a rural area are less likely to be 'out' than those living in an urban area and are more likely to report needing the support of an LGB&T community-based organisation but not accessing services compared to those living in an urban area. Additionally, LGB&T people living in a rural area are twice as likely not to access the services they need because they are not 'out' compared to those living in an urban area. LGB&T people living in a rural area were three times as likely not to access services they are aware of because it is too far to travel compared to those living in an urban area. Seven in every eight LGB&T people living in a rural area feel that it is important to have access to an LGB&T support service in their local area.

The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report does not have data on farmer's sexual orientation. At this stage in the development of a policy on wildlife intervention there is no evidence available to suggest that implementation of the policy proposal will have any foreseeable impact on equality of opportunity for stakeholders as a result of their sexual orientation.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Men and Women Generally

The Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework consultation was launched on 21 December 2021 and closed on 15 February 2022 ([Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)).

There were 47 responses to equality issues resulting from this consultation.

One comment relevant to this Section 75 characteristic was;

- Five responses (1 organisation ‘other’ and 4 individuals) commented on encouraging females into the farming sector with 1 response commenting on succession.

During the Future Agricultural Policy consultation in Northern Ireland, responses identified varied economic impacts across farm sizes, types, and designations, while highlighting a critical gap in socioeconomic data. Consequently, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) committed to gathering more evidence to prevent adverse impacts on vulnerable Section 75 groups.

Specific issues and commitments raised during the consultation include:

- **Demographic Needs:** Respondents highlighted the need for targeted support to encourage women and younger individuals into the agricultural sector.

The implications of the proposed policies for the farming sector across Northern Ireland will range from little or no impact to a very significant impact depending on the specific farm size, type and designation.

Farms of differing size, type and land designations and thus differing proportions of men and women will have corresponding variation in needs, experiences and priorities in relation to the policy. Thus, there will be variable impacts on men and women for example as there are much fewer female dairy farmers than male dairy farmers it is likely that measures more applicable to dairy farms will impact the needs, experience and priorities of males more than females in this demographic. After taking the needs of this characteristic into consideration it has been determined that nothing in this policy proposal will disadvantage women more so than men.

Disability

The Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework consultation was launched on 21 December 2021 and closed on 15 February 2022 ([Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)).

There were 47 responses to equality issues resulting from this consultation.

One comment relevant to this Section 75 characteristic was;

- One environment focused organisation raised potential lack of access to schemes due to disability or lack of education opportunities.

During the Future Agricultural Policy consultation in Northern Ireland, responses identified varied economic impacts across farm sizes, types, and designations, while highlighting a critical gap in socioeconomic data. Consequently, the Department of Agriculture,

Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) committed to gathering more evidence to prevent adverse impacts on vulnerable Section 75 groups.

In relation to disability the proportion of farmers of very small farms stating that their activities were limited a lot (16%) was twice that of farmers of large farms (8%) with farmers in disadvantaged areas (16%) slightly more likely than lowland farmers (12%) to state that their activities were limited. As those farmers with mobility restrictions will have differing needs, experience and priorities to those farmers whose needs are not limited, the implementation of the policy proposals will have corresponding variations in impact.

After taking the needs of this group into consideration it has been determined that nothing in the policy proposals will disadvantage people with disabilities, including those with hidden and dynamic disabilities.

Dependants

With households of medium sized farms, those in Disadvantaged Areas and those engaged in pig, poultry or mixed farming being slightly more likely than smaller or larger farms to contain dependants there will be variation between these demographics in their needs, experience and priorities in relation to wildlife intervention.

After taking the needs of this group into consideration it has been determined that nothing in the policy proposals will disadvantage those with, or without, dependents.

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a ‘major’ impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of ‘minor’ impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;

- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- 1) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- 2) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Religious belief*:

The policies being introduced through a proposed wildlife intervention as an integral element of a bTB eradication strategy, as outlined in the TB Partnership Steering Group's Blueprint for eradication, and the additional resource of lay vaccinators, are considered to have no differential impact on the Religious Belief category. The policies will be applied uniformly and will not introduce any differential treatment based on religious belief. The policies are neutral in relation to impacts on religious belief, and therefore no impact on equality of opportunity for those with differing religious beliefs is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Political Opinion*:

Equality Commission monitoring guidelines for public authorities suggest that community background/religion is a reasonable proxy indicator for the unionist/nationalist divide. Using this guideline, the policies being introduced through a proposed wildlife intervention as an integral element of a bTB eradication strategy, as outlined in the TB Partnership Steering Group's Blueprint for eradication, and the additional resource of lay vaccinators, are considered to have no differential impact on the Political Opinion category. The policies relate solely to disease control and resource allocation. They do not interact with political opinion or create barriers based on political affiliation therefore little or no impact on equality of opportunity for those with differing political opinion is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Racial Group*:

The policies will be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and will involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating this disease. It is considered that there is no potential for partial or imbalance in the implementation of the proposed actions.

