

Public Document Pack

Peak District National Park Authority

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Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell, Derbyshire. DE45 1AE



Our Values: Care – Enjoy – Pioneer

Our Ref: A.1142/5006

Date: 15 April 2025



NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: **Programmes and Resources Committee**

Date: **Friday 25 April 2025**

Time: **10.00 am**

Venue: **Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell**

PHILIP MULLIGAN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

- 1 **Apologies for Absence**
- 2 **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 24 January 2025** *(Pages 5 - 8)* 5 mins
- 3 **Urgent Business**
- 4 **Public Participation**
To note any questions or to receive any statements, representations, deputations and petitions which relate to the published reports on Part A of the Agenda.
- 5 **Members Declarations of Interest**
Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary, personal or prejudicial interests they may have in relation to items on the agenda for this meeting.

FOR DECISION

- 6 **Safeguarding Annual Report 2024-25** *(Pages 9 - 18)* 15 mins
Appendix 1

Appendix 2
- 7 **Equality Plan 2024-28** *(Pages 19 - 30)* 15 mins
Appendix 1
- 8 **Occupational Safety and Health Annual Report 2024-25** *(Pages 31 - 48)* 15 mins
Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Appendix 3
- 9 **Access for All Funding** *(Pages 49 - 58)* 10 mins
Appendix 1

Appendix 2

FOR INFORMATION

- 10 **Landscape and Nature Recovery Aim Overview** *(Pages 59 - 78)* 40 mins
Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Appendix 3

Appendix 4

Appendix 2

Appendix 3

Appendix 4

Duration of Meeting

In the event of not completing its business within 3 hours of the start of the meeting, in accordance with the Authority's Standing Orders, the Committee will decide whether or not to continue the meeting. If the Authority decides not to continue the meeting it will be adjourned and the remaining business considered at the next scheduled meeting.

If the Committee has not completed its business by 1.00pm and decides to continue the meeting the Chair will exercise discretion to adjourn the meeting at a suitable point for a 30 minute lunch break after which the committee will re-convene.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (as amended)

Agendas and reports

Copies of the Agenda and Part A reports are available for members of the public before and during the meeting on the website <http://democracy.peakdistrict.gov.uk>

Background Papers

The Local Government Act 1972 requires that the Authority shall list any unpublished Background Papers necessarily used in the preparation of the Reports. The Background Papers referred to in each report, PART A, excluding those papers that contain Exempt or Confidential Information, PART B, can be inspected on the Authority's website.

Public Participation and Other Representations from third parties

Please note meetings of the Authority and its Committees may still take place at venues other than its offices at Aldern House, Bakewell when necessary. Public participation is still available and anyone wishing to participate at the meeting under the Authority's Public Participation Scheme is required to give notice to the Customer and Democratic Support Team to be received not later than 12.00 noon on the Wednesday preceding the Friday meeting. The Scheme is available on the website <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/about-us/have-your-say> or on request from the Customer and Democratic Team 01629 816352, email address: democraticandlegalsupport@peakdistrict.gov.uk.

Written Representations

Other written representations on items on the agenda, except those from formal consultees, will not be reported to the meeting if received after 12 noon on the Wednesday preceding the Friday meeting.

Recording of Meetings

In accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 members of the public may record and report on our open meetings using sound, video, film, photograph or any other means this includes blogging or tweeting, posts on social media sites or publishing on video sharing sites. If you intend to record or report on one of our meetings you are asked to contact the Customer and Democratic Support Team in advance of the meeting so we can make sure it will not disrupt the meeting and is carried out in accordance with any published protocols and guidance.

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This meeting will take place at Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell, DE45 1AE.

Information on Public transport from surrounding areas can be obtained from Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or on the Traveline website at www.travelineeastmidlands.co.uk

Please note there is no refreshment provision available.

To: Members of Programmes and Resources Committee:

Chair: Prof J Dugdale
Vice Chair: C Greaves

J W Berresford	C Farrell
A Gregory	L Grooby
G Heath	A Nash
C O'Leary	K Rustidge
K Smith	Dr R Swetnam
S Thompson	Y Witter
B Woods	A Martin

Other invited Members: (May speak but not vote)

P Brady	V Priestley
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Constituent Authorities
Secretary of State for the Environment
Natural England

Peak District National Park Authority
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 Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell, Derbyshire. DE45 1AE



MINUTES

Meeting: **Programmes and Resources Committee**

Date: Friday 24 January 2025 at 10.45 am

Venue: Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell

Chair: Prof J Dugdale

Present: C Greaves, J W Berresford, C O'Leary, K Rustidge, K Smith, Dr R Swetnam, S Thompson, Y Witter and A Martin

Apologies for absence: C Farrell, A Gregory, G Heath, A Nash, B Woods and P Brady

1/25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2024

The Chair welcomed Amanda Martin, the Boardroom Apprentice, to the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 6th December 2024, were approved as a correct record.

2/25 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

3/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public had given notice to make representations at the meeting.

4/25 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Member declarations of interest.

5/25 REVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING POLICY (2025)

Natalie Webster, HR Adviser, presented the report which was to approve the revised Safeguarding Policy for 2025.

It was noted that although there is policy in place currently there is no Member scrutiny of this policy. The Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and the intention is for this policy to align with Occupational Safety and Health and bring a more detailed report to the committee in April each year. The minor changes to the policy were discussed and are outlined in point 2.5 of the report.

Members asked if Volunteers are included in the report and it was clarified that they are included in point 3 of the policy. It was felt that a little more clarity and definition regarding Volunteers would be useful.

It was discussed that not all posts require a DBS check. DBS checks are undertaken as and when a risk assessment of a post indicates a need.

The recommendations as set out in the report, were moved and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the revised Safeguarding Policy (2025) be approved as Authority policy from 24 January 2025.**
- 2. That the Programmes and Resources Committee review the Safeguarding Policy on an annual basis to ensure it is up to date with both the Authority organisation and arrangements to deliver safeguarding, and with current legislation.**

6/25 REVIEW OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY (2025)

Natalie Webster, HR Adviser, presented the report which was to approve the new Occupational Safety and Health Policy for 2025.

It was noted that the Health and Safety committee has been renamed the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee. There has been some minor revisions to the policy to reflect changes to the incident reporting arrangements.

The recommendation as set out in the report, was moved and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

That the revised Occupational Safety and Health Policy (2025) be approved as Authority policy from 26 January 2025.

7/25 THRIVING COMMUNITIES THEME UPDATE

Brian Taylor, Head of Planning was present for this item to inform Members about the Authority's progress since April 2024, with respect to the Aims and Objectives of the National Park Management Plan in relation to Thriving Communities and what this means for the future.

Members asked about the flexibility of planning policy regarding business space and the setting aside of space for specific use.

A question was asked about the former government levelling up and regeneration act regarding the registration of holiday homes and their impact on thriving communities and there is still discussions taking place over this. The focus of the new government is on building new homes. The Authority does have the power of the legislative framework to constrain development. Strategic Planning was discussed and that combined mayoral authorities do have a wider picture of the areas. The "Duty to Seek to Further" was mentioned and how this will pan out in future.

The Members asked how representative were the responses to the Local Plan as there was no way of identifying any demographic characteristics of the respondents. It is possible to identify if the response has come from a Parish Council but not the demographics of individual respondents.

12.58pm Chris O'Leary left the meeting.

The attendance at the Parish's Day is limited however it is encouraging to see that more Parishes are attending the planning training.

13:05pm James Beresford left the meeting.

The recommendation as set out in the report, was moved, seconded, put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

To note the progress report for the National Park Management Plan Thriving Communities Theme.

The meeting ended at 1.07 pm

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6. SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide assurance that satisfactory safeguarding measures are in place to ensure our legal duty of care to provide a safe environment when children and vulnerable adults access our services.

2. Context

2.1 Public bodies are required to have due regard to making arrangements to safeguard children and vulnerable adults when delivering their work. The Authority has had a Safeguarding Policy and procedures in place for some time, with the current version ratified at this Committee meeting on 24 January 2025, however this is the first time an annual report has come before Members.

2.2 In August 2023, the Head of Engagement and former Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Authority, reviewed our safeguarding arrangements. It recommended the Authority annually review the actions taken under the Safeguarding Policy where we specifically commit to:

- Adopt safeguarding guidelines throughout our procedures and make clear the standards of conduct expected of our workforce when engaged in a professional activity.
- Recruit staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Share information about child protection and good practice with children, parents/guardians and staff/volunteers.
- Respond swiftly to all suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Provide effective management for staff through supervision, support and training

2.3 The review identified some gaps in our safeguarding measures which formed the basis for an action plan to be completed in 2024-25. The annual report summarises the work undertaken and the actions completed. The Safeguarding Working Group (SWG) agreed the report should provide reassurance the Authority has appropriate mechanisms in place and in a state of readiness to respond to any suspicions or allegations made. The report should not contain any details of incidents.

2.4 A more systematic approach is proposed in 2025-26 to assess the safeguarding measures in place at the Authority, to a standard widely recognised. Using the National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) guidance document *Firstcheck: a step by step guide for organisations to safeguard children*, a checklist has been drafted which is relevant and proportionate to the work of the Authority. This checklist will be used by the Authority's trained and experienced Designated Safeguarding Officers at the first meeting of the SWG, to develop an action plan for 2025-26.

3. Proposals

3.1 The work undertaken by the Safeguarding Working Group during 2024-25 and summarised in the annual report, which provides protection for children and vulnerable adults who receive our services, is recognised.

3.2 The proposal for assessing the safeguarding measures in place at the Authority, as set out in the draft Safeguarding Checklist Action Plan 2025-26, is approved.

4. Recommendations

1. The Safeguarding annual report 2024-25 (Appendix 1), is noted.

2. The draft Safeguarding Checklist and Action Plan for 2025-26 (Appendix 2), is approved.

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Maintaining a safeguarding policy and having effective safeguarding procedures in place aligns with the range of legislation that requires various bodies to ensure that functions are discharged considering the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Establishing awareness and knowledge throughout the Authority will also ensure co-operation and collaboration with other organisations to ensure an effective multi-agency approach.

b. Financial

There are no additional financial implications, as funds are already available.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

This report demonstrates how we contribute to the Authority Plan and the National Park Management Plan:

Objective C – to have highly engaged, healthy and inclusive staff and volunteers.

Objective 8 - to create opportunities for young people and those from under-served communities to connect with and enjoy the National Park

Objective 9 – to promote the National Park as a place where there are opportunities for the improvement of physical and mental health and wellbeing.

d. Risk Management

The risks are managed according to the responsibilities set out in the Safeguarding Policy 2025 with the Safeguarding Working Group implementing the action plan.

e. Net Zero

No issues

f. Equality

The Authority's policies and procedures must be compliant with the Authority's legal duty in relation to equality, and include the additional protections provided for children and vulnerable adults who access our services. All risk assessments must identify and address any specific adverse safeguarding impacts on a case by case basis.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Annual report 2024-25

Appendix 2 - Safeguarding Checklist and action plan 2025-26

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Theresa Reid, Head of People Management, 15 April 2025.

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Phil Mulligan, Chief Executive Officer.



Safeguarding annual report 2024-25

1. Context

This report is primarily concerned with management of safeguarding matters during the period April 2024 – March 2025. The aim is to provide assurance that the mechanisms in place are effective and support the delivery of a robust approach to safeguarding.

This is the first annual report on safeguarding activity. Producing an annual report on how the Authority meets its commitment to safeguarding, as set out in the Safeguarding Policy, was a recommendation following a Safeguarding review in August 2023.

The routine safeguarding management of the activities of the Authority and employees is the responsibility of the Authority, management and employees. In our safeguarding policy we have specifically committed to:

- Adopt safeguarding guidelines throughout our procedures and make clear the standards of conduct expected of our workforce when engaged in a professional activity.
- Recruit staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Share information about child protection and good practice with children, parents/guardians and staff/volunteers.
- Respond swiftly to all suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Provide effective management for staff through supervision, support and training.

2. Governance

There is a legal duty of care to provide a safe environment when children and vulnerable adults access our services. We have a safeguarding policy which sets out the Authority's aims, commitments and responsibilities on safeguarding in the delivery of our services. The policy was ratified at the meeting of the Programmes and Resources Committee on 24 January 2025, and will be reviewed annually going forward. The policy is published on our website at <https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/publications/operationalpolicies>

A Safeguarding Working Group (SWG) was convened in December 2023 to implement the recommended actions from the review. The SWG consists of:

Post	Role
Head of People Management	Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)
Engagement Manager	Deputy DSO
Young People and Communities Team Leader	Deputy DSO
HR Adviser	Lead on staff processes
Volunteering Manager	Lead on volunteer processes
People Management Support Officer	Lead on Disclosure and Barring Checks

The SWG was chaired by the DSO and met quarterly in this period.

3. Review of supporting documentation

The document **Guidance on Safeguarding** sets out how we will implement the intentions of the policy. It was reviewed throughout the year and the updated version published on the HUB for staff to access and on Better Impact for volunteers. The target audience is staff and volunteers who have significant contact with children and vulnerable adults. It provides the contact details of Safeguarding Officers, and who to contact outside of the organisation, when needed. It gives clarity on the selection and recruitment process of staff and volunteers into roles which involve working with children or vulnerable adults, and in what circumstances these roles require disclosure. It gives details on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and the process for keeping certificates up to date.

The Guidance clearly sets out the standards of conduct to which all staff and volunteers are expected to comply, and also the procedure to follow when there are any concerns.

The four induction briefing documents were reviewed in November and condensed into one, the **Safeguarding induction briefing**. The content is based on the information provided in the ELMS module *Safeguarding for all*. The volunteer handbook on Better Impact has a link to this briefing document, and it has been added to the line managers checklist to ensure it is discussed with every new starter.

4. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check audit

Although Authority staff and volunteers are rarely in sole charge of children and vulnerable adults (as they are usually accompanied by a teacher, guardian or carer whilst accessing our services), it is recognised it is important to ensure as much as is reasonably practicable, that appointments to positions of trust are 'safe'.

In November, the decision criteria for identifying which of our staff posts and volunteering roles require an enhanced DBS check was reviewed. Following this, the Wider Team managers were tasked with assessing the posts and volunteer roles they manage using the criteria to determine whether a DBS check was required.

As a result of this audit, 37 staff posts were identified as requiring a DBS check. Five volunteer roles were identified. At the end of 2024-25, there are 26 volunteers with a DBS certificate.

This means successful candidates and volunteers in these posts/roles will be subject to a pre-appointment DBS check (and every 3 years thereafter) aimed at assuring us of their suitability to work with children and/or vulnerable adults.

5. Education and Training in 2024-25

It is recognised that staff and volunteers with special safeguarding responsibilities require training to enable them to develop and maintain the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding.

Safeguarding training throughout 2024-25:

- The DSO attended the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (DDSCP) attended Working Together: Everyone's responsibility (Level 3) in November.
- The DDSOs completed the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) two day Designated Safeguarding Officer Training in December. (this is a requirement for all Authority designated posts every 3 years)
- The safeguarding lead HR Adviser and the Volunteering Manager completed the NSPCC online Managing allegations training.
- The HR Advisers and Volunteering Manager completed the NSPCC online Safer recruitment training.
- All DBS checked postholders and volunteers completed the following ELMS modules:
 - Safeguarding for all – Children edition (20 mins)
 - Safeguarding for all – Adult edition (20 mins)
- All managers/supervisors of work experience students are required to complete the Children edition prior to the placement.
- Two half day classroom *Safeguarding in Practice* training sessions by the Independent Safeguarding Service cic, in February and March (although latter postponed until May) open to any staff or volunteer working with children or vulnerable adults. There were 20 attendees in February and 19 people have booked on to the course re-arranged in May.

6. Work experience placements

In 2024-25 the Authority hosted 10 work experience placements.

Host team	No. of placements
Mix of CMPT/Engagement/Rangers/Woodlands	5
Development Management - Planning	2
Junior Rangers	2
Information Technology	1

The allocation of a placement requires individual students to submit a completed application form with parent or guardian consent. The parent or guardian is advised that staff supervising work experience students do so on an ad hoc basis therefore do not have a DBS check. They are also informed that we recognise children experiencing work for the first time may merit special consideration in regards to health and safety, and are provided with a list the common hazards associated with work at the National Park.

The Authority has a generic risk assessment for *young person & students*. Where any more significant risks are identified, a specific risk assessment would also be necessary.

7. Planning for implementation, monitoring and evaluation in 2025-26

Children and vulnerable adults have the right to be safe and happy in the activities that they, or their parents or carers choose, and parents have a right to believe that the organisations to which they

entrust their children, are safe. We have a duty of care for the children and vulnerable adults for whom we provide activities or services. Therefore, we must continue to put safeguards in place to ensure their safety and enjoyment.

It is far better to prevent abuse by putting safeguarding measures in place in advance of any incident – in exactly the same way that we consider health and safety hazards – and take steps to minimise the possibility of this occurring.

In this period, the SWG delivered actions to meet the recommendations from the August 2023 review. The review was an assessment of our safeguarding measures by a previous DSO based on their experience and observations, against our policy commitments.

The current DSO proposes a more systematic approach to assessment (appendix 2 – Safeguarding Action Plan for 2025-26). Using the NSPCC's *safetycheck standards*, a checklist relevant and proportionate to the Authority's activities with children and vulnerable adults has been drafted. Using this checklist at the first 2025-26 quarterly meeting of the SWG, the DSO, supported by the DDSOs, will use their knowledge and training to complete the checklist and identify what actions are required to either maintain, update or improve the measures.

8. Recommendations

- 1.** The Safeguarding annual report 2024-25, is recognised and noted.
- 2.** The proposal to develop a Safeguarding Action Plan for 2025-26 from the checklist, is approved.



Safeguarding Checklist and Action Plan 2025-26

1. Policy standard criteria	In place	Not in place	Action required	Timescale
1.1 The organisation has a Safeguarding Policy				
1.2 The policy is written in a clear and easily understood format				
1.3 The policy is publicised, promoted and distributed to relevant audiences				
1.4 The policy is approved and endorsed by the relevant Authority Committee				
1.5 The policy is reviewed annually or whenever there is a major change in the Authority or in relevant legislation				

2. Procedures and systems	In place	Not in place	Action required	Timescale
2.1 There are clear procedures in respect of safeguarding which provide guidance on what action to take if there are any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult's safety				
2.2 Safeguarding procedures and guidance are available to all (including children, young people, vulnerable adults and their parents/carers) and are actively promoted on joining the organisation				
2.3 At a countrywide level, procedures are consistent with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2024). At a local level there is a need to be aware of the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership				
2.4 There is a designated person/s with a clearly defined role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, which are appropriate to the level at which they operate.				

2.5 There is a process for recording incidents, concerns and referrals and storing these securely in compliance with relevant legislation				

3. Prevention	In place	Not in place	Action required	Timescale
3.1 There are rigorous procedures for recruiting staff and volunteers who have contact with children/vulnerable adults and for assessing their suitability to work with them				
3.2 All those who have significant contact with children are subject to safeguarding (Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS) checks, as required by legislation and guidance and these are properly recorded.				
3.3 There are well publicised ways in which staff and volunteers can raise concerns, confidentially if necessary, about unacceptable behaviour by other staff or volunteers. These include external contacts.				
3.4 An assessment of risk to children of any activities and the environment in which they take place is made prior to commencement, and actions taken to minimise any risk.				