Access to an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, and access to lay vaccinators, will be open to all eligible farm businesses and is unlikely to have any specific impact on any racial groups. No impact on equality of opportunity for people from different racial groups is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Age*:

The policies will be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and will involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating this disease. It is considered that there is no potential for partial or imbalance in the implementation of the proposed actions.

Access to an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, and access to lay vaccinators, will be open to all eligible farm businesses and is unlikely to have any specific impact on age groups. No impact on equality of opportunity for those in different age groups is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Marital Status*:

The policies will be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and will involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating this disease. It is considered that there is no potential for partial or imbalance in the implementation of the proposed actions.

An intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, and access to lay vaccinators, is unlikely to impact differently on people with different marital statuses. No impact on equality of opportunity for those who are married or unmarried is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Sexual Orientation*:

The policies will be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and will involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating this disease. It is considered that there is no potential for partial or imbalance in the implementation of the proposed actions.

There is no evidence available to suggest that implementation of an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, and the deployment of lay vaccinators, will have any foreseeable impact on equality of opportunity for people as a result of their sexual orientation. No impact on equality of opportunity for people with differing sexual orientations is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Men and Women*:

The policies will be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and will involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating this disease. It is considered that there is no potential for partial or imbalance in the implementation of the proposed actions.

Although the majority of farmers are men, an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, and access to the use of lay vaccinators, will be available to all eligible farm businesses regardless of sex and, therefore, it is considered that there will be no impact on equality of opportunity for either men or women. No impact on equality of opportunity for men or women who are farmers is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Disability*:

The policies will be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and will involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating this disease. It is considered that there is no potential for partial or imbalance in the implementation of the proposed actions.

The 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, received 1 response that raised potential lack of access to schemes due to disability.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Access to an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, and the ability to use lay vaccinators, will be open to all eligible farm businesses and access to it will not be affected by disability. No impact on equality of opportunity for those with a disability is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Dependants*:

The policies will be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and will involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating this disease. It is considered that there is no potential for partial or imbalance in the implementation of the proposed actions.

The 2011 Census showed that 34% of NI households have dependant children (those aged 0-15 and person aged 16-18 who is a full-time student and in a family with parent(s)). The 2018 DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report found that two fifths (40%) of all farm households contained children under 18 years old, elderly disabled people, or both. Households of medium sized farms were slightly more likely than smaller or larger farms to contain dependants as were the households of farmers engaged in pig, poultry or mixed farming. Farm households in Disadvantaged Areas (41%) were slightly more likely than those in lowland areas (38%) to contain dependants.

Responses received during the stakeholder engagement and consultation on future agricultural policy did not raise any issues in relation to dependants.

Access to an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, and the ability to use lay vaccinators, will be open to all eligible farm businesses and is likely to have as equal an impact on farmers with dependants as those without. No impact on equality of opportunity for those with or without dependants is expected.

What is the level of impact? Major None

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

Yes No (select as appropriate)

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The policies being consulted on are essentially technical in nature, focused on disease control and resource allocation and there are no identified opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity within this category.

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity in this category for those affected by the implementation of policies to introduce a wildlife intervention as an integral element of a long term bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The policies being consulted on are essentially technical in nature, focused on disease control and resource allocation and there are no identified opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity within this category.

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity in this category for those affected by the implementation of policies to introduce a wildlife intervention as an integral element of a long term bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The policies being consulted on are essentially technical in nature, focused on disease control and resource allocation and there are no identified opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity within this category.

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity in this category for those affected by the implementation of policies to introduce a wildlife intervention as an integral element of a long term bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

Age - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The policies being consulted on are essentially technical in nature, focused on disease control and resource allocation and there are no identified opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity within this category.

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity in this category for those affected by the implementation of policies to introduce a wildlife intervention as an integral element of a long term bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

Marital Status - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons

The policies being consulted on are essentially technical in nature, focused on disease control and resource allocation and there are no identified opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity within this category.

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity in this category for those affected by the implementation of policies to introduce a wildlife intervention as an integral element of a long term bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The policies being consulted on are essentially technical in nature, focused on disease control and resource allocation and there are no identified opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity within this category.