4. Conduct and behaviour/equality and inclusion	In place	Not in place	Action required	Timescale
4.1 There is Safeguarding Guidance which clearly sets out the standard of conduct to which all staff and volunteers comply.				
4.2 The Safeguarding Guidance on conduct make it clear that discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour are unacceptable.				
4.3 The consequences of breaching the standard are clear and linked to the disciplinary and grievance procedures.				

5. Communication	In place	Not in place	Action required	Timescale
5.1 Information about the organisation's commitment to safeguard children and vulnerable adults is openly displayed and available to all.				
5.2 Everyone in the organisation knows who the designated person/s are and how to contact them.				
5.3 Contact details for the local children's service authorities, police and the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline are readily available.				
5.4 Steps are taken to seek users' views on policies and procedures and how they are working.				

6. Education and training	In place	Not in place	Action required	Timescale
6.1 There is an induction/training process for all staff, volunteers and Members that includes familiarisation with the Safeguarding Policy and procedures.				
6.2 Staff and volunteers with special responsibilities in relation to safeguarding have training to enable them to develop the necessary skills and knowledge and have regular opportunities to update their knowledge and understanding				
6.3 Training and guidance on safe recruitment practice is provided for those responsible for recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers.				

7. Access to advice and support	In place	Not in place	Action required	Timescale
7.1 Children and young people are provided with information on where to go for help and advice in relation to abuse, harassment and bullying, or significant difficulties at home				

7.2 Designated safeguarding staff have access to specialist advice, training support and information.				
7.3 Contacts are established at a national and/or local level with key statutory child protection agencies.				
7.4 There are arrangements for providing regular supervision and support to staff and volunteers, and particularly during and following an incident of allegation of abuse or a complaint.				

8. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation	In place	Not in place	Action required	Timescale
8.1 There is a plan showing what steps will be taken to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, who is responsible for what actions and when these will be completed.				
8.2 The resources essential for implementing the plan are made available.				
8.3 The policy and guidance are reviewed annually, and revised in light of changing needs, changes in legislation or guidance, organisational experience.				
8.4 All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints are recorded and monitored				
8.5 Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with regard to safeguarding in recruitment and selection processes.				
8.6 Plans are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding measures.				

7. EQUALITY PLAN 2024-28

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the work to date to ensure the Authority's compliance with the specific duties under the public sector equality duty (PSED).

2. Context

2.1 The PSED is made up of a general equality duty supported by specific duties. The general duty is set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and it came into force on 5 April 2011.

2.2 The general equality duty applies to 'public authorities', and those subject to the duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

2.3 The specific duties were created by secondary legislation in the form of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011. The Peak District National Park Authority is listed in Schedule 2 of the regulations and as a 'listed' authority is subject to both the general equality duty and specific duties. The purpose of the specific duties is to help listed authorities improve their performance on the general duty, by improving their focus and transparency. In summary, each listed authority is required to:

- Publish equality information at least one a year. The information we publish should be enough to demonstrate to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), as well as service users, staff and other interested parties, how the Authority is performing in the area of equality. The nature of the information depends on the size and purpose of the organisation.
- Prepare and publish one or more equality objectives that it thinks it needs to achieve to further any of the aims of the general equality duty, at least every four years. The number of objectives set depends on the size and role of organisation.
- Publish their gender pay gap information (if 250 or more employees) by 30 March each year. The gender pay gap is the difference in average and median pay, between men and women in the workforce. It is different to equal pay, which means you must pay men and women the same for equal or similar work.

2.4 Previously equality outcomes, objectives and information were reported separately. In the Corporate Strategy 2019-24 two specific key performance indicators and two workforce metrics were identified as the equality objectives to demonstrate the specific duties.

Key performance indicator	Success factors	Result
Proportion of under-represented groups reached	Peak District National Park Authority audience reach that is 30% closer to demographics of	In many demographic areas we are now close to regional demographics, although there is still under representation in socioeconomic and

	those within an hour's travel time of the National Park by 2024	age groups. The PDNP continues to stand out from other NPs with the ethnicity of our visitors closely matching that of the region.
No. of residents and other community stakeholders understanding & engaged in the development of strategic policies	50% increase in number by 2024 and 50% increase in range by 2024	34% increase

Equality duty objective	Success factors	Result
Employee age – range and median	We will seek to reduce the median by 2024	@ 31/03/2024 median age was 49 yrs 2023 49 2022 52 2021 49 2020 50
Gender pay gap – median	We aim to close the gap by 2024	@ 31/03/2024 pay gap was 2.2% 2023 8.8% 2022 4.8% 2021 9.5% 2020 9.4%

2.5 When considering new equality objectives, the aim was to bring all objectives and actions into one document for a better overview and joined up approach across the teams and services to delivery. There was ambition for the equality objectives to be integral to everyday business, and encourage staff at all levels to engage with developing and ultimately 'owning' the actions.

2.6 In December last year, the Senior Management Team attended a workshop with the Human Resource team, and the Workforce Champions (a representative group of 10 employees from across the Authority) with the aim to come up with a list of possible equality objectives to help address some of the equality challenges faced by our workforce and service users. From this workshop three themes with possible objectives and suggested actions were developed.

2.7 Engagement of the members of the Wider Management Team (WMT) is key to the success in achieving the proposed equality plan actions, and therefore helpful to give them opportunity to comment and suggest amendments. The WMT as well as our recognised trade union, UNISON, were consulted on the draft plan initially in January with a discussion held at the WMT meeting 28 January, and consulted again with a revised version in February.

2.8 The Equality Plan 2025-26 is not yet finalised. It has grown organically from the original workshop in December which started at grassroots with the Workforce Champions. It was only recently agreed the Equality Plan should be taken before Members for scrutiny and monitoring in future. There is still work to be done on establishing stronger links with the Authority Plan. Another discussion is tabled at the WMT meeting on 29 April. The manager of the team responsible for each of the actions will be tasked with providing details on how each action will be measured/monitored and the timescale for milestones and delivery. There will also be a discussion and decision made on the mechanism for performance monitoring and reporting.

3. Proposals

3.1 Members agree that as part of demonstrating our public sector specific duties, an update on the Equality Plan 2024-28 should be taken to the Programmes and Resources Committee annually in April.

3.2 That Members note the progress to date on developing the Equality Plan 2024-28. It has been fundamental aim when drafting the plan, to keep the language clear and simple. There has been robust and meaningful consultation to create as much ownership as possible across the Authority to ensure successful delivery of outcomes.

4. Recommendations

- 1. An update on the Equality Plan 2024-28 is taken to the Programmes and Resources Committee every April is approved.**
- 2. The current version of the Equality Plan 2024-28 is noted.**

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to section 65(5) of the Environment Act 1995, the Authority has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the accomplishment of its statutory purposes. This power is subject to any express statutory or public law constraints.

The Authority is subject to the general and specific equality duties set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 respectively, as outlined in this report.

Pursuant to sections 5 and 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Authority must deliver to the statutory purposes and statutory duty, respectively, when carrying out its work. Monitoring the Authority's progress against the aims and objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan will enable appropriate scrutiny and safeguard legal compliance.

The National Park Management Plan and the Authority Plan are compliant with the Authority's duties in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. Specific projects presented to the Programmes and Resources Committee will identify and address any adverse equality impacts on a case by case basis for consideration prior to approval.

b. Financial

There are no financial implications, as funds are already available.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

This report demonstrates the work being undertaken on equality as part of our legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. More work is planned to crystalise the links to the Authority Plan and the National Park Management Plan. The key objectives to which the Equality Plan will contribute towards are:

Objective C – to have highly engaged, healthy and inclusive staff and volunteers.

Objective 8 - to create opportunities for young people and those from under-served communities to connect with and enjoy the National Park

Objective 9 – to promote the National Park as a place where there are opportunities for the improvement of physical and mental health and wellbeing.

d. Risk Management

The Equality Plan is not yet finalised. Being clear on our PSED legal obligations has enabled development of a draft plan. At which meeting, and how often, the updates on the actions will be monitored and evaluated is yet to be determined. Hereafter, an annual report on the Equality Action Plan 2024-28 will be taken to the Programmes and Resources Committee meeting every April for scrutiny.

e. Net Zero

No issues

f. Equality

The Authority demonstrates due regard to the general equality duty and complies with the specific equality duties with the creation of an Equality Plan.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – the draft Equality Plan 2024-28

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Theresa Reid, Head of People Management, 15 April 2025.

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Phil Mulligan, Chief Executive Officer.

Equality Plan 2024-28

As a UK national park, our equality plan is guided by the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty. We recognise that we have clear obligations towards our workforce and the community at large and a duty to ensure that our policies, practices and procedures do not disadvantage people on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We are committed to considering the impact of our actions on individuals and actively promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of our operations, including service provision, employment practices, and decision-making processes.

We recognise that every person has one or more protected characteristic and the Equality Act 2010 protects everyone against unfair treatment.

The general equality duty means that in everything they do, public authorities should have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

As a local authority, we are also bound by the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010. The specific duties complement the general duty. We are required to publish:

- one or more equality objectives at least every 4 years
- information on general duty compliance with regard to people affected by our policies and practices every year
- information on general duty compliance with regard to our employees every year
- gender pay gap data by 30 March every year

The information must be available in a manner that is accessible to the public. This plan is published on our website at [Open government: Peak District National Park](#)

This Equality plan contributes to the achievement of:

1. [National Park Management Plan Objective 8](#) - To create opportunities for young people and those from under-served communities to connect with and enjoy the National Park
2. [Authority Plan Objective C](#) - To have highly engaged, healthy and inclusive staff and volunteers

[NB – still working through links and narrative to the NPMP and Authority Plan]

It contains important information about the work Peak District National Park Authority will do across 2024-2028 to promote equality and diversity. Our aim is to meet our legal duties and, in areas where we can make a difference, achieve positive experiences for all.

Our Plan is set around three objectives, acknowledging that as an Authority we may only have limited scope to effect change:

1. The Peak District National Park welcomes everyone

- Our National Park communications will be representative of the diverse audiences of the park (See Appendix 1, Table 1.1) and we will continue to work to reach underrepresented groups and advocate for their access to the Park.
- We will consider and reflect access for all users of the Peak District National Park in our policies and in the work we do.
- Our staff, volunteers and Members will be trained and there will be mechanisms in place to ensure we design, procure and deliver accessible and inclusive services.

2. Our Workforce is supported within an inclusive work environment

- We will strive to increase potential routes into employment and volunteering for underrepresented groups into our workforce.
- We will strive to ensure consistent line management support including regular one to ones and meaningful annualised performance reviews where staff can discuss future ambition, promotion, reward, and recognition.
- We will engender a feeling of belonging within and across our teams and look for ways to improve inclusion and engagement.

3. Increased participation in governance and engagement

- By publishing our Equality plan on our website, we will make it available to the public.
- We will have in place mechanisms to enable a diverse range of groups and people to participate in an ongoing conversation about the National Park.

Performance Monitoring

[To be finalised with WMT] - We will annually monitor the delivery actions below and report progress against each.

Equality Action Plan 2024-28

1. The Peak District National Park welcomes everyone

Actions – we will		Responsible Teams	Time Scale
1.	Continue to develop mechanisms to ensure promotion and interpretation material takes into account accessibility and inclusivity as standard practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy & Performance (Comms) IT 	Business as usual (BAU) practice
2.	Continue to address a wide range of affordable housing needs to support our aim for Thriving Communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development & Enforcement Policy & Communities 	BAU Local Plan timescales
3.	Procure or develop equality training and awareness for all staff, volunteers and Members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Management Team (SMT) People Legal 	Annual
4.	Procure and deliver digital systems and services that comply with accessibility best practice and public sector regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT Legal 	BAU
5.	Continue to develop and deliver Management Plan projects in partnership with others that have positive benefits for those facing inequalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rangers Engagement Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL) 	BAU

2. Our Workforce is supported within an inclusive work environment

Actions – we will		Responsible Teams	Time scale
6.	Continuously review the Authority's recruitment and selection processes to ensure fairness, including looking at potential barriers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People 	BAU
7.	Maintain our Disability Confident organisation level 1 and progress towards becoming level 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Recruitment Managers 	March 2026
8.	Identify and develop a wellbeing offer that reflects current best practice to support staff and volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People Workforce Champions Volunteer VOICE 	May 2025
9.	Systematically review our People policies to ensure they reflect current best practice in terms of promoting an inclusive workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People 	Scheduled throughout 2024-28
11.	Source and develop a suite of training for line managers to equip them to manage diverse teams and promote an inclusive culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR 	BAU
12.	Continue to carry out and report on our workforce equality profile including gender pay gap (Public Sector specific equality duties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR 	Annually in April

Increased participation in governance and engagement

Actions – we will		Responsible Team	Time scale
13.	Create a Youth Voice/Board to connect young adults to the Peak District National Park Authority to enable a wide range of more diverse voices/opinions to address pressing environmental and social challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement 	March 2025
14.	Ensure visible and transparent equality consideration in our governance and decision-making processes with implications properly thought through on reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal 	BAU
20.	Support outreach mechanisms and initiatives that help the Authority develop an ongoing conversation about the National Park Management Plan with a diverse range of stakeholders and members of the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy & Performance 	March 2026

Appendix 1

Appendix 1

1.1 Peak District National Park – Visitor Survey Responses to Ethnicity:

Ethnic groups (as per 2021 Census of England and Wales)	2024 Survey	2015 Survey	2005 Survey
Asian or Asian British	7.6%	2%	1.2%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	7.4%	0%	0.3%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2.9%	1%	0.5%
Other ethnic group	1%	2%	1.3%
White	81.1%	91%	96.7%

The change in ethnic groups represented in the 2024 visitor survey are a result of a change in methodology. Face to face visitor survey was not affordable and an online panel sample was chosen to mirror the England demographic. This facilitates a more balanced share of the voice in terms of visitor feedback but is not designed to measure or reflect the actual ethnic profile of visitors. Different results would be expected if a face to face survey was conducted.

1.2 Ethnicity by Region as per the England Census 2021

Ethnicity Group	North West	East Midlands	West Yorkshire	West Midlands	Average (aforementioned PDNP main visitor catchment regions)	England & Wales (UK)
Asian or Asian British	8.4%	7.7%	15.9	13.3%	11.3%	9.3%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	2.3%	2.5%	3.1%	4.5%	3.1%	4.0%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2.2%	2.3%	2.8%	3.0%	2.5%	2.9%
Other ethnic group	1.5%	1.2%	1.7%	2.1%	1.6%	2.1%
White	85.6%	86.3%	76.6%	77%	81.8%	81.7%

1.3 Workforce equality profile

Established post numbers of **paid staff** @ 31 March 2025

	Full-time	Part-time	Fixed-term	Casual Workers	Total
Number of staff	126	99	24	213	225**
Full Time Equivalent	126	58	20.9	n/a	

* Staff who are fixed term also fall into either the full or part-time category. ** Excluding casual workers

Our employee* profile is:

Sex	Age	Race	Disability
50% female - 113	0.4% aged 20 or under	99.5% White British	3.1 % of employees disclosed that they consider themselves to have a disability
50% male - 112	8.0% aged 21-30		
	20.5% aged 31-40,		
	24.5% aged 41-50		
	30.2% aged 51-60		
	16.5% aged over 60		

*excludes casual workers

Total number of **volunteers** on Better Impact (database) @ 14 April 2025 is 1578

Sex	Age	Race	Disability
42% female - 668	5% aged 20 or under	86% White British	5% of volunteers consider themselves to have a disability
52% male - 824	26% aged 21-30	1% Black/Black British	
1.3% non-binary - 22	16% aged 31-40	2% Mixed/Multiple Ethnic groups	
0.3% prefer to self-describe - 5	13% aged 41-50	1% Other ethnic group	
3.7% not answered - 59	16% aged 51-60	4% Prefer not to say	
	23% aged over 60		

1.4 Gender pay gap

Organisations with more than 250 employees are required to publish the difference in pay between male and female employees. Although as at 31 March 2025 we only had 225 employees, below the legal threshold, as this is an important topic we have chosen to report our gender pay gap.

The gender pay gap should not be confused with unequal pay. Unequal pay is the unlawful practice of paying men and women differently for performing similar work or work of equal value. Our job evaluation scheme ensures that all jobs are evaluated and graded consistently to ensure equal pay for work of equal value, regardless of gender.

Difference in hourly rate:

	Number of employees	Mean Hourly rate	Median Hourly rate
Total	225	18.12	17.29
Male	112	18.36	17.29
Female	113	17.88	16.93

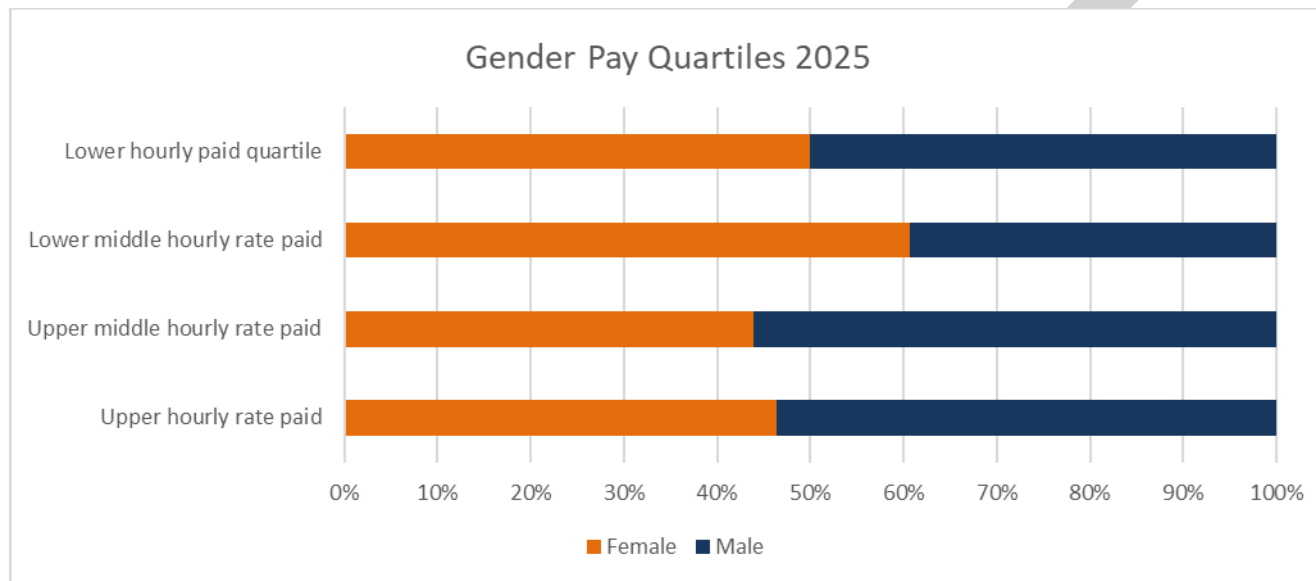
The mean pay gap is 2.65%. A positive percentage figure indicates that female employees have a lower average hourly rate of pay. In other words, when comparing hourly rates, women earn £97p for every £1.00 that men earn.

The median pay gap is 2.08%. A positive percentage figure indicates that female employees have a lower average hourly rate of pay. In other words, when comparing hourly rates, women earn £98p for every £1.00 that men

The mean average is useful as it places the same value on every number used, giving a good overall indication of the gender pay gap, but very large or small pay rates can 'dominate' and distort the answer. The median average is useful to indicate what the 'typical' situation is, i.e. in the middle and not distorted by very large or low pay rates.

Proportion of women in each pay quartile

Pay quartiles are calculated by splitting all employees in an organisation into four even groups according to their level of pay. Looking at the proportion of women in each quartile gives an indication of women's representation at different levels of the organisation.



We have a higher proportion of females in our lower middle hourly rates and a lower proportion of females in our upper middle hourly paid rates.

Bonus pay

The Authority does not have a Bonus Scheme, and as such no bonuses were paid.

8. OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT (2024-25)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide assurance that Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) management and performance is satisfactory through 2024-25.

2. Context

2.1 In October 2023 the OSH Adviser role was disestablished as a result of organisational change decision in July 2023 to make cost savings. Future day to day management of OSH matters is now provided by a combination of in-house competence, and the retained services of a strategic and expert OSH consultant on a routine basis, and other externally sourced OSH advice, as necessary.

2.2 After a competitive procurement process, we engaged National Parks Safety Service (NPSS) for a three-year period to provide strategic OSH advice as necessary, which substantially supports us in complying with our statutory health and safety obligations and in particular, the duty to satisfy the general requirements of the *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999* (MHSWR), Section 7, Health and Safety assistance. The contract commenced on 1 April 2024.

2.3 The service NPSS provides includes:

- Routine attendance at the quarterly Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee
- A quarterly comprehensive general OSH update of matters relevant to the work of the Authority
- Ad-hoc OSH advice via email and/or telephone, by request of the Authority's staff, not exceeding one half day per calendar month annual resource in total.

2.4 A period of organisational change which commenced in early January 2025 and continues to be implemented. has had an impact on the delivery of managing safely training and also delayed the timing of the Annual Workforce Survey.

3. Proposals

3.1 The work summarised in the annual report, to deliver good and continuously improving OSH management here at the Authority throughout 2024-25, is recognised

3.2 Proposals for specific matters to be addressed, as set out in the draft Health Safety and Wellbeing objectives for 2025-26, are approved.

4. Recommendations

1. The Occupational Safety and Health annual report 2024-25 (Appendix 1), is noted.

2. The Health Safety and Wellbeing objectives for 2025-26 (Appendix 3), are approved.

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the subordinate legislation thereunder, the Authority has a statutory duty to put adequate arrangements in place to control occupational health and safety risks. Inter alia, this includes a written health and safety policy; suitable and sufficient risk assessments; effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventative and protective measures arising from any risk assessment; effective training

programmes; and staff engagement. A process of continuous performance monitoring should be undertaken to ensure legal compliance and allow necessary improvements to be made to avoid criminal/civil penalties, insurance losses and/or reputational damage.

b. Financial

There are no additional financial implications, as funds are already allocated.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

This report demonstrates how we contribute to the Authority Plan Objective C - to have highly engaged, healthy and inclusive staff and volunteers. This objective has a target of a maximum of 9 days per year sickness level per staff member.

d. Risk Management

The risks will be managed through the governance arrangements as set out in the Occupational Safety and Health Policy (2025). This policy was approved as Authority Policy at the Programme and Resources Committee on 24 January 2025.

e. Net Zero

No issues

f. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

The Authority's policies and procedures must be compliant with the Authority's duties in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, and include the additional protections provided for in health and safety legislation for persons with protected characteristics. All risk assessments must identify and address any specific adverse equality impacts on a case by case basis.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

none

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Occupational safety & health annual report 2024-25

Appendix 2 – Site inspection audit 2024-25

Appendix 3 – draft Health Safety and Wellbeing Audit.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Theresa Reid, Head of People Management, 17 April 2025

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Phil Mulligan, Chief Executive Officer.



Occupational safety & health annual report 2024-25

1. Context

This report is primarily concerned with Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) performance during the period April 2024 – March 2025.

This is the first full performance year without a designated in-house OSH Adviser. An external OSH consultant has been engaged from 1 April 2024 for a three-year period to provide strategic OSH advice as necessary, which substantially supports the Authority in complying with its statutory health and safety obligations.

The routine safety management of the activities of the Authority and employees is the responsibility of the Authority, management and employees. This includes:

- Regular inspection and audit of Authority premises/workplaces and workforce
- Routine consideration of incident reports and any further investigation/follow up action
- Routine production and review of specific risk assessments

2. Governance

It is a legal requirement to have a suitable occupational safety and health policy setting out an organisation's intentions, administration and arrangements to deliver occupational safety and health. The policy is reviewed annually and the current version was ratified at the meeting of the Performance and Resources Committee on 24 January 2025.

From 1 April, the Chief Executive Officer assumed chair of the renamed Health Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) Committee. Quarterly meetings were held on:

11 April 2024	8 October 2024
9 July 2024	11 January 2025

The representation of all services at the HSW Committee together with Trade Union and Staff Committee representation continued. Including the chair and Head of People Management, there are eighteen safety representatives.

3. Site inspection/audit

After the disestablishment of the OSH Adviser, the Corporate Property Facilities Manager was identified as the most appropriate person to co-ordinate and facilitate Authority property inspections in conjunction with the Duty Holder at each site. The Facilities Manager provides an update on site inspections at each HSW Committee quarterly meeting.

Each site inspection follows the same format looking for evidence on the following:

- Legislation (insurance policies, risk assessments, Occupational Safety and Health policy, Health & Safety poster)
- Gas (if applicable)
- Lifting & WAH (working at height)
- Compressed air & Pressure Systems (if applicable)
- Water quality management
- Fire/risk assessment & emergency procedures
- Auditing & monitoring (previous evidence of OSH / Site Manager audits)
- Electrical, heating & ventilation
- Hazardous substances (COSHH – control of substances hazardous to health)

Where required health and safety items were either missing or out of date, the Facilities Manager introduced measures to put the item in place, or have it updated.

The Site Inspection Audit 2024-25 PowerPoint provides a more detailed summary on sites inspected, findings, and recommendations to the HSW Committee (Appendix 2).

4. Workforce survey

Staff and volunteers are normally surveyed annually during March to seek feedback on a number of key functions including health and safety. The survey is anonymous. This year, the survey was delayed and opened on 21 March. The survey will close on 22 April. An update will be brought to the P&R committee meeting.

In the survey, staff have been asked to respond from strongly disagree to strongly agree on three statements relating to safety and wellbeing:

- I feel safe in my work environment
- I know the relevant H&S policies and procedures relating to my work
- I feel my wellbeing at work is considered a priority

Volunteers have been asked to respond from strongly disagree to strongly agree on three statements relating to safety and wellbeing:

- I feel safe when volunteering
- I know the relevant H&S policies and procedures relating to my work
- I feel that my wellbeing while volunteering is considered a priority

5. Accidents and incidents 2024-25

The Authority incident reporting process was reviewed in quarter 1 and an improved process implemented on 1 July. New forms were created and introduced:

- OSH-AIR 1 – for accident, incident, near miss report
- OSH-AIR 2 – for follow up incident investigation, if required.

These forms are easily accessible to staff from the noticeboard on the HUB. Completed forms are emailed to the newly created email address OSH@peakdistrict.gov.uk where they are logged and acknowledged with a reference number. The form is assessed if any further investigation is needed

and if the incident is reportable to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). The HR team and Property team have access to this inbox to manage the log spreadsheet. Relevant parties to the type of incident or people involved, are also advised on receipt of the incident form.

Type of incident	Who advised	Why
Volunteer involved	Volunteering Manager	Welfare check on volunteer
Employee involved	Relevant HR Adviser	Welfare check on employee
PDNPA vehicle	Finance	Insurance purposes
Cycle hire	Legal	Preparedness for future claims
Trees	Woodland Manager	Intervention/inspection

Logged incidents are reviewed monthly at a meeting of key staff in Property and HR. Any incomplete forms are returned, and any follow up must be actioned before the next monthly review. The aim of the monthly review is to ensure sufficient information is reported and follow up actions are completed in a timely manner.

Incidents reported in 2024-25:

People affected	No.
Visitor/Member of the public	42
Staff/Member	25
Volunteer	14
Contractor	1
No-one (near miss)	3
Total reported	85

Classification of incident	No.
Near Miss	15
Fall from cycle	15
Slipped tripped or fell on the same Level	10
Another kind of incident	10
Vehicle incident (Staff)	8
Another kind of incident not H&S related	5
Public car park / vehicle incident	4
Hit something fixed or stationery	3
Hit by moving flying or falling object	3
Stings or bites	2
Static (electrical)	2
Injury whilst lifting, handling or carrying	2
Environmental incident	2

Cut/Stabbed by something	2
Hit by moving vehicle	1
Fall from a height (specify height)	1
Total Reported	85

There has been a significant increase in the number of incidents reported, up from 36 reported last year. Although the figures still suggest there is under reporting, the new forms and process have raised the safety profile and generated an increase in reporting.

6. Risk assessments

The Authority has identified 19 generic risk assessments most commonly used in our work activities. These generic risk assessments, when incorporated into specific risk assessments, support a consistent approach to managing hazards in our workplace and activities.

The HSW Committee has created a scheduled programme throughout the year to review the generic risk assessments. Each generic risk assessment is reviewed by a team closely associated with the identified risk. The team manager is required to ensure it is updated on good practice.

The reviewer provides an update on the review at the relevant the HSW Committee meeting. The generic risk assessments are published on the HUB.

Quarter	Generic Risk Assessment	Reviewer
1	Animals	Ranger Team
2	COSHH	Corporate Property
3	Driving at Work	Ranger Team
4	DSE	People Management
1	Fire Safety	Corporate Property
2	Lone Working	MFFP
3	Manual Handling	People Management
4	New & Expectant Mothers	People Management
1	Occupational Stress	People Management
2	Outdoor working	CMPT
3	Personal Safety (violence/aggression)	Planning
4	Tools and equipment	CMPT
1	Trees	Rural Estates
2	Underground and overhead services	CMPT
3	Work at height	CMPT
4	Work on or near highways	CMPT
1	Working on or near water	Engagement Team
2	Young Person & students	People Management
3	First Aid at Work	People Management

In October an audit of specific risk assessments commenced with members of the Wider Management Team asked to report back on what risk assessments their teams use, when they were created and last reviewed, and by who, where they are saved and whether hard copies are available.

In December a sub-group of the HSW committee met to review the findings of the audit, in summary there were:

- Some teams with no specific risk assessments
- Some teams with dated risk assessments
- A wide range of competence in carrying out assessments
- Specific risk assessments stored in different locations with accessibility a concern

The sub-group made a number of recommendations which were approved at the HSW Committee meeting in January, namely:

- Sub group to review current process and map out flowchart of best practice to be followed
- Implement risk assessment training for WMT and Safety representatives to ensure competence
- The sub-group to map out creation of specific risk assessment flowchart to bring about change
- Identify best location to file risk assessments in order to share learning and good practice

7. OSH management system - training

Day to day, routine management of OSH matters is the responsibility of all employees. All new starters are required to complete two online courses as part of their induction:

- Introduction to Health and Safety
- Fire Safety

All line managers have particular responsibility for ensuring that OSH requirements detailed in policy, procedures and risk assessments, are properly understood and complied with. A significant component of this responsibility is ensuring that suitable and sufficient levels of information, training, qualification and supervision are provided and maintained.

Globally recognised Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) accredited management training was introduced in 2019 and it was made available to all managers and key post holders. Post organisational restructure, the Senior Management Team reviewed the OSH skills profile for the management and identified the posts where IOSH Managing Safely training is essential.

IOSH Managing Safely training planned for quarter 4 was postponed and rescheduled for quarter 1, due to the impact of organisational change on managers' capacity and availability.

8. Health and wellbeing

Since April 2022, wellbeing and sickness reporting has been a standing item on the committee agenda when we achieved Silver level of the 'We invest in wellbeing' accreditation. From 1 April the Health and Safety Committee became known as the Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee to recognise the significance of this agenda.

Our performance target is to have on average no more than 9 days lost to sickness absence per year, per full time equivalent (fte). The total amount of days lost to sickness per fte for 2024/25 was 7.91 (2.08 in Q1, 2.5 in Q2, 1.57 in Q3 and 1.76 in Q4).

In 2024/25 there were 363 occurrences of sickness absence. The top reasons for absence occurrences were:

Reason	Number of occurrences
Cough/cold	84
Vomiting, Diarrhoea, Nausea	39
Other	37

In total, 10,736 hours were lost to sickness absence. The top loss of hours was due to:

Reason	Number of occurrences
Operations/recovery	16
Stress	10
Other	37

There were 16 staff with long terms absences in this year, 7 of which involved recovery from a planned operation.

In total, an average of 1.84 days was lost per fte as a result of a mental health related illness. This equates to 23.26% of time lost overall, a similar level to that of the previous year. There were 14 staff absent due to mental health in 2024/25, an increase from 8 in the previous 2 years, and 4 of those developed into becoming long term absences.

Staff continue to have access to an Employee Assistance Programme which includes free confidential counselling and a 24/7 Virtual GP Service. During the year we held a *Health & Wellbeing Day*, providing access to NHS Health Checks, massage chairs and stretch sessions targeted to both those who work in the field and desk-based roles. We have continued to promote national events such as Mental Health Awareness Week and Financial Awareness Day. We renewed our Mindful Employer commitment for the 11th year in January and we continue to support the provision of social activities through staff groups.

9. Objectives for 2025-26

In January, members of both the HSW and SMT were asked to identify the priorities for safety management in 2025-26, and have been consulted on the subsequently drafted objectives:

1. Management has sufficient health and safety knowledge and competence to ensure compliance with our legal obligations
2. To raise the profile of occupational safety and enhance staff competence to undertake their work in safety

3. The Authority has a robust process assessing and managing risk
4. To ensure appropriate generic and specific risk assessments are in place and accessible

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Objectives 2025-26 document sets out more details on the activities and measures (Appendix 3).

10. Recommendations

1. The work summarised in the annual report, to deliver good and continuously improving OSH management here at the Authority throughout 2024-25, is recognised and noted.
2. Proposals for specific matters to be addressed, as set out in the draft Health Safety and Wellbeing objectives for 2025-26, are approved.

Theresa Reid – Head of People Management – 31 March 2025

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The below table shows the PDNPA sites audited

Duty Holder	Site	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Martin Hill	Aldern House	16/01/2025			
Sue Beswick	Bakewell VC		16/05/2024		
Chris Cole	Ashford Depot		16/05/2024		
Helen Carrington	Millers Dale	N/A			
Sue Beswick	Castleton		22/05/2024		
Martin Hill	Edale Moorland Centre				16/12/2024
Andy Farmer	Brunts Barn				02/10/2024
Helen Bower	Parsley Hay CH	17/05/2024			
Helen Bower	Ashbourne CH	17/05/2024			
Helen Bower	Hume End	T.B.A			
Martin Hill	Pump Farm	T.B.A			
Helen Carrington	North Lees Campsite		21/05/2024		
Mark Anderson	North Lees Barn				
Helen Bower	Fairholmes CH				01/10/2024
Andy Farmer	Fairholmes Ranger Base				01/10/2024
Lorna Fisher	Trentabank SK11 ONS			25/09/2024	
Martin Hill	Langsett	T.B.A			
Lorna Fisher	Longdendale	T.B.A			

All audits followed the same format looking for evidence based on the below headings.

Legislation (insurance policies, risk assessments, H&S policy, H&S poster)

Gas (if applicable)

Lifting & WAH (working at height)

Compressed air & Pressure Systems (if applicable)

Water quality management

Fire/risk assessment & emergency procedures

Auditing & monitoring (previous evidence of H&S / Site Manager audits)

Electrical, heating & ventilation

Hazardous substances (COSHH)

Site Audits

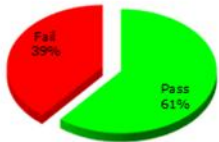
From each audit a Statutory Compliance Report was produced as per samples below

SITE MANAGEMENT CONTROL LIST STATUTORY COMPLIANCE REPORT

Contract / Site:	Trentabank	Reporting Month:	Sep-24
Elements Available:	68	Elements Applicable:	23
		Non Compliances Raised:	9

Page 43

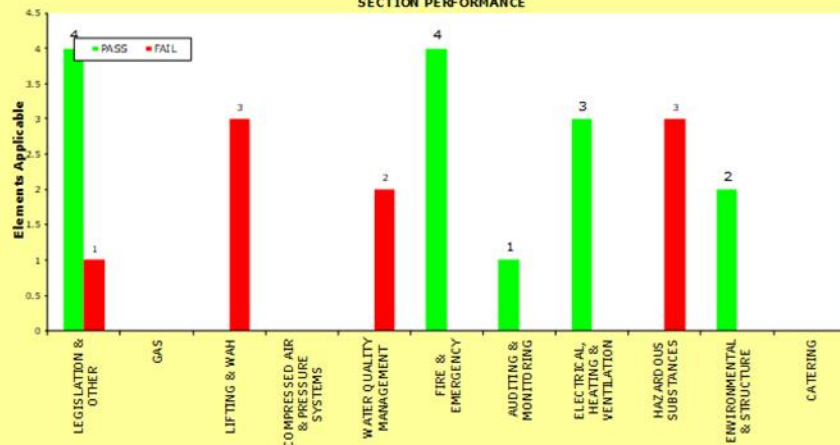
OVERALL SITE MANAGEMENT
CONTROL LIST RATING



NON COMPLIANCE OWNERSHIP



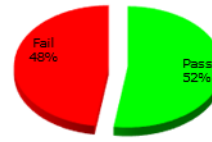
SECTION PERFORMANCE



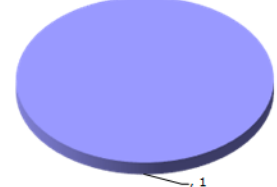
SITE MANAGEMENT CONTROL LIST STATUTORY COMPLIANCE REPORT

Contract / Site:	Derwent Cycle Hire	Reporting Month:	Oct-24
Elements Available:	68	Elements Applicable:	21
		Non Compliances Raised:	9

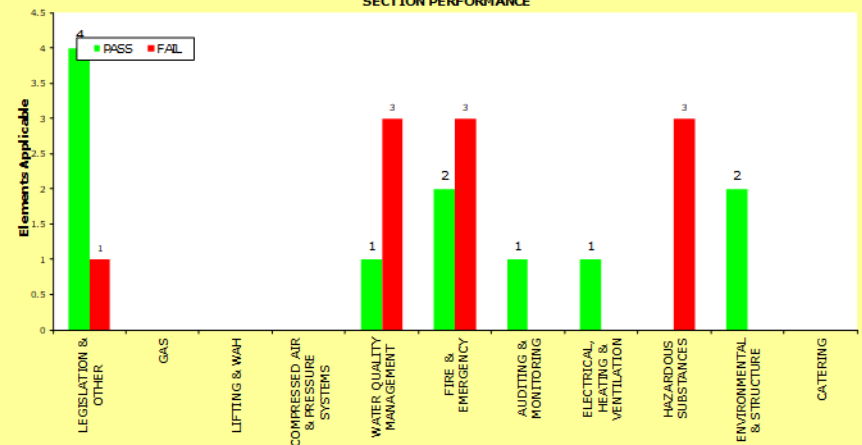
OVERALL SITE MANAGEMENT
CONTROL LIST RATING



NON COMPLIANCE OWNERSHIP



SECTION PERFORMANCE



Each completed audit identified the main H&S items that were either missing or out of date.