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity in this category for those affected by the implementation of policies to introduce a wildlife intervention as an integral element of a long term bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The policies being consulted on are essentially technical in nature, focused on disease control and resource allocation and there are no identified opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity within this category.

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity in this category for those affected by the implementation of policies to introduce a wildlife intervention as an integral element of a long term bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

Disability - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The policies being consulted on are essentially technical in nature, focused on disease control and resource allocation and there are no identified opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity within this category.

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity in this category for those affected by the implementation of policies to introduce a wildlife intervention as an integral element of a long term bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

Dependants - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The policies being consulted on are essentially technical in nature, focused on disease control and resource allocation and there are no identified opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity within this category.

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity in this category for those affected by the implementation of policies to introduce a wildlife intervention as an integral element of a long term bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Religious belief*:

The policies being consulted on are unlikely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief.
They are essentially technical in nature and focused on disease control applying uniformly across religious beliefs, so there will be no differential impact on good relations. DAERA notes that existing equality and engagement mechanisms already meet statutory obligations, and further measures would likely duplicate effort without delivering meaningful benefits.

DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different religious beliefs and will review any issues identified during the implementation of policy decisions in respect of wildlife intervention, bTB eradication or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Political Opinion*:

The policies being consulted on are unlikely to impact on good relations between people of different political opinion.
They are essentially technical in nature and focused on disease control applying uniformly across religious beliefs, so there will be no differential impact on good relations. DAERA notes that existing equality and engagement mechanisms already meet statutory obligations, and further measures would likely duplicate effort without delivering meaningful benefits.

DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different political opinion and will review any issues identified during the implementation of policy decisions in respect of wildlife intervention, bTB eradication or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Racial Group*:

The policies being consulted on are unlikely to impact on good relations between people of different racial groups.

They are essentially technical in nature and focused on disease control applying uniformly across different racial groups, so there will be no differential impact on good relations. DAERA notes that existing equality and engagement mechanisms already meet statutory obligations, and further measures would likely duplicate effort without delivering meaningful benefits.

DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different racial groups and will review any issues identified during the implementation of policy decisions in respect of wildlife intervention, bTB eradication or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

***Religious Belief* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

Interventions to address the transmission of bovine TB between cattle and wildlife are unlikely to create opportunities for promoting good relations between people of different religious beliefs. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different religious belief and will review any opportunities identified during the implementation of policy decisions in respect of wildlife intervention as an integral element of a bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

***Political Opinion* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

Interventions to address the transmission of bovine TB between cattle and wildlife are unlikely to create opportunities for promoting good relations between people of different political opinion. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different political opinion and will review any opportunities identified during the implementation of policy decisions in respect of wildlife intervention as an integral element of a bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

Interventions to address the transmission of bovine TB between cattle and wildlife are unlikely to create opportunities for promoting good relations between people of different racial groups. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different racial groups and will review any opportunities identified during the implementation of policy decisions in respect of wildlife intervention as an integral element of a bTB eradication strategy or the deployment of lay vaccinators. The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities? If so, please detail below.

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

There are no potential impacts on people with multiple identities from a policy to implement an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife or the deployment of lay vaccinators.

DAERA also has legislative obligations to meet under the **Disability Discrimination Order**. Questions 5 - 6 relate to these.

Consideration of Disability Duties

5. Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity for DAERA to better **promote positive attitudes** towards disabled people?

No

It is very unlikely that there will be any facility in the provision of an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, or the use of lay vaccinators, to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, but communication channels will be open, and comments will be welcomed should stakeholders feel there is a need to do so.

To facilitate this the completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

6. Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity to actively **increase the participation** by disabled people in public life?

No

It is very unlikely that there will be any facility in the provision of an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, or the use of lay vaccinators, to increase the participation by disabled people in public life, but communication channels will be open, and comments will be welcomed should stakeholders feel there is a need to do so.

To facilitate this the completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Part 3. Screening decision

“Screened out” without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

The policy proposals focus on the eradication of a disease. Given the nature and spread of the disease, all rural parts of Northern Ireland are, and can be, affected. The policies will be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and will involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating this disease. It is considered that there is no potential for partial or imbalance in the proposed actions and approaches which would impact on the rural community given that the focus is on the disease itself and addressing its spread and maintenance.

As the policy proposals will be applied equally in the rural communities affected by bovine tuberculosis and the intended outcomes will achieve substantial economic and social benefits for farmers and rural communities it is considered that there is no requirement to consider mitigations in respect of the implementation of the proposed policies.