No evidence of previous H&S audits either on the Hub or on site

H&S Policy missing or an out of date statement on site

Page 44
No Public Liability Certificate on display

Site Specific Risk Assessments out of date or missing

Monthly water temps missing or out date

Fire Risk Assessments missing or out of date

No Inventory of PDNPA COSHH Substances

No COSHH Assessments or assessments out of date

No PUWER (provision and use of work equipment regs) checks for machinery available

Following the audits the below items have either been updated or completed

A full COSHH inventory now available on the Hub

COSHH Risk Assessments for substances identified now on the Hub

H&S Policy statements on site

Public Liability Certificate on display

Employers Liability Certification on display

Site Specific Risk Assessments updated by the site Responsible person

Monthly water temps carried out by CPT

Recommendations

Property Managers to audit their sites on a 6 monthly basis, findings to be discussed at H&S committee meetings

Site specific risk assessments to be reviewed and updated by 1st January each year

Ensure all staff and Managers understand their role and responsibilities in regards to H&S

Heads of Service to carry out spot checks of risk assessments etc

Heads of Service / Line Managers to identify any specific H&S training requirements for staff



Health Safety and Wellbeing Objectives 2025-26

Summary of objective	Detail	Measure/end result
Management has sufficient health and safety knowledge and competence to ensure compliance with our legal obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of IOSH Managing Safely training or refresher courses Provision of Risk assessment training 	100% completed IOSH Managing Safely courses by post holders where training identified as essential All managers risk assessment trained and relevant specific risk assessments completed
To raise the profile of occupational safety and enhance staff competence to undertake their work in safety	This year's Employee Performance Review (EPR) corporate objective, demonstrating the Care value, is 'to take responsibility for the day-to-day operational safety management of yourself and others working with you' .	All staff are confident and understand their responsibilities on health and safety matters including risk assessments and incident reporting
The Authority has a robust process assessing and managing risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process to report incidents is promoted amongst the workforce on the HUB and at Staff Briefings Review of specific risk assessment (SRAs) templates Create guidance notes on how to complete SRA Identify location for filing current SRAs to enhance access and learning from others 	All staff know their responsibility to promptly report any accident, near miss or violent incident to the appropriate line manager using the incident report form (OSH-AIR1)
To ensure appropriate generic and specific risk assessments are in place and accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduled review generic risk assessments Undertake audit of specific risk assessments in Q4 	Any audit or assessment of health and safety is at least 'Reasonable Assurance' in line with 2022/23 Audit

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9. ACCESS FOR ALL FUNDING

1. Purpose

The report provides an update on funding for the Defra Access for All programme. For 2025/26, the funding available to the Peak District is approximately £255,899. The funding is for capital infrastructure improvements for inclusive access.

Members are asked to delegate acceptance of this funding to the Head of Landscape & Engagement in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer/Finance Manager.

2. Context

2.1 The Defra Access for All programme commenced in November 2022. Grant funding of £287,000 over 3 years was approved at the September 2022 Authority meeting (Min 81/22). The funding was allocated as follows

- Year 1: 2022/23 - £131,164.81 (46%)
- Year 3: 2024/25 - £155,847.91 (54%)

2.2 The full amount of funding allocated was spent in Years 1 and 3. No funding was received in Year 2. Details of the delivery in 2022/23 was reported to Programme and Resources Committee in April 2023 as part of the Welcoming Place Aim Overview (Min 18/23). The delivery for 2024/25 is set out in Appendix 1 and forms part of the update to the Welcoming Place report to this meeting.

3. Proposals

3.1 The funding provides for accessibility improvements, operating at the level of each individual Protected Landscape with local flexibility for their areas of focus.

3.2 The funding is for capital expenditure only. This could cover equipment, facilities, routes, signage, interpretation, filming, mapping, and design. It could also include external professional fees and for the capitalisation of staff time where directly attributable to the creation or acquisition of an asset. No revenue funding has been made available for the appointment of project officers or for administration and other general overhead costs. Details are set out in Appendix 2.

3.3 Expenditure would be allocated in accordance with the principles set out by Defra and the objectives of the Authority and to meet the Authority's standing orders. Expenditure in excess of £5k (excluding VAT) would be subject to the receipt of quotes or full tenders in accordance with the Authority's standing orders. However, an exemption to standing orders would be required where works to provide for accessibility improvements are undertaken by a Highway Authority on their assets (rather than by external contractors following a tender process) as such works are part of a common undertaking. Where this is an option, this would be undertaken in accordance with a Service Level Agreement.

3.4 The Peak District Local Access Forum and disability groups will continue to be involved in the infrastructure improvements, accompanied by close working with Highway Authorities, land owners and managers, and communities. Joint working with the other National Parks for the combined ambition to develop and promote the accessibility offer in Protected Landscapes also continues.

3.5 The acceptance of the Access for All funding would be by way of an uplift to the Defra core grant agreement and would be subject to the terms of the core grant agreement and the requirements of the framework for this funding. Previously, there have been additional funds identified, as a result of underspend by other Protected Landscapes. For this eventuality, delegation of the acceptance of funding up to £350,000 is sought.

3.6 The Chair of this committee has been consulted on and confirms approval to apply, accept, and spend this funding.

4. Recommendations:

- 4.1 That Committee supports the bid for and approves acceptance of Access for All funding for the project described in this report of up to a maximum of £350,000 for the period ending March 2026. Approval of the terms of funding is delegated to the Head of Landscape and Engagement in consultation with the Finance Manager/Chief Finance Officer (or such other person appointed under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972).
- 4.2 That authority be delegated to the Authority Solicitor to enter into and determine the terms and conditions of the funding agreement for the project in the best interests of the Authority.
- 4.3 That approval be granted to incur expenditure up to £350,000 as detailed in the report, pursuant to Part 3, C3.(c), subject to compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders.
- 4.4 That authority be delegated to the Authority Solicitor to enter into and determine the terms and conditions of any contracts required for the project, subject to a compliant procurement exercise and tender evaluation being carried out as required in line with Standing Orders.
- 4.5 That approval be granted to exempt Standing Orders in respect of the delivery by Highway Authorities of works, services, and supplies in respect of the project.
- 4.6 That authority be delegated to the Authority Solicitor to enter into and determine the terms and conditions of Service Level Agreements with Highways Authorities in the best interests of the Authority.
- 4.7 That this project be monitored by the Audit, Budget, and Project Risk Management Group or any equivalent group or committee.

5. Corporate Implications

a) Legal –

- i) Pursuant to section 65(5) of the Environment Act 1995, the Authority has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the accomplishment of its statutory purposes. This project falls within the Authority's statutory purposes. This power is subject to any express statutory or public law constraints which should be considered holistically and as the project progresses.
- ii) As the funding for the project is anticipated to exceed the sum of £200,000, approval to apply for and accept the grant and thereafter to incur the expenditure is required to be submitted to this committee. pursuant to Part 7, delegation 7.C-2(a) and 2(b) and Part 3, C3.(c), respectively. In addition, the Chair of Programmes and Resources Committee has been consulted and has given approval to apply, accept, and incur the expenditure.
- iii) Exemptions from Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders where there is a written arrangement to provide works, goods or services as a common undertaking requires the approval of this committee where the value of the contract (or service level agreement) exceeds £150,000 (Part 2, CP13.1 and CP13.2.4)

b) Financial - Funding would relate to capital expenditure only. Works would need to have been completed or items purchased and delivered by March 2026, if the allocation is to be met. Any monies not spent by this time would be subject to a clawback provision.

c) National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan - It is considered that the funding would meet the Management Plan's outcome of a Welcoming Place where all are inspired to enjoy, care for and connect to its special qualities by improving access so that everyone can

experience its special qualities, including those with limited mobility, and to build up the confidence of those who do not feel able to visit.

d) Risk Management - There are four risks:

- (i) Programme Design & Spend – There is no flexibility on year spend. The funding would need to be spent within the financial year or returned to Defra.
- (ii) Core Grant – there is a risk that Defra would use the funding to state that they have increased the funding for National Parks and AONBs, despite a cut in real terms.
- (iii) Delivery – the funding is for capital expenditure only. The continuing ability to handle significant project expenditure relating to infrastructure improvements remains important in order to meet grant and contractual conditions and in relation to the statutory functions of the Authority for Access and Rights of Way and Planning.
- (iv) Reputation - There is a reputational risk of not delivering disability access improvements, resulting from any delays to the approval/receipt of the funding.

e) Net Zero - The work on active travel and a plan for walking, wheeling, and cycling provides a mechanism for the Authority to engage with visitors to the National Park regarding issues associated with climate change and for engagement with actions to protect its assets. The funding will not directly contribute to carbon net zero targets. The Authority recognises that for some people options are more limited but would not seek to promote unsustainable transport decisions

f) Equality, Diversity, & Inclusion - The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 have been met in the consideration of actions and the Authority will continue to have regard to its duties under the Act to address inequalities in its visitor and audience profile.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Defra Access for All - 2024/25

Appendix 2 – Areas of Spend

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Sue Smith, Access & Rights of Way Officer, 15 April 2025

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Suzanne Fletcher, Head of Landscape & Engagement

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- ACCESS FOR ALL FUNDING 2024/25

Allocation

1. Defra's Access for All programme provides capital funding for the removal of barriers to access 'to make Protected Landscapes more accessible for people of all ages and abilities and from all socio-economic backgrounds, to make them what Glover called, "places for everyone". In 2024/25, The Authority received £155,847.91.

Areas of Spend

2. In Year 3 of the programme, the funding has been used to build, inform, and support through:
 - Creating and enhancing Miles without Stiles routes
 - Developing facilities at key locations and improving online information
 - Increasing the number of people participating.
3. In Year 3 the full amount of the funding was again spent. The funding was also used to raise further funding of £26.2k via the Peak District Foundation towards the provision of a Changing Place at Parsley Hay. This has allowed for additional accessibility projects to be delivered.
4. Expenditure in Year 3 includes:
 - Surfacing and widening routes and gate installation
 - A changing place, campsite facilities, resting places, and tactile interpretation panels
 - Trikes and fast charging e-bikes

More Miles

5. The path surfacing works at the [Goyt Miles without Stiles](#) has near doubled the length of this accessible route. The existing route has been enhanced by funding from the Foundation for maintenance along the existing 1 km section. At Hurdlow a section of the High Peak Trail which forms part of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail has been widened. At Fernilee Reservoir, new gates are being installed for a new Miles without Stiles route and access by cyclists and horse riders.

More Places

6. The funding has provided a Changing Place at Parsley Hay Cycle Hire. Works have also been undertaken to improve accessibility at two shelters, provide a level surfaced access to a wood and picnic place, and for tactile interpretation panels, and seating. At North Lees, a hoist, washing-up area, and a ramp to the accessible camping pod has been provided.

More Mobility

7. New fast charging e-bikes have been provided at Parsley Hay and elsewhere to accompany the trampers and provide for short-term hires. Two trikes have also been purchased to complement the one provided in Year 1.

Summary

8. In Year 3 of the funding, approximately £31.5k has been spent on routes, £83k on facilities, £22k on equipment, and £18.5k on information. The funding has delivered access for all comprising:
- 3.23 km of accessible paths
 - 3 accessible gates and gaps
 - 3 accessible routes with new or improved wayfinding
 - 2 proposed Miles without Stiles routes
 - 1 Changing Place
 - 14 resting places
 - 2 trikes
 - 11 e-bikes
9. **Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date**
Sue Smith, Access & Rights of Way Officer, April 2025

Completed Projects – Year 3

More Miles

Item	Details	Comments
Millers Dale	Surfacing path on platform & seating	Link from Goods Shed and Changing Place avoiding car park. Also seating area. Supports Accessibility Hub development.
Goyt	Vegetation removal, resurfacing & gate	Extended MwS route. Also identified as proposed active travel network. Maintenance on existing route funded by the Peak District Foundation.
Hurdlow	Widening & resurfacing High Peak Trail	Improvements along a multi-use trail. Part funding. Also supports development of White Peak Loop and active travel.
Fernilee	Replacing kissing gates.	Gates with increased width for all users. Proposed Miles without Stiles route and permissive bridleway. Also identified as proposed active travel network.
Mapping of routes	For new Miles without Stiles routes	In-house mapping for extended Miles without Stiles route at the Goyt. Published in the Welcome Guide.

More Places

Item	Details	Comments
Parsley Hay Changing Place	Design and construction of Changing Place	Bespoke design to complement the heritage of the former rail trails. Part funded by the Peak District Foudnation.
Tissington and	Tactile interpretation	Signage which welcomes all users and shows

High Peak Trail panels	panels	location, facilities, and distances between car parks and cycle hire locations. Also supports active travel.
Hurdlow weighbridge	Surfaced access ramp from the Trail	Ramp installation to former weighbridge shelter near to Parsley Hay. Accessible by tramper.
Hartington shelter	Re-roofing, access ramp, rail, and seating	Upgraded resting place/shelter at mid-point between Parsley Hay and Hartington Station.
Trails benches	8 benches	Additional seating.
Ruby Wood	Surfacing to picnic area	Extends the MwS route into the picnic area. Accompanied by Peak District Foundation funding to level the access from the Trail.
North Lees Campsite	Hoist, washing-up facilities, automatic door opener, ramp to camping pod, benches.	Improvements and provision of facilities to complement a stay in the accessible camping pod.

More Mobility

Item	Details	Comments
Inclusive cycles	2 items	At Parsley Hay
E-bikes	11 fast-charging	To allow for repeat and short hires for accompanying the trampers and inclusive cycles.
Wheelchair bike battery	1 item	Second battery to allow for repeat hires.

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AREAS OF SPEND

The Defra Access Funding is capital funding. Capital spend is defined a one-off itemised cost where funding is provided to purchase or invest in a physical item or asset (capital item) to achieve a stated outcome, in this case to improve accessibility for all.

Some examples of what would be classed as capital expenditure, include access infrastructure, buildings, machinery and equipment, for example:

- Disabled toilet facilities
- Replacement of gates
- Additional seating areas
- Improved access to waterways for the mobility-impaired
- Widening and resurfacing of paths for multi-user use
- Purchase of trampers, mobility scooters, electric bikes and storage/charging facilities
- Purchase of specially adapted tools and personal protective equipment for volunteers
- Provision of accessible signage and visitor information, physical and digital
- Creation of a new or improvement of an existing piece of access infrastructure, such as building a toilet or fitting a new accessible gate or adapting a minibus or visitor centre.
- Research and development, defined in budgeting guidance as:

“Creative work undertaken on a systematic basis to increase the stock of knowledge, and use of this stock of knowledge for the purpose of discovering or developing new products, including improved versions or qualities of existing products, or discovering new or more efficient processes of production”.

Some examples that are not classifiable as capital, include:

- Removal of a stile - unless it's being replaced by an accessible gate
- Hire of a minibus
- Staff time that is not directly attributable to creation of an asset

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10. LANDSCAPE AND NATURE RECOVERY AIM OVERVIEW

1. Purpose

To inform Members about the Authority's progress in landscape and nature recovery since January 2024 and what this means for the future.

2. Context

2.1 Members agreed at the 22 July 2022 Authority meeting to align the programmes for Programmes and Resources to the National Park Management Plan 2023-28 aims (minute reference 65/22). The same paper also agreed that landscape and nature recovery would be the second aim reported to Programmes and Resources. This paper fulfils that on-going commitment.

2.2 Key issues:

2.2.1 This report is the landscape and nature recovery theme update report in the Programmes and Resources Committee programme for 2024/25. This follows the climate change update report considered by Members in September 2024.

2.2.2 The National Park Management Plan vision includes the Peak District National Park (PDNP) being exemplary in its response to nature recovery and that its special qualities and resilience as a living landscape should be significantly enhanced.

2.2.3 The 25 Year Environment Plan 2018 set out the framework and vision for what the Government wants to do to improve the environment within a generation. The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (EIP23) revised the original plan and set out the plan to deliver the ten goals with the "apex" goal of thriving plants and wildlife. In July 2024 the Secretary of State for Defra announced a rapid review of EIP23 with an [interim statement](#) in January 2025 which highlighted further improvements later in 2025.

2.2.4 The Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF) was launched in January 2024. Work on the indicators continues with a focus on the three targets to be set locally: 1. Area of Priority habitats, 7. Area of restored peat, 8. Tree canopy and Woodland cover. National parks are collaborating to produce draft figures for these three targets to assess the scope to meet the overall target. Data to support the measurement and setting of all targets is yet to be formally released by Natural England. The strategy team have been asked to work with NE and colleagues from National Landscapes to sense check both PLTOF target data and the supporting statistics prior to release. It is anticipated that the full data set will be available by the end of April and Members will be given a detailed presentation on the PLTOF targets at the 9th May forum meeting.

2.2.5 Recent Government announcements about changes to agricultural property relief for inheritance tax, the unexpected pausing and review of Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMs) Capital Works Grant and the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) have impacted negatively on farmer and land manager confidence in the direction of travel towards enhanced delivery for nature and climate. The closure of the SFI scheme to new applications without notice has left many farmers now unable to access annual land management payments even if they are managing land appropriately for nature and were planning to make an SFI application. Some farmers are having to consider continuing with a focus on food production in the interim at least.

- 2.2.6 The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme has continued to be extremely successful both nationally and locally, please see [FiPL National Report 2025](#). This has resulted in additional funding for FiPL advisers and admin officers and a £1.6 Million project fund for Peak District farmers and land managers in 2025/26. The importance of trusted local advice, local flexibility, bespoke projects and the farmer led Local Assessment Panels continues to be recognised. Defra is exploring further project funding for 2026/27 and how the learnings from FiPL can be taken forward in future ELM schemes. However, FiPL is focused on capital projects and has only limited funding for revenue spend i.e. annual land management payments so cannot fill the current gap for SFI or Higher tier.
- 2.2.7 In January 2025 the Government launched a consultation on a new approach to Land Use which provides stakeholders with the opportunity to help shape the proposed new Land Use Framework. The framework will provide the principles, advanced data and tools to support decision-making by local government, landowners, businesses, farmers and nature groups to make the most of our land. This will help deliver the different objectives we have for England's finite land, including growing food, building homes and restoring nature at a time of global uncertainty and a changing climate. A range of Authority officers are supporting National Parks England to produce a response to the consultation which closes on the 25 April 2025. A consultation to require a license to burn on peat over 30 cms depth within Less Favoured Areas (currently over 40 cms depth and only within S
- 2.2.8 SSIs) was launched in March 2025. This would significantly extend the area over which heather/grass burning requires a license, in order to protect carbon stores, biodiversity and water quality. It is proposed that the Authority contributes to a National Parks England response. Officers have also recently contributed to a review of the Heather & Grass Burning Code set up by Defra/NE.
- 2.2.9 Since the January 2024 Programmes and Resources meeting the Authority has undertaken many activities, both on our own and in partnership, that assist in meeting our landscape and nature recovery ambitions. These are outlined at section 3 below the majority of which will continue to be delivered and developed through 2025-26 together with additional actions detailed in the Authority Plan 2023-28.

3. Proposals

3.1 As Programmes and Resources will be aware from the reports to this Committee in January 2024 the Authority is already undertaking many activities, both on our own and in partnership, that assist in delivering our landscape and nature recovery ambitions. The summary below updates Members on the activities we have focused our resources on since January 2024 and look to continue and develop.

3.2 Influencing:

- 3.2.1 The work of the Authority's Officers at national stakeholder meetings representing both the English National Park Authorities and the PDNPA.
- 3.2.2 The Peak District Nature Recovery Plan will continue to be used to influence the development and complement the six-future county-based LNRS's. Please see the Nature Recovery Update at Appendix 1 for more details.
- 3.2.3 Policy & Communities, Land & Nature, Legal and Planning officers have been working together to consider the future role of the Authority and future implications of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). A future report will be brought for Members to consider whether or not the Authority should become a Responsible Body for BNG.

- 3.2.4 Delivering the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Programme for Defra, learnings from which continue to feed into the design of the ELM schemes. The future of FiPL beyond 2025/26 is also being considered by Defra. Please see Appendix 2 FiPL Case Studies 2024.
- 3.2.5 Existing Landscape scale partnerships – Moors for the Future, the evolving Morridge Hill Country Landscape Recovery Pilot building on the successful partnership working of the South West Peak Landscape Partnership.
- 3.2.6 The Authority convened a ‘retreat’ with key moorland managers, representatives and stakeholders to explore the role of moorland in nature recovery. The retreat also established principles as to how to work together as part of a refreshed approach and will be followed by site visits during 2025/26.
- 3.2.7 The Authority’s own land continues to demonstrate environmental land management e.g. the Warslow Moors Estate as part of the Morridge Hill Country ELM Landscape Recovery Pilot Project including Pump Farm as a demonstration farm and nature recovery hub. The acquisition, survey and management of a strategic piece of land at Boarsgrove has facilitated enhanced environmental delivery on the Warslow Moors Estate.
- 3.2.8 The European Diploma for Protected Areas, held by the PDNP since 1966 was renewed in 2024. The Diploma is awarded by the Council of Europe (CoE) in recognition of “natural and semi-natural areas and landscapes of exceptional European importance for the preservation of biological, geological and landscape diversity and which are managed in an exemplary way.” There are currently 67 Diploma-holding areas throughout Europe, with just 4 others in the UK. For more info about the Diploma see [European Diploma - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats \(coe.int\)](https://convention.coe.int/t/t1995/Convention/Convention_en.asp).

3.3 Delivering:

- 3.3.1 The work of the Authority’s farm advisers with farmers and land managers brokering national agri-environment schemes and supporting the delivery of FiPL has continued. However, the temporary withdrawal of the Capital Grant Scheme (CGS) in November 2024 and the sudden withdrawal of SFI March 2025 has had an impact on delivery and successful applications. Farm advisers completed and/or provided advice and support for 6 SFI applications/claims, 21 CGS applications/claims, 10 Countryside Stewardship Mid-Tier claims and 14 FiPL applications. The FiPL team also supported 14 SFI applications which were mostly FiPL transfers and 4 CGS applications. FiPL also funded between 25-30 1:1 SFI advice visits by external advisers.
- 3.3.2 Existing Landscape scale partnerships – Moors for the Future, South West Peak Landscape Partnership (through legacy projects) and the White Peak Partnership.
- 3.3.3 Landscape Recovery Pilot projects -
 - 3.3.3.1 Morridge Hill Country Landscape Recovery Project – now almost one year into the two-year development phase the project is further developing the relationship between the Authority, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, the Ministry of Defence, their tenants and private land owners. This in turn will ultimately leading to a longer-term delivery phase with both public and private sector funding. Please see Appendix 3 for details.

- 3.3.3.2 White Peak Landscape Recovery Project - whilst no Defra funding has been secured through the Landscape Recovery Pilot scheme the farmer Steering Group has been expanded and has worked with an external consultant, Natural England and the Authority to explore the options for green finance in the White Peak and begin the development of a nature recovery plan at a farm level. This has been funded through a grant of £50,000 from Natural England through their Protected Sites Strategy Pilot and £15,000 from the Authority. This work will continue into 2025/26.
- 3.3.4 A range of smaller-scale projects such as the invasive species project, clearing Himalayan Balsam from the Dove catchment.
- 3.3.5 The findings of the Authority led ELM Test & Trial on the role of National Park Authorities as local convener and in local delivery continues to be used and has enabled Authority officers to participate in Defra working groups exploring future farmer advice and facilitation.
- 3.3.6 FiPL has continued to deliver farmer and land manager projects under the four themes of climate, nature, people and place. Successful delivery of FiPL across all 44 protected landscapes has led to additional funding and an additional fifth year for the programme. Please see Appendix 2 FiPL Case Studies 2024. FiPL funding has been used to support 4 traditional building projects of which 2 involved change of use for diversification projects supporting the farm business, 1 building had protected species (bats) with most buildings used by other bird species. FiPL funding also supported 1 project involving a Grade II listed limekiln.
- 3.3.7 The Woodland Trust Partnership extending and growing the arrangements for small-scale woodland creation using Nature for Climate funds. Approximately 81 ha of woodland created to date including 30 ha in 2024/25.
- 3.3.8 Authority owned land is also one of the key delivery mechanisms for landscape and nature recovery for example rewetting of a large proportion of moorland. In 2023/24 over £440,000 was secured for the rewetting and sphagnum planting on seven moorland blocks extending to approximately 250 ha on the Warslow Moors Estate. During 2024/25 £45,000 of sphagnum planting has been delivered with the rewetting works planned for 2025/26.
- 3.3.9 One project to underground overhead electric wires was completed last year, in the historic landscape around Roystone Grange. 4 further schemes are being developed with electricity supply companies, at North Lees Hall/Bronte Cottage, Arbor Low, Gradbach/The Roaches and in partnership with the National Trust at Longshaw. In Longdendale, the Landscape Enhancement Initiative has funded walling, woodland enhancement and improvements to the Trans-Pennine Trail to help offset the visual impact of the high-voltage electricity lines.
- 3.3.10 Recently developed artificial intelligence interpretation (AI) of aerial photographs for land cover monitoring has produced the PDNP Land Cover 2023 Map. This data continues to be used successfully in a number of areas such as funding bids. Natural Capital and species modelling has been developed for the North Lees Estate and the Morridge Hill Country Landscape Recovery Pilot area.

3.4 Regulatory:

- 3.4.1 Regulatory work, notably planning, including developing the Authority's approach for the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). 324 ecological consultations were dealt with in 2024, including a significant number of applications requiring BNG. Work to date suggests that mandatory BNG from development within the National Park is likely to deliver very limited biodiversity enhancement, and officers are exploring ways of maximizing environmental benefits whilst minimizing the burden

- on both applicants and the Authority. It is planned to brief Members on BNG at the Member Forum in May and to offer recommendations for Member consideration at a later Authority meeting.
- 3.4.2 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations compliance enquiries, advice and support including updated guidance notes. Farm advisers have dealt with 11 compliance enquiries involving loss of habitat and drystone walls and 1 formal screening consultation. A revised EIA Advisory Note specific to the Peak District has been developed and agreed with Natural England, please see Appendix 4. Farm advisers have also had input to a consultation on NE's proposed future revisions to the EIA guidance on GOV.UK.
- 3.4.3 Land management consultations include 24 Felling Licences, 7 England Woodland Creation Offers, 15 other informal woodland consultations, 1 Hedgerow Regulations, 1 Section 156 Land disposal, 1 Environment Agency water discharge/abstraction, 31 SFI/Countryside Stewardship Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England (SHINE) review requests.
- 3.4.4 Land management consultations include 21 felling Licences, 3 England Woodland Creation Offers, 1 Hedgerow Regulations, 3 EA water discharge/abstraction/other works together with a range of informal consultations for projects such as the White Rose Forest, Sustainable Farming Incentive etc.
- 3.5** Partners also continue to deliver for landscape and nature recovery, often with input from Authority officers, for example:
- 3.5.1 Sheffield Moors Landscape Partnership.
- 3.5.2 Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust managing the recently purchased Ughill
- 3.5.3 Farm close to Bradfield with a nature recovery focus.
- 3.5.4 Derwent, Dove and other Catchment Partnerships.
- 3.5.5 The Natural England (NE) led partnership Ravine Woodland Project continues to mitigate the impacts of Ash Dieback on the internationally designated Ash woodlands of the Peak District dales.
- 3.5.6 NE continues to work towards our collective ambitions for nature recovery in the White Peak primarily through initiatives delivered by Catchment Sensitive Farming projects and through the Peak District Dales Protected Sites Strategy Pilot. In the Dark and South-West Peak the focus is on the moorland protected sites. NE has initiated the process of supporting farmers and land managers with applications to the newly released Higher Tier Scheme but capacity issues means this will only deliver 12 agreements across the Peak District in the first phase of work in 2025/26.
- 3.5.7 The National Trust are developing their High Peak Estate ELM Landscape Recovery project with funding from Defra. They are starting a similar process of vision development and tenant engagement in the White Peak.
- 3.5.8 Wild Peak project led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.
- 3.5.9 Derwent Living Forest (kickstarted by Derwent Connections) led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.
- 3.5.10 Derbyshire Species Recovery Group, and various species or habitat specific groups, e.g. woodland, water vole, beavers, willow tits.
- 3.5.11 Cheshire Wildlife Trust is delivering small-scale woodland creation with Nature for climate funds in the Cheshire part of the National Park. This includes the first agro-forestry scheme in the Peak District.

- 3.5.12 Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is working with City of Trees to deliver a similar programme of small woodland creation in Derbyshire, in and out of the National Park.
- 3.5.13 Peakland Environmental Farmers is a group of about 70 farmers in the Dark and South-West Peak co-ordinated by the Game & Conservation Wildlife Trust who are looking at the opportunities for attracting green finance to support the delivery of public goods. FiPL funding has helped support the group, funding detailed sample baseline ecological surveys, carbon audits and awareness raising events. They are also in receipt of funding from the National Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 3.5.14 Other farmer groups also support delivery for landscape and nature recovery including the Hope Valley, Bradfield, White Peak, Peak Farmers and Hayfield Groups. The Peak Farmers, Bradfield and Hayfield Groups receive funding from FiPL. The Hope Valley and White Peak Farmer Groups are funded through Defra but have received specific support for development and/or nature/landscape recovery projects through FiPL.

4. Recommendations

1. **To note progress in delivering to the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2023-28 and Authority Plan landscape and nature recovery aim and targets.**

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to section 65(5) of the Environment Act 1995, the Authority has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the accomplishment of its statutory purposes. These projects and activities fall within the Authority's statutory purposes. Pursuant to sections 5 and 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Authority must deliver to the statutory purposes and statutory duty, respectively, when carrying out its work. Monitoring the Authority's progress against the aims and objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan will enable appropriate scrutiny and safeguard legal compliance.

b. Financial

Activities in the early years of the Authority Plan and National Park Management Plan 2023-28 had funding and resources identified to deliver them. However, the recent organisational change, the introduction of vacancy control and the 2025/26 budget reduction is impacting capacity. Once the three-year Defra settlement is known a further review of capacity and activities is likely to be needed.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The activities described in this report contribute to a number of our policies and legal obligations:

- The 30 by 30 target through which the Government has agreed to conserve (protect) 30% of land by 2030.
- All seven of the [special qualities](#), Aim One [Climate Change](#), Aim Two [Landscape and Nature Recovery](#), Aim Three Welcoming Place, Aim Four [Thriving Communities](#) including many of the objectives with their targets and headline delivery of the National Park Management Plan particularly for Aims One and Two; and the [Authority Plan](#) Aims One, Two, Three and Four actions.

- The Landscape Strategy 2023 was approved by Members at the Authority meeting in December 2022. It describes what is special about the Peak District landscapes, sets out the issues affecting the landscape and provides management guidelines to address the issues, conserve and enhance the landscape (minute reference 99/22).
- The Peak District Nature Recovery Plan (PDNRP) was developed with constituent Local Authorities and key partners and was [approved by Members in April 2024](#). It has been used to contribute to the six emerging statutory county-based Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSSs) being developed by County Councils/ Combined Authorities. Input into the LNRSSs has been prioritised above the development of the PDNRP Delivery Plan, so this will need to be progressed in 2025/26, but work on a 'guidance map' and visioning have begun. Once completed the PDNRP will sit as part of the NPMP and the revised Local Plan.

d. Risk Management

The main risk of the Authority being unable to deliver the landscape and nature recovery aim is the resource challenge of both the Authority in terms of reducing revenue budget, key partners budgets and the wider economy. In addition, the various announcements from Government regarding inheritance tax allowances for land-based businesses and ELM scheme detail delays and closures have dented confidence in the future direction of travel. Whilst there is some progress in terms of private/green finance this is still uncertain and for now largely outside the reach of upland family farms. Overall there is now a higher risk that farmers and land managers may continue or return to a greater focus on food production rather than on nature recovery, adaptation and mitigation of climate change. Whilst these risks continue to be mitigated by focusing on the priority aims and objectives in the Authority Plan, FiPL delivery and the development of Morridge Hill Country Landscape Recovery project they are not wholly within the control of the Authority.

e. Net Zero

Many of the activities being delivered for landscape and nature recovery also contribute to the Authority's role in climate change. The work with farmers, land managers and owners supports the conservation and enhancement of moorland, woodland and trees, species rich grassland, regenerative farming techniques e.g. herbal leys, rotational grazing, water corridors. The use of both national and private sector funding are involved. There is growing interest in regenerative farming. FiPL has funded a [Pasture for Life](#) project to deliver 4 events and 4 workshops across the Peak District seeking to increase awareness of the benefits both to the farm business and the environment of rotational or paddock grazing without any inputs.

f. Sustainability

Our work on landscape and nature recovery directly improves the sustainability of the National Park as a place.

g. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

There are no direct implications for equalities in the activities contained within this report. Indirectly, responding to landscape and nature recovery could have a positive impact on the nine protected characteristics by providing a more resilient environment.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Nature Recovery Update.

Appendix 2 - Farming in Protected Landscapes Case Studies 2024.

Appendix 3 – Morridge Hill Country Landscape Recovery Project Update.

Appendix 4 – Peak District EIA Advisory Note.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Suzanne Fletcher, Head of Landscape 15 April 2025

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Phil Mulligan, CEO

Nature recovery and Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRs)

2024-2025



Nature Recovery Plan

- ✓ Approved by Members April 2024
- ✓ Feeding into LNRS priorities and measures
- ✓ Delivery plan template drafted and test population carried out with Forestry Commission
- Delivery plan completion with other expert groups
- Incorporating reporting and delivery into NPMP, working with Strategy team
- ✗ Guidance mapping and visioning (begun April 2025)

What are Local Nature Recovery Strategies?

Government has made legally binding commitments to end declines in nature and for nature to recover. To do this, Government have said they need targeted, coordinated action and for everyone to work together. LNRSs are a way to do this and are being developed now. Each county will have an LNRS. There are six LNRSs that cover the Peak District National Park.

What will LNRSs look like?

Each LNRS will have a description of the county, a list of priorities, and a list of practical actions (measures) that could help achieve the priority.

There will also be maps showing designated sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and a map of places that could be important for nature in the future. If there is enough information, actions that could lead to places becoming important are also mapped, for example, where hedgerow creation would best link woodlands.

Who is preparing LNRs?

Responsible Authorities are writing and mapping LNRs; either the County Council or Combined Mayoral Authority. District and Borough Councils, National Park Authorities and Natural England are all Supporting Authorities, and can object to LNRs before the two compulsory consultations.

Cheshire: Cheshire West & Chester Council

Derbyshire: Derbyshire County Council

Greater Manchester: Greater Manchester Combined Authority

South Yorkshire: South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority

Staffordshire: Staffordshire County Council

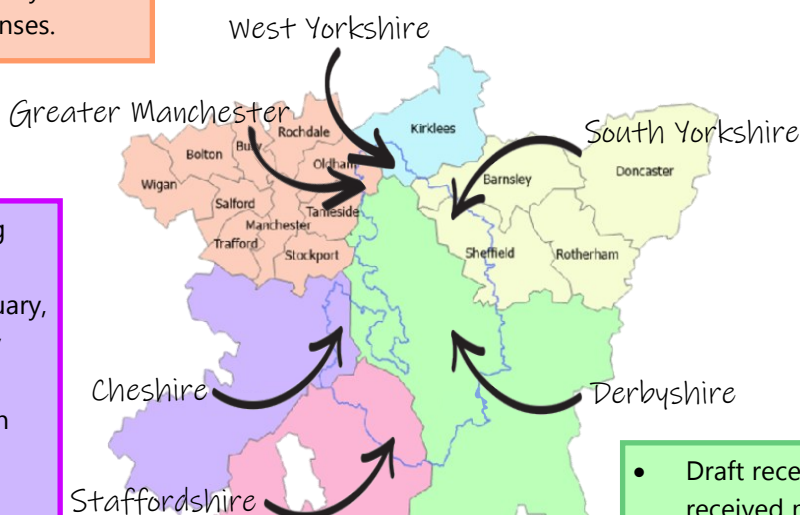
West Yorkshire: West Yorkshire Combined Authority

- 28-day Supporting Authority period initiated September 2024.
- Public consultation November 2024-January 2025.
- March workshop to input into changes suggested by consultation responses.

- Input into habitat workshops, particularly for uplands August 2024.
- Priorities and measures being finalised.
- Input into mapping, particularly for uplands.
- Consultation expected autumn 2025.

- Significant concerns raised by all Supporting Authorities over issues with coordination by SYMCA, and methodology and outputs received by consultant RSK.
- Significant time spent on inputting into priorities and measures.
- Revised timeline indicates consultation early 2026.





- 28-day Supporting Authority period initiated early January, but unable to fully access mapping.
- Public consultation February-March.
- Serious concerns regarding no mapping of measures on designated sites and potential impact on future funding. Resolution of mapping issues underway.
- No objection raised on the presumption that mapping issues will be resolved.



- Long list of priorities produced with feed in from Nature Recovery Plan.
- Consultation expected summer 2025.

- Draft received early December, mapping received mid-December.
- 28-day Supporting Authority period initiated early January. Some comments provided regarding language.
- Public consultation February-March.
- Serious concerns regarding no mapping of measures on designated sites and potential impact on future funding. Significant progress made on resolution for blanket bog, issues remain for other measures, particularly clough woodland.
- No objection raised on the presumption that mapping issues will be resolved.

Farming in Protected Landscapes

-  Supports **NATURE** recovery
-  Mitigates the impacts of **CLIMATE** change
-  Opportunities for **PEOPLE** to enjoy, discover and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage
-  Protects or improves the quality/character of the **PLACE**

CASE STUDIES

Page 69



Standhill Farm hedge planting

Standhill Farm, Great Longstone



Grant value: £120,574




Embracing tradition, diversification and partnership

An exemplar of what can be achieved in landscape recovery, this ambitious FiPL project in the heart of the White Peak encompasses tradition, diversification and partnership working.

This dairy farm, run by Robert Thornhill, sought to deliver landscape and nature recovery while maintaining and developing its commercial business.

It is the lead in a collaborative agreement of five landowners, looking at factors such as the mineral and protein content in herbal ley forage with the aim of encouraging other farmers to trial this option.

The project included:

-  In-field and boundary tree and hedge planting and management of grass margins with the aim of mitigating for ash dieback
-  Reinforcing the historic field pattern
-  Diversifying the landscape, enhancing wildlife on the farm and – in the future – providing a diverse fodder beneficial to the health of dairy cows

It was ground-breaking by looking at new ways of delivering both high quality forage and more trees in the landscape, with effective business analysis and new ways of monitoring activities on the holding. It has encouraged community engagement with volunteers from the local village involved in tree and hedge planting.

Further plans include an acoustic and breeding bird baseline survey to allow successful measurement of the impact of FiPL and other projects on wildlife at the farm and the restoration of a traditional field barn, a characteristic element of the landscape which supports barn owls.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust



Grant value: £36,339

Working together for curlew and wader conservation

This holistic, collaborative project for curlew and wader conservation is farmer-focused and targeted to 'wader hotspots' in the Cheshire and Staffordshire fringe area of the South West Peak.

It is co-ordinated and bankrolled by Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT), working in partnership with the South West Peak wader group to help improve the resilience of breeding curlew and other waders beyond previous focus areas.

A wider, co-ordinated approach was required to target and work with landowners, some of whom had not necessarily engaged with environmental schemes in the past. The project – steered by the South West Peak wader group - covers a wide range of activities, including advice and action on the ground, some of which would not be funded through other mechanisms.