Access to an intervention to address the transmission of bTB between cattle and wildlife, and access to the use of lay vaccinators, will be open to all types of farmers and land managers in Northern Ireland. Implementation of an intervention would not exclude any types of farmers from specific Section 75 categories. It is therefore unlikely that these policies will impact the already established demographics of the farming community in NI.

An Equality, Disability and Human Rights Screening exercise has been undertaken, which assessed evidence relating to Section 75 considerations, including equality of opportunity, good relations, disability duties and human rights. The exercise has concluded that the policies being consulted on would apply equally to all stakeholders but has also recognised that comments from any of the Section 75 groups, or other individuals or groups, are welcomed through the public consultation process, particularly if any group / individual considers they are significantly affected by the new policies and the issues have not been recognised in the Equality & Disability screening document.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

The policy proposals focus on the eradication of a disease. Given the nature and spread of the disease, all rural parts of Northern Ireland are, and can be, affected. The policies will be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and will involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating this disease.

It is considered that there is no potential for partial or imbalance in the proposed actions and approaches which would impact on the rural community given that the focus is on the disease itself and addressing its spread and maintenance.

As the policy proposals will be applied equally in the rural communities affected by bovine tuberculosis and the intended outcomes will achieve substantial economic and social benefits for farmers and rural communities it is considered that there is no requirement to consider mitigations in respect of the implementation of the proposed policies.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: [A Practical Guide to Equality Impact Assessment](#)

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If so, give the reasons to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been ‘screened in’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people’s daily lives	
Relevance to a public authority’s functions	
Total score	

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If yes, please provide details.

N/A

Part 4. Monitoring

Section 75 places a requirement on DAERA to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services etc; and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity. Please note the following excerpt from The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in relation to monitoring:

A system must be established to monitor the impact of the policy in order to find out its effect on relevant groups. The results of ongoing monitoring must be reviewed on an annual basis. The public authority is required to publish the results of this monitoring. And they must be included in the public authorities' annual review on progress to the Equality Commission. The Equality Scheme must specify how and where such monitoring information will be published. It is therefore essential that monitoring is carried out in a systematic manner and that the results are widely and openly published.

If the monitoring and analysis of results over a two year period show that the policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the public authority must ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups.

Further advice on monitoring can be found at: [ECNI Monitoring Guidance for Public Authorities](#)

Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy or decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.

Equality:

Good Relations:

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on Good Relations will be reviewed as the method of wildlife intervention is further developed and the use of lay vaccinators is rolled out, in line with future policy decisions taken by the DAERA Minister.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Disability Duties:

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on people with disabilities will be reviewed as the method of wildlife intervention is further developed and the use of lay vaccinators is rolled out, in line with future policy decisions taken by the DAERA Minister.

The completed Equality & Disability screening document will be published alongside the consultation paper. The consultation paper will invite the submission of any further equality-related evidence or views, which will be considered before any final policy decisions are taken.

Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights

7. The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 brings the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law and it applies in N Ireland. Indicate below by deleting Yes/No as appropriate, any potential adverse impacts that the policy or decision may have in relation to human rights issues.

See Annex A for brief synopsis on each of the Human Rights Articles & Protocols.

Right to Life	Article 2	No
Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment	Article 3	No
Prohibition of slavery and forced labour	Article 4	No
Right to liberty and security	Article 5	No
Right to a fair and public trial	Article 6	No
Right to no punishment without law	Article 7	No
Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence	Article 8	No
Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	Article 9	No
Right to freedom of expression	Article 10	No

Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association	Article 11	No
Right to marry and to found a family	Article 12	No
The prohibition of discrimination	Article 14	No
Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions	Protocol 1 Article 1	No
Right to education	Protocol 1 Article 2	No
Right to free and secret elections	Protocol 1 Article 3	No

8. Please explain any adverse impacts on human rights that you have identified.

None identified.

9. Please indicate any ways which you consider the policy positively promotes human rights.

None identified.

Part 6 - Approval and authorisation

Before signing off this screening template please confirm that you have completed all the actions listed below.