The project builds on the legacy of the five-year Working for Waders initiative, funded through the South West Peak Landscape Partnership Project (Heritage Lottery Funding), which ended in 2022.

In 2023/24, the project has included:

- CWT working with 10 landowners
- Creation of 29 scrapes, reprofiling of two ponds and rewetting works to provide feeding opportunities close to wader breeding sites and cutting 9ha of rushes to improve habitat structure. Wetland creation/restoration also has carbon sequestration benefits
- Development of new wader plans including training of volunteer wader wardens to support farmers in the delivery of positive management on the ground, monitoring curlew territories and clutch activity
- Purchase of wildlife cameras to help monitor nest activity

The benefits of the foraging and nesting habitat created/restored are already being seen, with breeding curlew present on two of the sites where works have taken place. Further works are planned for next year.

The volunteer element (wader wardens) provides opportunities for members of the public to develop skills around nature and the farmed environment.

Corker Walls Farm, Dungworth, Bradfield



Total grant value: £7120

Improving soil health and habitat management for birds

Two independent, yet related, projects have led to improved soil health, enhanced grassland management and greater support for wading birds in this nature-friendly farming business.

Corker Walls Farm is a family-run beef and sheep farm in the Ughill valley. It has areas of species rich grassland, wetlands and nesting wading birds. It supports a large population of breeding lapwings, curlew and other upland birds, including skylarks.



There are compaction issues in certain areas of the farm and, in order to manage selected fields effectively, farmer Trevor White was keen to aerate compacted fields using a tractor drawn aerator (pictured right).

His grant application, in partnership with another farmer, arose from a meeting of Bradfield Farmers group.

The aeration process benefits soil-water management, which contributes to climate change mitigation and nature diversity.

The farmer reports:

- Greater productivity with low fertiliser inputs
- Better growth of grass
- The land now copes better in dry and wet conditions – with improved drying in wet conditions and retention of moisture in dry weather. This means that the population of soil invertebrates is more stable and more accessible as a food to wading birds.

Wider benefits also include a reduction in flood risk and improved water quality. With less surface runoff, soil and sediment remain on the land, reducing the amount of potential pollutants getting into waterways.

Trevor White monitors lapwing and manages his land sensitively around the birds. With this in mind, he has received funding for a solar powered pumping system to improve management of pastures and stock - providing a water supply enabling compartmentalisation of fields to ensure bird breeding areas are appropriately grazed.

The project has resulted in better soil management and conditions and more effective stock management, sensitive to breeding lapwing and improve soil conditions.



Ecton Copper Mine



Total grant value: £145,000

Heritage preservation allows nature to flourish

This multi-disciplinary project has achieved the conservation of the unique Ecton balance cone – allowing the wider, nationally important, Ecton Copper Mine site to be removed from the UK's Heritage at Risk register.

The Ecton Mine balance cone (pictured right) is a complex structure, both above and below ground. A scheduled monument, falling within two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Ecton was once the deepest mine in England, using cutting edge 18th century technology to extract copper ore from depths of up to 300 metres below the River Manifold.

The balance cone housed a counterbalance to support some of the weight of the winding rope and reduce the load on the Boulton and Watt steam-powered winding engine which, in 1788, was only the sixth ever commissioned in the world.

Funding allowed a multi-disciplinary feasibility study to understand the structural integrity of the Ecton balance cone, its archaeological complexity and its importance for wildlife.

Objectives achieved include:

- Conservation and enhancement of a heritage asset and increased knowledge to inform future conservation and educational activity
- A better understanding of relationships between cultural and natural landscapes
- Opportunities identified to provide better and greater habitat (bird nesting, invertebrates, reptile, bat) through restorative works to the cone, shaft and vegetation cover
- Enhancements to make the structure more resilient against increasingly intense weather



© Tom Marshall

New interpretation at the Geoff Cox Centre on Ecton Hill and at nearby Hulme End – at the start/finish of the Manifold track – will improve people's understanding of the history of lead and copper mining here and elsewhere in the Peak District.

For over 20 years, the interests of the Ecton Copper Mine have been overseen through the collaborative efforts of a partnership of several organisations, with landowner support.



Celebration event at Ecton Mine

© Tom Marshall

The partnership includes the Ecton Mine Educational Trust, Ecton Hill Field Studies Association, Peak District National Park Authority, Historic England, National Trust and Natural England.

A NEW GENERATION LEARNS ABOUT FARMING



Pupils at Paradise Farm

Lessons in farming

A programme of educational visits has been developed by Lis Boyle at Paradise Farm, specifically tailored to pupils' work at nearby Bradwell Primary School.

During their visits to the farm which are funded by FiPL, children learn about their local environment and the history of farming.

Welcome to the farm

FiPL funding has allowed James Metcalfe to extend educational provision at Hardenclough Farm in Edale.

The farm already hosts school visits throughout the year but is now able to reach more people, including through its first Open Farm Sunday, in June 2023.



Open Farm Sunday

The new venture attracted bookings from 85 people who learned about life on the farm, its livestock, its sheep breeds, the importance of shearing and the value of wool. Visitors were encouraged to look around the farm and ask questions and watched a demonstration by Jess, the farm's working collie. They also enjoyed a hay meadow walk.

The farm now has its own Facebook page, which is regularly updated with farming activities.



Permissive paths link rights of way

At Blaze Farm (pictured above), close to Wildboarclough, new permissive paths have been established to create long-sought after links between existing rights of way, enabling access through Heild Wood and amazing views north to Shutlingsloe.

The access is complemented by boards providing information on the habitats, species and features of interest.



IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTS – WILDLIFE AND PEOPLE

Hay meadows and birds of prey

The fields at Round Meadow Barn are surrounded by species rich grassland, designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Landowner Miranda Harris wanted to see this habitat extend into her hay meadows and to support lots of wildlife. FiPL helped her to work with the farmer next door by providing payments for green hay – containing wildflower seeds - to be brought onto the site.

Survey work shows the meadows are now becoming more diverse, with wildflowers establishing, including common spotted orchid. A kestrel box installed on a nearby tree, and funded through another FiPL initiative, was used in 2024 by a breeding pair, who raised five youngsters.



Accessible path across farmland

Stiles and rails have been replaced with gates at five locations along a path from Townhead at Warslow to Stoneyfold Lane.

The path crosses hay meadows and grazing land belonging to two farms. The request for FiPL support came from Moorside Farm, Warlsow. There are now plans for upgrades to another footpath to make a circular walk.



THREE YEARS OF DELIVERING FiPL



Over 329 projects approved...



Over £3.2M in grant funding...

**Additional
£2.4M
in 2024/25**



25 projects that will prevent flood risk



47 ponds created or restored



~22km of new hedgerow planted



42 projects for recovery of threatened species



8 built cultural heritage features repaired/restored



16 new permissive paths/bridleways (over 8km)



Over 630 farmers and land managers engaged in the programme



8 farm clusters created or supported



Over 560 volunteers engaged in the programme



4 additional staff providing farmers with local dedicated advice and guidance

WHAT ARE PEAK DISTRICT FARMERS SAYING?

Chloe Palmer, of Bradfield Farmers Group, says:



The Bradfield Farmers group, with over 40 farmer members, has been funded by FiPL for almost two years. FiPL funding has allowed us to grow the group to include a larger area and more members.

Robert Thornhill, of Standhill Farm, says:



The FiPL funding allowed me to make positive changes which otherwise would not have been possible and I valued the opportunity to work with the Peak District team to bring about some important environmental benefits and habitats for wildlife.

OBSERVATIONS FROM OUR FiPL TEAM

Kirstie Burnet, FiPL Programme Admin Support, says:



The rewarding element of FiPL is that we have enabled farmers and landowners to create and improve wildlife habitats, help make farm businesses more sustainable and improve public opportunities to enjoy the countryside.

Andrew Farmer, FiPL Engagement Officer, says:



It's fantastic that FiPL enables direct contact and engagement with real people on the ground to work on bespoke projects that work just outside the national schemes. It's also a great opportunity to signpost to other funding and organisations to achieve positive outcomes.



Staffordshire
Wildlife Trust



PEAK
DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK

Landscape Recovery

Morridge Hill Country

Landscape Recovery Project

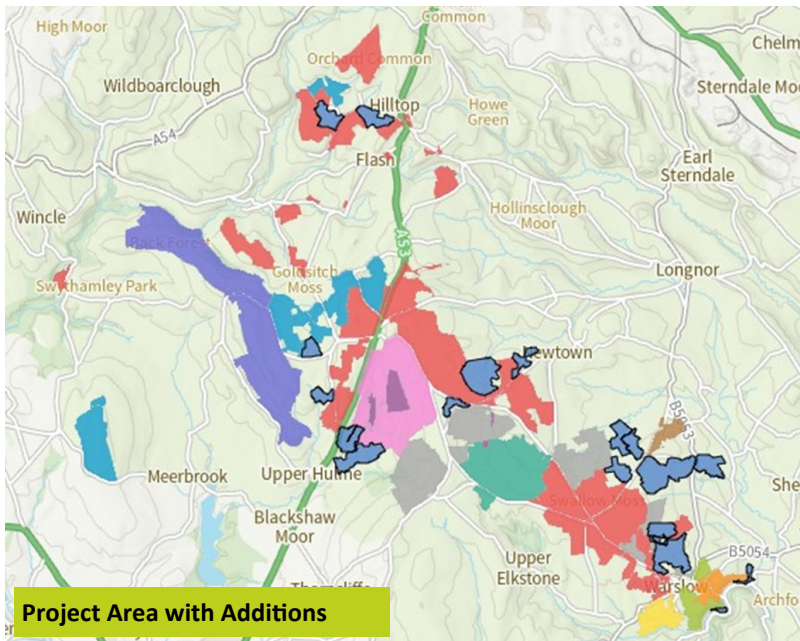
Project Area Additions

DEFRA approved an additional 6 farmers joining the project bringing in an additional 344ha.

MHC now includes 21 farmers from both tenanted and private farms.

Project area increased to 2900ha with increased contiguity of the landscape recovery area.

No further additions can be made to the development phase.

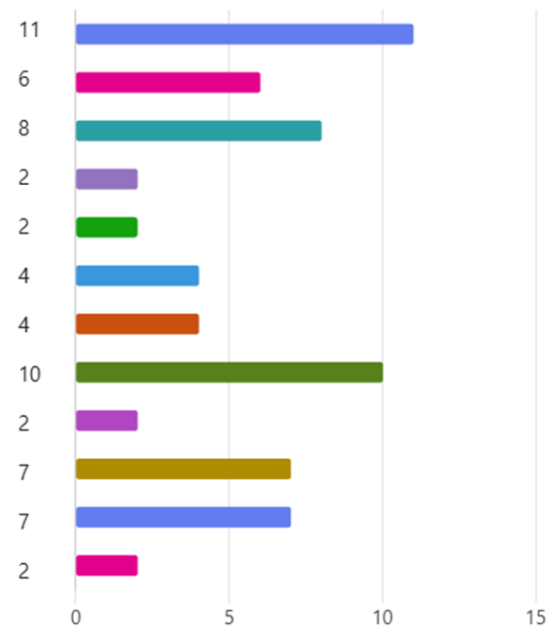


Farmer Interviews

16 farmers have had interviews with Rob Townsend, Farm Adviser. Findings are feeding into the development of the project.

Online surveys also conducted alongside these meetings. Land management plan meetings starting this month.

- Species rich grassland
- Waders
- Rivers and streams
- Blanket bog
- Ponds
- Waxcaps
- Moorland
- Rough grazing
- Woodland
- Hedgerows
- Infield trees
- Other



Project Timeline

To be shared with farmers in our upcoming project newsletter.

Stakeholder Engagement

Early stages developing a long-term vision for the landscape. Meetings with staff from Natural England, Environment Agency and Forestry Commission, RSPB.

Support provided from national experts on woodlands, wetlands and fungi.

Site visits to ascertain what the opportunities might be to enhance habitats within the project area.

Next phase to develop land management plan maps with farmers in meetings over the next 6 weeks.

Wider groups and local conservation groups will be engaged with over the summer.

Site visit with Forestry Commission and Environment Agency



Additional land parcel adjacent to the River Manifold

Blended Finance Plan

Land Use Consultants (LUC) are developing estimates for opportunities within the project area to create income from Ecosystem Services through Carbon Codes, Biodiversity Net Gain. Their work programme now includes engaging with potential buyers and investors and beginning to build a finance model.

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Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations in the Peak District National Park



What are the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations?

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (Agriculture) Regulations 2006 are designed to protect uncultivated land and semi-natural areas from damage caused by the introduction of, or changes in activities that improve the productivity of land for agriculture. The Regulations also protect land from negative environmental effects from physical change to rural land by restructuring. Under the Regulations, all land within the boundary of a Protected Landscape (National Parks & National Landscapes) is considered to be a semi natural area. Land inside and outside (adjacent to) the Protected Landscape that supports regionally significant heritage features, priority habitats or areas of significant bracken and scrub is also considered a semi natural area.

What are upland waders and why are they important?

Around 50% of England's lapwing, curlew and snipe breed in grasslands on upland farms, most often in rush pastures and on rough grazing land.

Lapwing and curlew are considered birds of principle importance for conservation. Changes to the management of fields that support breeding pairs, that make the land more productive for agriculture or restructure the land, are covered by the Regulations.



Heritage features

Changes to the management of fields that include historic or archaeological features of regional importance, that make the land more productive for agriculture or restructure the land, are covered by the Regulations. These features do not have to be designated (e.g. Scheduled Ancient Monument) to be covered by the Regulations.

This could include fields with heritage features such as ridge and furrow, remains of limestone or lead workings, significant field boundaries, and pre-historic features such as burial mounds and settlement sites.



Flower-rich grasslands



Changes to the management of traditional hay meadows and pastures, flower-rich fields with rush, grasslands on dalesides, rough grassland on the moorland edge, and sites associated with old mineral workings (e.g. lumps and bumps left from lead workings), that make the land more productive for agriculture or restructure the land are covered by the Regulations.

Special Qualities of the Peak District National Park

In addition to the features, species and habitats described above the Regulations also protect the special qualities of the National Park from management and restructuring changes that could include but are not limited to:

- Intensification of semi-improved grasslands.
- Traditional field boundary removal in distinctive landscapes including impacts on boundary trees.
- Agricultural improvements or restructuring that:
 - have a significant impact on geology, soils and landform;
 - impact on the natural or cultural landscape or public enjoyment;
 - impact on ponds, rivers and streams.

What do I need to do?

Any change that increases agricultural productivity* on land within a Protected Landscape, regardless of what that land supports, or changes to uncultivated land, or if you intend to carry out restructuring works (such as adding, removing or changing the type of field boundaries) will be within the scope of the Regulations and you may need to apply for a screening decision from Natural England. You should review the current advice on the EIA website where the screening application form can also be accessed. See here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eia-agriculture-regulations-apply-to-make-changes-to-rural-land>

* Examples of increasing agricultural productivity can include, but are not limited to, cultivation, re-seeding, use of fertilisers, increased stocking rates, adjustments to drainage, tree planting and scrub or other vegetation removal. Further examples are included within the EIA guidance at the link above.

On already agriculturally improved grassland that supports upland waders, some activities will be permissible outside the bird breeding season (15th March—31st July), but a screening application may still be required.

Still unsure?

Contact the Peak District National Park Authority Farm Advisers on 01629 816270. They will be able to help with how to make a screening application, as well as provide advice on conservation management and environmental schemes.

The Environmental Impact Assessment unit helpline number is free on 0800 028 2140 or you can contact them via email on eia.England@naturalengland.org.uk. Contact this helpline for advice on assessing whether your project will require an application for a screening decision.

Carrying out work that is covered under the EIA Regulations without seeking advice from Natural England could affect your access to schemes & payments, result in a fine and you may be required to restore the site.



11. WELCOMING PLACE AIM OVERVIEW

1. Purpose

To inform Members about the Authority's progress in responding to the Welcoming Place aim since April 2024 and what this means for the future.

2. Context

2.1 One of the four 20 year aims for the NPMP is focused on developing the national park as a place where 'all are welcomed and inspired to care for and connect to its special qualities.' The five-year objectives that underpin this aim, and prioritise delivery over the plan period, are Objectives 7, 8 and 9 please see [Welcoming Place](#).

2.2 Key Issues:

2.2.1 The 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP) 2018 sets out the framework and vision for what the Government wants to do to improve the environment within a generation. Updated by the [Environmental Improvement Plan 2023](#) with plans to deliver ten goals. Goal 10 is to enhance beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment. The Government wants everyone to enjoy our landscapes, but also recognises that to restore nature, we need to enjoy its beauty responsibly. In July 2024 the Secretary of State for Defra announced a rapid review of EIP23 with an [interim statement](#) in January 2025 which highlighted further improvements to the plan later in 2025.

2.2.2 The [Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) (PLTOF) was published on the 31 January 2024. It seeks to support Protected Landscapes (PLs) in meeting their huge potential for nature, climate, people and place and to deliver the EIP23 goals. Area 9 is to improve and promote accessibility to and engagement with PLs for all using existing metrics in our Access for All programme. However, this access target is currently under review and we expect further guidance from Natural England regarding a more appropriate metric to measure this outcome. The strategy team have been asked to work with NE and colleagues from National Landscapes to sense check both PLTOF target data and the supporting statistics prior to release. It is anticipated that the full data set will be available by the end of April and Members will be given a detailed presentation on the PLTOF targets at the 9th May forum meeting.

2.2.3 The Authority is legally required to set a balanced budget and the Authority uses its Medium Term Financial Forecast to do this which Members considered and approved on the 21 March 2025. An organisational change process took place during 2024-25 which included moving Engagement activities from a core-funded to an externally-funded delivery model. This includes potentially disestablishing a number of Engagement Team posts. In recognising the specialist role of the Engagement Team in delivering the core purpose "to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public", a new Engagement Programme Manager role has been established. This role will develop and manage the delivery of externally-funded priority engagement projects and provide expert engagement advice and support across the Authority. They will also work closely with the Peak District Foundation (PDF). Four priority engagement projects have already been identified and sources of external funding are being explored:

- 2.2.3.1 The Authority is working with the National Trust (NT) to move the full cost of delivering the Moorland Discovery Centre on the Longshaw Estate to the NT with the Authority withdrawing from the current partnership arrangement by 1 March 2026.
- 2.2.3.2 The required funding for the Landscape Discovery Centre at Longdendale, Ambassador Schools and Community Engagement projects is yet to be secured.
- 2.2.4 The [Diverse Audience Plan \(DAP\)](#) is aligned with the National Park Management Plan (NPMP) and Authority Plan. With reduced engagement capacity delivery of the current targeted actions with diverse audiences is no longer viable. Mitigation will include ensuring that all staff incorporate engagement methods to meet the ambitions of the Diverse Audience Plan in all their business as usual activities. The DAP will need to be reviewed in 2025-26 and aligned with the Authority's emerging Equality Plan for which an update is provided for members at this same meeting.
- 2.2.5 Whilst the economic benefits to the national park from tourism are acknowledged the need for better and more shared data across partners has also been recognized. Work is on-going to use data to better understand the changes in terms of user numbers and patterns and the impact that this may be having on the area's communities, its fragile natural environment and cultural heritage assets. This has started to be explored with Members with next steps identified along with the drafting of a Tourism Charter. Any emerging proposals will need to be discussed with partners.
- 2.2.6 The Authority works with its constituent authorities who are responsible for rights of way within the national park. The Authority's role, as its limited resources allow, is to enhance access on priority routes e.g. those promoted, connected to visitor hubs and access for all. Constituent authorities' resources are also becoming more limited and this coupled with increasing severe weather events and visitor usage has led to deterioration in rights of way condition.
- 2.2.7 Since the April 2024 Programmes and Resources meeting the Authority has undertaken many activities, both on our own and in partnership, that assist in meeting our welcoming place ambitions. These are outlined from paragraph 3 below. Some of these activities will continue to be delivered and developed through 2025-26 but there will need to be a further review following completion of the organisational change process in terms of the reduced capacity and need for external funding.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 As reported to this Committee in April 2024 the Authority is already undertaking many activities, both on our own and in partnership, that assist in delivering our welcoming place ambitions. We will review the activities that the Authority delivers going forward based on priority projects and external funding being secured following the recent organisational change. The summary below updates Members on the activities we have focused our resources on since April 2024.
- 3.1.1 Priority routes within the national park - have been identified by Rangers and mapped on a GIS mapping layer. Regular volunteer ranger patrols to check and maintain the rights of way furniture.

- 3.1.2 White Peak Loop - in March 2025 Derbyshire County Council (DCC) officially launched the 42-mile circular trail designed for walkers, cyclists, and horse riders although further development is still required for sections such as along Woo Dale. Please see [White Peak Loop Launch](#).
- 3.1.3 Defra Access for All funding - has delivered more miles, more places, and more mobility across the national park over 2024-25. An additional £26,200 of funding was provided by the Foundation making the overall spend £181,000. Details are set out in Appendix 1. A separate report on the funding available for 2025-26 and delivery in 2024-25 is being presented to this committee.
- 3.1.4 Changing places facilities – have been installed and are now open at Millers Dale and at Parsley Hay using Access for All funding.
- 3.1.5 Active Travel England funding - is identifying a high-level network of routes for walking, wheeling and cycling across the national park as well as developing and allowing for data monitoring, accessibility mapping, and scheme feasibility. Approximately 5,500 website views have been made during the consultation period.
- 3.1.6 Recreation hubs pilot – the Dovedale area an improvement plan and NT has carried out works to improve car park management and infrastructure on their sites. FIPL funding of over £100,000 in 2023 & 2024 installed more accessible routes. Progress to continue now through Planning e.g. consulting on an additional footbridge to ease pressure around stepping stones. The Authority focus is now on Castleton. A visitor pressures & management meeting about Mam Tor took place in March 2025 between the Authority, Police, DCC Highways, and NT, sharing current practice, data on visitor movements, enforcement and engagement actions to date. Potential actions discussed include car park expansion, clearer parking signage, vehicle towing, and greater Ranger presence. Learnings will inform the identification of key areas to work with.
- 3.1.7 Biennial Ease of Use survey - 5% of the rights of way network have been surveyed using a bespoke app allowing for in-field recording of the condition and accessibility of rights of way. The CROW Access Land monitoring app continues to be used by rangers to record the state of all access points and its easy usage is helping to increase monitoring overall.
- 3.1.8 Fire Operations Group – this multi-stakeholder forum is chaired by Authority Rangers and has continued to meet twice a year for effective partner working and management of wildfires. A Key Concept of Operations document has been developed for landowners to allow best practice and more consistent work for wildfire management across the National Park. Please see Appendix 2 for details.
- 3.1.9 The Authority has continued to support the Environmental Quality Mark (EQM) Community Interest Company to deliver the Peak District EQM. A further 16 Peak District businesses have achieved the award (7 within the national park).
- 3.1.10 #PeakDistrictProud – as reported last year this has lost traction and the user environment has also changed since the inception of the scheme in 2019-20 and some partners continue to query whether it is still the right approach. A review of #PeakDistrictProud will need to take place now that up to date user data is available but will be dependent on future capacity following the organisational change.

- 3.1.11 Social listening pilot - commenced in 2023 and concluded in July 2024 the learnings from which include the recommendation to establish a digital and potentially a hard copy toolkit based around the year and seasons i.e. fires, dogs on leads, safety in winter etc. The cost for the provision of such an interactive, dynamic approach is not yet known and will be dependent on funding post organisational change.
- 3.1.12 Volunteering – all types of volunteer activities have been merged onto 1 Better Impact page (our volunteer software) allowing volunteers to see the full range of opportunities across the Authority.
- 3.1.13 Volunteering hours - 67,718 hours of volunteering have been delivered across the Authority: Volunteer Rangers & Engagement contributing 21,561 hours; Peak Park Conservation Volunteers (PPCV) delivering 15,166 hours, working with groups including United Utilities, Staffordshire County Council; tree planting schemes (6,000 trees); engagement with diverse audience groups e.g. Green Leaders (18-30yrs) and We Go Outside Too community group.
- 3.1.14 Other Authority grant support includes: Community grants (reported in the Thriving Communities update report); Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grants (already summarised in the landscape and nature recovery aim update report shared at the same meeting).
- 3.1.15 Access Unlimited Coalition - the Authority has supported the Youth Hostel Association who lead the coalition, to deliver Access to Nature, a £4.5 million Defra funded project across the English National Parks and consortium partners. The Authority has delivered nature connection experiences in the National Park to 431 young people. An expression of interest is being developed for the next steps towards a £10 million NHLF Grant led by Access Unlimited to expand the project across the UK.
- 3.1.16 Ambassador Schools - a flagship project delivered by the Authority was launched in 2022 and currently has 20 schools, both primary and secondary, participating from across the national park and within 30 minutes travel of the boundary. Funding through the PDF Connecting New Audiences project has enabled delivery of focused activity and an external evaluation to better understand the impact, influence of and next steps for the project. Please see Appendix 3 for the evaluation report. Potential next steps include working with the PDF to secure external funding and a revised version of this project is one of the four priority engagement projects identified in the issues section above.
- 3.1.17 The school visit programme - was fully booked engaging over 9,000 young people and exceeding the income target. The quote *"This is seriously the best day ever!"* evidences the value to young people and this year celebrates 25 years of outdoor learning at Landscape Discovery Centre at Longdendale.
- 3.1.18 Junior Rangers - has continued as a gateway to Green Pathway of youth volunteering with groups meeting across the National Park. This together with the success and growth of Green Leaders (volunteers aged 18-30), has identified youth environmental social action as a focus for future funding.
- 3.1.19 The Youth Impact Collective - with support from Animo Leadership is now underway. The first meeting was held, bringing together 13 participants, creating a vision and presenting at the Members Forum on the 21 March 2025, setting out their ambitions for the future to have a voice and role in decision making and co-creation opportunities. New volunteer opportunities for ages 12-25 are being created. It is hoped that the Trainee Academy trainees can help drive this forward in future years.

- 3.1.20 Championing National Parks for Everyone - led by Peak District Mosaic is well underway, celebrating great successes with the first Community Championing Training programme oversubscribed, monthly event programmes fully booked and greater diversity reached in re-recruiting to new roles. A key outcome of this project is working to address low representation of people from diverse backgrounds in the environmental sector. Please see [The RACE Report - Racial Action for the Climate Emergency](#). All roles are now filled and the project activity programme operates to March 2026.
- 3.1.21 National Parks UK and the Protected Landscapes Partnership – there has been joint working on creating a shared vision for belonging in our National Parks. Community group support examples include: Dal Kular Black Writer in residence, please see [Peak District Residencing – Black Nature in Residence](#);
- 3.1.22 Health and Wellbeing Project:
- 3.1.22.1 Prevent: Developing and relaunching Peak District wide Nature Prescription resource, building on existing focus groups and relationships. Developing clear volunteer pathway.
- 3.1.22.2 Restore: 6 events trailing different approaches to Health and Wellbeing work in the National Park, including family events and collaborating with the Peak Park conservation Volunteers
- 3.1.22.3 Excel: Peaks of Health - Support and advice around Health and Wellbeing approaches to the new Championing National Parks for Everyone project. Please see Appendix 4 for the Peaks of Health Evaluation Report.
- 3.1.23 The Authority Plan 2023-28 enabling delivery aim sets out actions that will assist in the delivery of the Authority's essential business. Objective B (Access): To achieve timescales and follow processes for the statutory functions under Countryside and Rights of Way Act and Town and Country Planning Act includes the following essential business actions:
- 3.1.23.1 Supporting the statutory functions of the Local Access Forum so that it continues to offer a good overview of access and accessibility issues within the National Park.
- 3.1.23.2 Identify, enhance and maintain access to Access Land and ensure the public has the greatest possible access to rights of way. The app continues to be used by rangers to record the state of all access points to open access land (Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act).

4. Recommendation

- 1. To note progress in delivering to the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2023-28 and Authority Plan Welcoming Place aim and targets.**

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to section 65(5) of the Environment Act 1995, the Authority has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the accomplishment of its statutory purposes. These projects and activities fall within the Authority's statutory purposes. Pursuant to sections 5 and 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Authority must deliver to the statutory

purposes and statutory duty, respectively, when carrying out its work. Monitoring the Authority's progress against the aims and objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan will enable appropriate scrutiny and safeguard legal compliance.

b. Financial

Activities in the early years of the Authority Plan and National Park Management Plan 2023-28 had funding and resources identified to deliver them. However, the recent organisational change included moving from a core funded delivery model to an externally funded delivery model for the Authority's engagement activities. Some level of financial support from the Authority will still be required as many funders require a cash or in-kind contribution and many do not contribute to overhead costs. The Authority's current and proposed contributions to externally funded priority projects across the Authority will be kept under review. The introduction of vacancy control and the 2025-26 budget reduction is also likely to impact on wider capacity across the Authority. Once the three-year Defra settlement is known a further review of capacity and activities will be needed.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The activities described in this report contribute to a number of our policies and legal obligations:

- The [Peak District National Park Management Plan 2023-28](#) Aim Three: [Welcoming Place](#) links closely to: [special qualities](#) 3, 6 and 7 and by developing a connection with the place visitors will benefit from all 7 [special qualities](#) which in turn will lead to support and understanding of the natural environment. Aim Three actions will also contribute to Aim One [Climate Change](#), Aim Two [Landscape and Nature Recovery](#), and Aim Four [Thriving Communities](#) including many of the objectives with their targets and headline delivery of the NPMP particularly for Aim Three.
- The Authority Plan 2023–28 Enabling delivery Aim: The Authority is inspiring, pioneering and enabling in delivering the National Park vision; Objective B (Access): To achieve timescales and follow processes for the statutory functions under Countryside and Rights of Way Act and Town and Country Planning Act.

d. Risk Management

- The main risk of the Authority being unable to deliver to the Welcoming Place aim continues to be the resource challenge of both partners and the Authority. The organisational change has severely reduced the breadth and depth of capacity to connect with communities, and provide services where all are inspired to enjoy, care for and connect to the special qualities which restricts capacity to deliver Welcoming Place initiatives going forward. Identified risks include maintaining partnerships and networks, closure of key educational visit site Macclesfield Forest Classroom, and potentially the Landscape Discovery Centre at Longdendale subject to completion of the proposed arrangement with NT. There is also uncertainty around delivery of Health and Communities, School visits, Junior Rangers and Ambassador Schools activities. Following the organisational change, the Authority now has a higher degree of risk in terms of securing the external funding required for externally funded priority engagement projects and activities than when these activities had core funding. The risk will continue to be mitigated by focusing on the highest priorities.
- In terms of the initial four priority projects identified and listed in the issues section above, there is a risk that external funding may not be secured in time to retain current officers delivering these activities, notice periods may end and experienced officers leave the Authority. Whilst there is a range of external funding sources for Diverse Audience Plan engagement activities and the opportunity for close working with the PDF, some level of on-going financial support from the Authority will also

be required as many funders require a cash or in-kind contribution and many do not contribute to overhead costs.

e. Net Zero

Climate change and its impacts feature in all engagement activities. A connection to the place is encouraged as research shows this leads to positive pro-environmental behaviours. Engagement activities highlight examples of good practice and encourage personal responsibility to take positive action. This work focuses on reaching out and engaging with communities that do not traditionally work with the Authority; to deepen the knowledge and understanding of those that do in order to encourage connection to the place and responsible pro-environmental behaviours, including sustainable transport use. Whilst this work will continue under the new model delivery activities will be less.

f. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The delivery of the Welcoming Place aim through the DAP work speaks directly to the ambition of ensuring equity of access (physical and intellectual) to the National Park with areas of most unequal access and gaps in provision being targeted. The DAP sets out a clear plan to address these inequalities and ways to evaluate and report this work. However, the DAP will need to be revised following the organisational change process and the alignment with the Authority's Equality Plan also considered.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Access for All Project Funding Update 2024-25.

Appendix 2 – Fire Operations Group Update.

Appendix 3 – Ambassador Schools Evaluation Report.

Appendix 4 – Peaks of Health Evaluation Report.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Suzanne Fletcher, Head of Landscape and Engagement, 15 April 2025.

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Phil Mulligan, CEO

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Appendix 1 – Access for All Funding 2024/25

What is involved?

Defra's Access for All Programme provides funding to the Peak District National Park to make it more accessible for people of all ages, abilities and needs, to help bring the benefits of spending time in nature to everyone.

In 2024/25, capital funding of £155k for infrastructure improvements was provided. The funding is for assets created or acquired, and not maintenance.

Why is it important?

The funding provides the financial support to allow focus on the development of accessibility hubs and accessible routes. This provides the places, facilities, equipment, and information needed to build confidence in accessing the special qualities and amazing experiences of the Peak District National Park.

Who is involved in delivery?

The project lead is the Access and Rights of Way Officer. The project team involves Properties, Trails, CMPT, Cycle-hire, and Communications. It includes inputs from Design, IT, and Rangers.

What's been delivered in 2024/25?

- A Changing Place at Parsley Hay
- Accessible camping facilities at North Lees
- Shelters at Hurdlow and Hartington
- Path surfacing at the Goyt and Hurdlow
- Tactile orientation panels on the Trails
- More resting places across our properties
- Fast charging e-bikes and trikes

How has the funding been supported?

The Peak District Foundation's funding of £26.2k for the Changing Place enabled the equivalent amount to be allocated to additional access improvements. The Foundation's funding of £7.7k for the maintenance of the pre-existing Goyt Miles without Stiles route complemented the capital works delivered under this programme. The Foundation's £3.5k to improve the access from the Parsley Hay Miles without Stiles route into Ruby Wood linked with the picnic site improvements provided by the Access for All funding.

What's next

Defra have indicated the availability of further funding in 2025/26 of £255.9k. A separate report in relation to this is provided, along with the 2024/25 project breakdown.

The active travel work is developing a plan for a high-level network of routes for walking, wheeling, cycling, and horse-riding in the National Park linking with future improvements for accessibility and access to nature.

More Miles

Extension of the Goyt Miles without Stiles route – Cost £20k.



More Places

Changing Place at Parsley Hay – Cost £55.5k, plus £26.2k Peak District Foundation funding.



More Mobility

Tactile orientation panels linked to new equipment – Cost £18.4k, excluding installation.





Fire Operations Group (FOG)

The Peak District FOG was setup in 1996 after a severe wildfire. Chaired by PDNPA, the group brings together land managers (NT, RSPB, PD Moorland Group), the Fire and Rescue service, utility companies, and Natural England to work in partnership to share knowledge, experience and expertise for the purpose of wildfire prevention.

Who is involved in delivery?

Coordinated by the Engagement Ranger Team Leader (ops and partnerships), supported by the Engagement Rangers and other NP officers, such as comms.

What is involved?

- Over 100 hectares of wildfire damage recorded in PDNPA wildfire log 2024
- 30 wildfires in Derbyshire Jan-March 2025.
- The Fire Operations Group members meet twice per year; at the beginning of the year (for preparation) and end of the year (evaluation).
- Annual training for Fire and Rescue Service personnel in September.
- Annual training for land managers in February.
- Regular comms and monitoring about fire conditions, with various collective actions in place for periods of high risk (i.e. signage, moorland closures, etc.).
- Membership of the England and Wales Wildfire Forum.
- A collective fund that can be used for training, equipment, PPE, and comms / signage.
- As members, FOG members received info about training, CPD, and information as appropriate.

Who are the beneficiaries?

The collective work of FOG protects the investment of moorland restoration and helps to reduce the impact of catastrophic fires on nature restoration works. FOG also

improves the dialogue between the different sectors of the land management community, and is setting a standard for professional training and PPE within the land management sector.

All members of the Peak District FOG benefit from the work of the group, as do the wider Peak District communities, who receive a quicker and more streamlined response to fire incidents when they happen, as well as improved, collective prevention work at appropriate times of year. A big part is training the fire and rescue services in how to work on a moorland habitat in an effective and sympathetic way, which in turn reduces the ecological and health damage caused by wildfires by reducing the severity of incidents.

What are the outputs?

- 35 FRS officers from 6 services trained in 2024.
- 10 land managers supported to undertake LANTRA accredited training.
- A new Concept of Operations document for land managers, outlining approach and for registering their capability and equipment (development of Fire Plan). Implementation over summer 2025.
- Wildfire Log, collecting data of all fires across PD, including near misses (i.e. BBQs, campfires).
- FOG members attended UK Wildfire Conference.
- Comms: High Risk fire signs put up (April 2025) & positive media coverage.
- Sharing of learning across partnerships (i.e. smoke sensors on NT Marsden Moor).

What will be the outcomes of the project?

The Peak District FOG is in a period of growth and moving in a positive direction, which is timely considering the impact of climate change is increasingly altering weather patterns and upload ecology. The next step is to develop FOG to attract regular funding to enable the develop of central staffing and resource.

What has been learnt from the project so far?

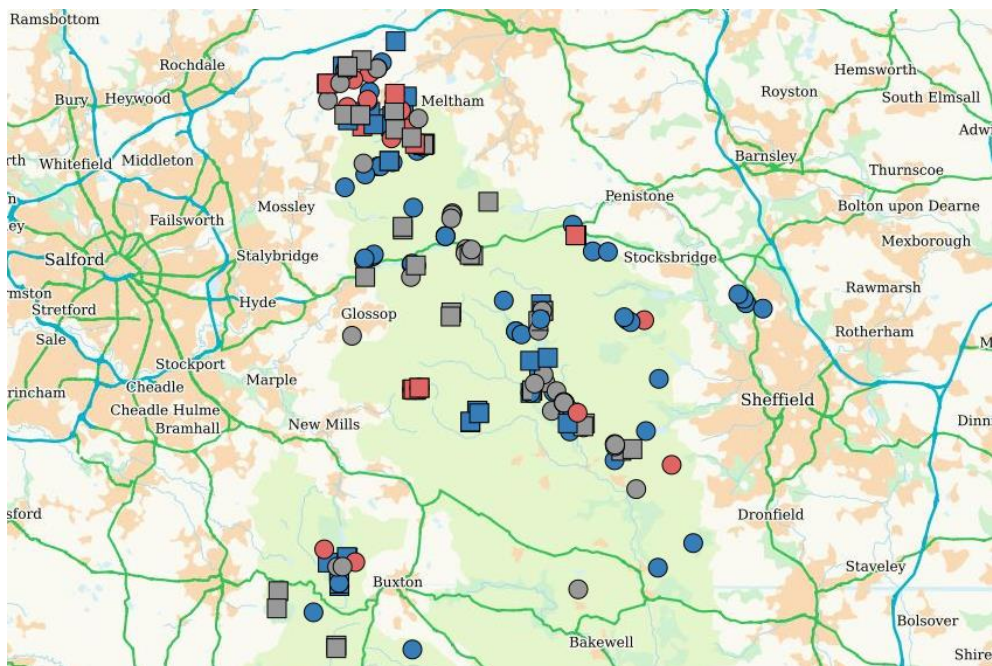
A partnership approach works best. Wildfires cannot successfully be dealt with by one organisation alone – the fire service need land managers and partners engaged with the issue and involved to help prevent and reduce incidents, while land managers bring expertise in habitat, ecology and topography, as well as skills in engaging with the public. Shared communication and messaging is much more successful than individual comms, and increased training and refining of approach is allowing everyone to work smarter and reduce the impact and cost (of incidents, but also comms and preparation).