I can confirm that all the actions listed below have been completed -

- I have explained any technical issues in plain English (easily understood by a 12 year old)
- I have used the most relevant, current & up to date data available
- I have added evidence and explained my assessments in full
- I have provided a brief note to justify my decision to 'Screen In' or 'Screen Out'
- A copy of this screening template and the final decision has been sent to the Equality Unit for their consideration before it has been forwarded for sign-off

Screening assessment completed by (Staff Officer level or above) -

Name: Damian McKevitt

Grade: DP

Branch: TB Policy and Research

Date: 28 May 2026

Signature:

Damian McKevitt

Screening decision approved by (must be Grade 3/Deputy Secretary or above) -

Name: Brian Dooher

Grade: Chief Veterinary Officer (Grade 3)

Branch: Group Head Veterinary Service & Animal Health

Date: 03 June 2026

Signature:

Brian Dooher

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be ‘signed off’ and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority’s website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

Please save the final signed version of the completed screening form in the CM container (AE2-19-11940) below as soon as possible after completion and forward the CM link to Equality Branch at equality@daera-ni.gov.uk. The screening form will be placed on the DAERA website and a link provided to the Department’s Section 75 consultees.

For more information about equality screening, contact:

DAERA Equality Unit

Capacity, Capability, Equality & Diversity Branch

Jubilee House

111 Ballykelly Road

LIMAVADY

BT49 9HP

Email: equality@daera-ni.gov.uk

Tel: 028 7744 2027



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o’
**Fairmin, Environment
an’ Kintra Matthers**

Annex A

Synopsis of Human Rights Act Articles & Protocols

ARTICLE 2

Right to life

1. Everyone's right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law.
2. Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this Article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:
 - a. In defense of any person from unlawful violence;
 - b. In order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained;
 - c. In action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.

ARTICLE 3

Prohibition of torture

No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

ARTICLE 4

Prohibition of slavery and forced labour

1. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.
2. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.

3. For the purpose of this Article the term “forced or compulsory labour” shall not include:
 - a. Any work required to be done in the ordinary course of detention imposed according to the provisions of Article 5 of this Convention or during conditional release from such detention;
 - b. Any service of a military character or, in case of conscientious objectors in countries where they are recognised, service exacted instead of compulsory military service;
 - c. Any service exacted in case of an emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community;
 - d. Any work or service which forms part of normal civic obligations.

ARTICLE 5

Right to liberty and security

1. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be deprived of his liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure prescribed by law:
 - a. The lawful detention of a person after conviction by a competent court;
 - b. The lawful arrest or detention of a person for non-compliance with the lawful order of a court or in order to secure the fulfilment of any obligation prescribed by law;
 - c. the lawful arrest or detention of a person effected for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority on reasonable suspicion of having committed an offence or when it is reasonably considered necessary to prevent his committing an offence or fleeing after having done so;

- d. the detention of a minor by lawful order for the purpose of educational supervision or his lawful detention for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority;
 - e. The lawful detention of persons for the prevention of the spreading of infectious diseases, of persons of unsound mind, alcoholics or drug addicts or vagrants;
 - f. The lawful arrest or detention of a person to prevent his effecting an unauthorised entry into the country or of a person against whom action is being taken with a view to deportation or extradition.
2. Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a language which he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and of any charge against him.
3. Everyone arrested or detained in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1(c) of this Article shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorised by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release pending trial. Release may be conditioned by guarantees to appear for trial.
4. Everyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings by which the lawfulness of his detention shall be decided speedily by a court and his release ordered if the detention is not lawful.
5. Everyone who has been the victim of arrest or detention in contravention of the provisions of this Article shall have an enforceable right to compensation.

ARTICLE 6

Right to a fair trial

1. In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law. Judgment shall be pronounced publicly but the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interest of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice.
2. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.
3. Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:
 - a. To be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him;
 - b. To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defense;
 - c. To defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require;
 - d. To examine or have examined witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;

- e. To have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court.

ARTICLE 7

No punishment without law

1. No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence under national or international law at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the criminal offence was committed.
2. This Article shall not prejudice the trial and punishment of any person for any act or omission which, at the time when it was committed, was criminal according to the general principles of law recognised by civilised nations.

ARTICLE 8

Right to respect for private and family life

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.
2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

ARTICLE 9

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

ARTICLE 10

Freedom of expression

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.
2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

ARTICLE 11

Freedom of assembly and association

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
2. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This Article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State.

ARTICLE 12

Right to marry

Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right.

ARTICLE 14

Prohibition of discrimination

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

Protocol 1

ARTICLE 1

Protection of property

Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.

The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

Protocol 1

ARTICLE 2

Right to education

No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

Protocol 1

ARTICLE 3

Right to free elections

The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature.

For further information:

Equality Unit,
Equality & Diversity Branch
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)
Jubilee House
111 Ballykelly Road
Ballykelly
Limavady
BT49 9HP

Tel: 028 7744 2027

Email: equality@daera-ni.gov.uk



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