Peak District FOG Training course, Sept 2024. Navigation training in the Goyt Valley.



Derbyshire FRS and Partners Training Exercise, Stanage Edge, May 2024



Screenshot from Wildfire Log (grey shapes recoded in 2024/25).

Ambassador Schools Programme Evaluation Report

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK

HELEN WRIGHT



The Peak District National Park

Ambassador Schools Programme

Evaluation Report

Introduction

Ambassador Schools is a flagship project delivered by the Peak District National Park (PDNP). The project aims to:

- Build lasting relationships with schools and communities
- Promote the benefits of outdoor learning and connection to nature
- Enable young people to enjoy, care for and take pride in the Peak District National Park

The project was launched in 2022 and currently has 20 schools signed up. The schools are spread across the PDNP and within 30 minutes travel of its boundary. The Ambassador schools include a mix of primary and secondary schools.

The Evaluation:

The PDNP is looking to understand more about the impact of the project and whether it has influenced change over two years of operation.

Has the Ambassador Schools Programme influenced the school's curriculum or how the curriculum is taught?

For example:

- are there more outdoor lessons?
- Are there more visits to green spaces and/or the National Park?
- Is there more use of the Peak District as an example of a local National Park in lessons?

Many of the Ambassador Schools have received in-school activities, learning resources and visits out to the PDNP. How have these interventions been received in schools by teachers and young people? What is the lasting impact of these interventions and where has there been effective added value?

What would support schools to gain more out of the Ambassador Schools Programme and how would they like to see it develop?

This evaluation aims to help the PDNP to understand the impact of the Schools Ambassador Programme on the schools' communities, to form a baseline for assessing change and to plan effectively for the future.

The Process

Meetings were arranged with the lead teachers at seven schools, selected by the PDNP Ambassador Schools team. These included primaries and one secondary. The schools are situated within the National Park and on the outskirts of the National Park in surrounding urban areas.

The schools visited were:

Village primary schools within the PDNP	Urban primary schools on the outskirts of the PDNP
Litton Primary, Litton	Anns Grove Primary, Sheffield
Youlgreave Primary, Youlgreave.	Burbage Primary, Buxton
Lady Manners, a secondary in Bakewell	Pye Bank Primary, Sheffield
	Spire Juniors, Chesterfield

Hadfield Infants was approached but the school was unable to arrange a meeting at the time.

Conversations with the teachers were based on the Evaluation Brief and the Ambassador Schools feedback questionnaire which the PDNP had sent to schools in the summer term, for which only one return had been received. Whilst the conversations were led by the questions, they tended to go into greater depth in different ways, depending on the unique circumstances within each school.

From these conversations, common themes did emerge which related to the geography and size of the schools. Small rural schools located in PDNP villages reported similar experiences and larger schools in urban areas outside the NP faced a different set of circumstances and therefore responded to the opportunities provided by the Ambassador Schools programme differently. Responses and conversations have therefore been grouped into 'Small Primary Schools within the PDNP' and 'Urban Primaries on the outskirts of the PDNP'

What has happened in the schools so far?

PDNP- led activity

Visits by PDNP staff into some schools to deliver assemblies, mapping and wildlife habitat activities.

Provision of online resources to support outdoor learning activity and a classroom-based introduction to the Peak District National Park

A teacher's Continuous Professional Development (CPD) day at Aldern House: the Ambassador Schools Conference in September 2024

Quarterly newsletter to keep schools up to date, with contributions from Ambassador schools.

Funding to support some school visits to PDNP

School-led activity

Set up a school Eco Committee- Litton, Pye Bank

Outdoor learning in the local area for curriculum-based topics- Litton, Youlgreave, Anns Grove, Burbage, Lady Manners

Communications about Ambassador Schools and the PDNP to parents and the local community via school emails, newsletters and community newsletters- Youlgreave, Litton, Pye Bank

PDNP themed well dressing- Youlgreave

Wet weather kit for all children to enable outdoor play every day- Spire Juniors

Working on Global Goals- Litton

Embedded PDNP into curriculum- Burbage, Anns Grove, Youlgreave

Project in a Box- Think Climate- Pye Bank

Coach trip visits to PDNP- Anns Grove, Spire Juniors, Burbage



Teachers participate in nature connection activity at Aldern House

The Conversations

Do you feel that your school has an increased connection to the Peak District National Park as an Ambassador School?

Small primary schools within the PDNP

Yes- being a part of the programme has added value to the outdoor learning and increased the school's awareness of the PDNP, building on teaching and learning which had already been started. The schools' local PDNP rangers have visited to deliver outdoor learning in the school grounds or in the local area. The schools communicate regularly to their local communities about their PDNP- linked activity, such as a PDNP themed well dressing, feedback from the Ambassador Schools conference, and Ambassador School updates are contributed to the village newsletter.

Urban Primaries on the outskirts of the PDNP

Yes, mainly through annual coach trips to the PDNP (Longshaw, Nightingale Centre in Great Hucklow, Goyt Valley) and some classroom teaching

Secondary school

Not increased but the PDNP is already embedded in the Geography curriculum at Year 7

Has the Ambassador Schools Programme helped to increase your teaching about the PDNP?

Small primaries within the PDNP

Yes- the schools are teaching about the PDNP outdoors and embedding outdoor learning into the curriculum as their local environment offers the perfect opportunity. The PDNP ranger visits have provided expertise which has helped the schools to enrich their curriculum and add value to their provision.

Urban Primaries on the outskirts of the PDNP

Some schools are teaching about the PDNP in the Geography curriculum as their local environment topic, or when studying rivers and mountains, picking PDNP examples to study,

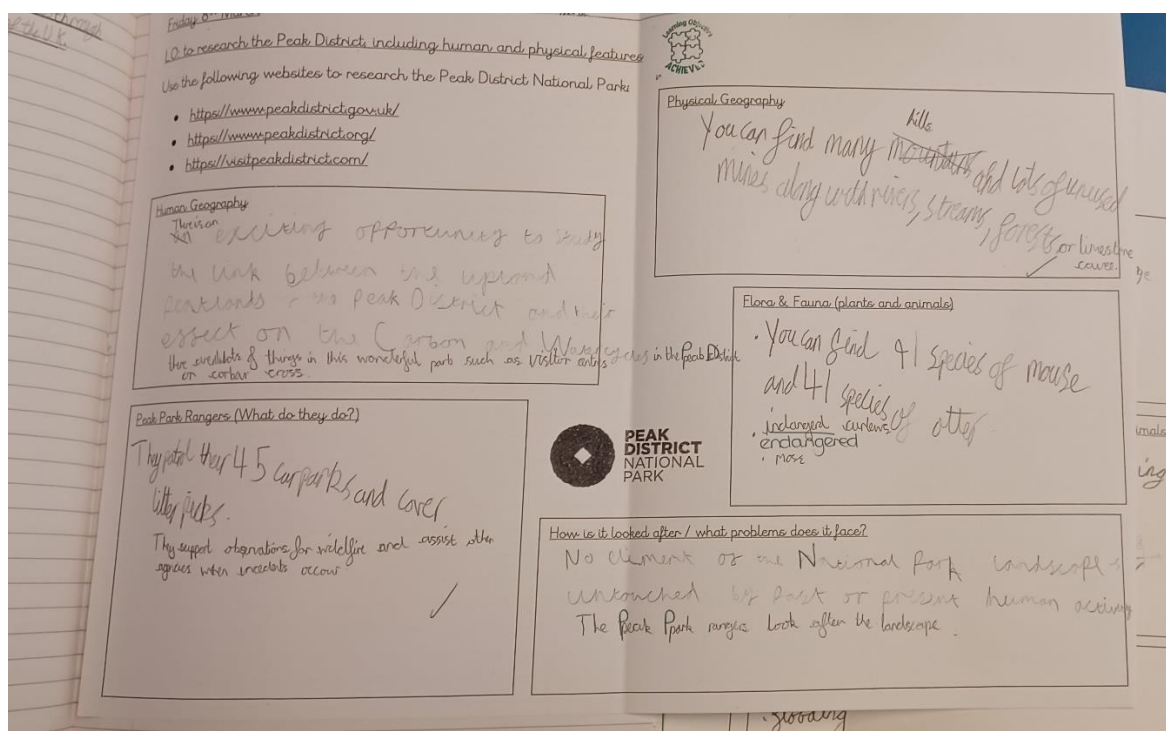
Burbage Primary incorporated the PDNP as a Geography topic for Y2 and Y5 as they were writing a new curriculum at the time of joining the Ambassador Schools Programme.

Some schools which are new to the programme are planning to develop classroom teaching on PDNP.

*Support and Development- could schools already teaching PDNP curriculum topics share planning?

Secondary

The PDNP is already a key part of the Y7 Geography curriculum, looking at quarrying, tourism and conservation, special qualities, and landscape past and present.



A research worksheet on the PDNP from Burbage Primary school

Children's responses

The children's responses show that where there is a PDNP topic in the curriculum, the children have developed an understanding of what the PDNP is about.

What do I know about the PDNP?

Buxton is on the border

It's got Mam Tor, Goyt Valley, lots of woods

It's full of countryside, grassy, not busy

You can't build there without permission because it's a place for nature

People can enjoy nature, climb hills, get good views, dog walks, cycle, drive

It's protected for wildlife and beauty

There are only a few roads

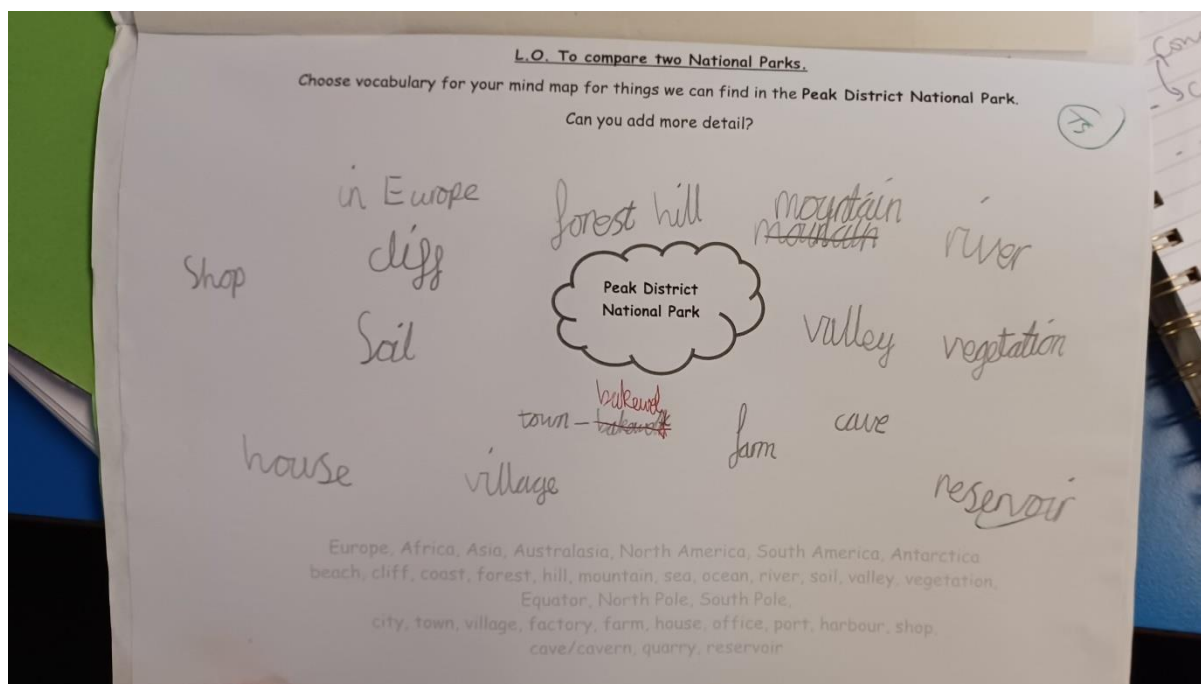
There are rules about fires and wild camping

It's a good place to visit but people mustn't harm it

It was the first National Park in Britain, it's a protected area so people can't build on it without planning permission. There is a lot of land which is not built on which is important because of the limestone and the different landscapes. Also people visit from cities to see the scenery and to do different things like walking, sledging which they can't enjoy as much in the city. There is more space, peace and quiet.

I remember that the PDNP is a really big area

They showed us a map of the PDNP and there was the White Peak and the Dark Peak.



A PDNP mindmap from Burbage Primary School

Have you used any of the online resources provided by the PDNP?

All Primaries

Schools which are embedding the PDNP into their curriculum and teaching about the PDNP in the classroom have used the online resources and found them useful. The website was noted as a benefit.

Some schools would like to make more use of the resources but first they need to plan the PDNP/outdoor learning into the curriculum, and in some cases increase whole staff awareness and practice.

Schools which are focused more on the outdoors opportunities were not really aware of the online resources but now plan to investigate.

Secondary

No, not aware.

*Support and Development- could the resources be linked to curriculum topics to make them easier and quicker to find?

Has the Ambassador Schools Programme helped to increase outdoor learning for your school?

Small primary schools within the PDNP

Yes-there is increased outdoor learning and activity.

Being small schools makes it easier to be flexible about taking children outside. The schools are surrounded by countryside and have outdoor spaces to explore either within their school grounds or in their local community within walking distance. They have received specialist

input from PDNP rangers and the learning team. The schools have positive support from the parents and community for the outdoor learning work they do and share their experiences and achievements regularly.

The lead teachers are aiming to match curriculum topics to outdoor learning locally to ensure these opportunities form part of the curriculum for each class.

Urban Primaries on the outskirts of the PDNP

The primary schools situated in urban environments tend to be more limited in what they can achieve with outdoor learning. Due to larger class sizes, outdoor learning activity requires more planning, staff resource and confidence to feel that outcomes will be achieved. The schools all have green spaces within the school grounds or close by and these are made use of at playtimes and through directed activity such as Forest Schools. The lead teachers at these schools are already aware of the benefits of outdoor learning for the children and are doing what they can but feel limited in being able to do more.

*Support and Development: The lead teachers all suggested that whole staff training for outdoor learning would be beneficial to build skills and confidence to plan and lead outdoor learning sessions.

Secondary school

The secondary school connection to the Ambassador Schools Programme is currently through the Geography department. The school has extremely limited time and staff resource to enable more outdoor learning than it already covers within the Geography curriculum. Outdoor learning for Geography includes a local environment walk, orienteering, a quarry visit, field study strips and field sketching.

Children's responses

The children's responses below show a wide range of outdoor activity that they have enjoyed both with school and outside of school

What I enjoy doing outdoors

With school

A walk to Solomon's Temple- woods- sketching

Pooles Cavern Walk

Gardening club

Den building, Fire, s'mores and snacks

Pond, Wildlife area in school

We saw a heron and we've seen other wildlife

Seeing nature

We've been rock climbing, we went to Longshaw but it was in Y4 and I can't remember much. We went down by the pond where it was wet and boggy-I enjoyed it there

We went to Hucklow on a really, really long walk

We went to Whitehall and did outdoor adventure, we went in caves and did weaselling

We've had a river walk and been to the community orchard

I like listening to birds and frogs

I like the fresh air

Outside of school

Swinging and looking at trees

Trampoline up to the trees

Bird watching, climbing, being outdoors with friends, sledging.

Where I live I'm near a forest area and I like it there, I build dens and have my own little space

I go to the park with my friends and I like it there

It's a bigger space and more open

I like being surrounded by nature

I like hearing all the animals

I go bird watching with my Grandad when I'm feeling stressed I just call him and we go. I've got a book with all the names of birds in.

I like having all the space

Has your school organised visits to the PDNP and/or to other green spaces?

Small primaries within the PDNP

Yes, within the local area – village schools have small class groups and can take the children to places of interest on foot or in the school grounds. Most opportunities need to link into the curriculum, particularly in KS2 when there is less flexibility with time.

Urban Primaries on the outskirts of the PDNP

Yes, to Longshaw, the Goyt Valley, the Nightingale Centre in Great Hucklow and Whitehall. Funding is essential for coach travel to the PDNP. The schools are very keen to organise many different trips for the children and this happens frequently, as funding and staff resources allow. Extra time from the lead teacher is required to source funding and extra staff are required to support a trip for a class of 30 children. Annual class visits to the PDNP tend to be the norm- however some teachers are concerned that they are not doing enough and that as an Ambassador School they should be trying to get out to the PDNP more often but opportunities are limited.

Some urban schools are making use of local areas and partnerships with local organisations, e.g. Heeley in Sheffield, Solomons Temple and Grin Low Woods in Buxton-

places the groups can walk to which reduces the need for funding. However with big class sizes extra staff resource is still needed. Sometimes these opportunities are taken up by smaller groups within the school.

Some urban schools have big outdoor spaces within the grounds and Forest School provision, this opportunity varies between whole class provision and/or small group sizes.

Secondary school

As part of the Geography curriculum, students go on a field study trip, visit a local area e.g quarry, do field sketches and orienteering in the school grounds. This is already a part of the curriculum.

*Support and Development- how to make the most of linking outdoor spaces to curriculum topics within the school grounds or within a short walking distance of school.

The benefits for children's health and wellbeing of being outdoors and connected to nature is recognised by the primary schools in particular and validated by some of the children's responses here:

Children's responses: How being in nature makes me feel



What are the key challenges of being an Ambassador School?

All schools

As the children get older, into KS2 and KS3/4 the opportunities to organise outdoor learning are more challenging due to more focused learning outcomes and a tighter timetable.

Enthusiasing other staff to have a go at leading outdoor learning. Teacher's lack of experience and low confidence is a barrier.

Urban Primaries on the outskirts of the PDNP

Cost of coach travel

Capacity of staff to support outdoor learning and trips for whole class sizes

Other

Unclear about what an Ambassador School should be doing and feeling that they are not getting it right

Contributing to the newsletter when you haven't got much to report, chasing updates from other staff.

How can the Ambassador Schools Programme be sustainable for your school?

If the school embeds outdoor learning and the PDNP into the curriculum, the PDNP can be taught as a topic for Geography. For certain topics, outdoor learning can become a core part of learning for each year group.

Regular funding for urban school groups to access the PDNP by coach

CPD for whole school staff delivered by PDNP (specialist/expertise) in school to develop everyone's skills and confidence to lead outdoor learning in the school grounds and/or in the local area.



Teachers at Aldern House try out a leaf slide activity

What could be improved?

Primaries

Help from the PDNP to maximise outdoor learning opportunities in the local area/school grounds and training for all staff.

A loan service of kit boxes for outdoor learning or an online photo/ advice sheet of what to include in a kit box

Easy to find, topic-linked online resources. Schools are now individually responsible for creating their own curricula and whilst this offers opportunities for the PDNP to add input it also increases the time needed by teachers to devise lessons, plan and prepare. (There is generally more awareness of the need for mental health support and a reduction of stress for teachers so providing easy to find, curriculum-related resources would be beneficial.)

Enable schools to share resources/plans/activities if they have developed something which could benefit others, e.g. PDNP curriculum planning.

A means of encouraging families to visit the PDNP – information to share about events, places to go, free or discounted activities.

Secondary

Help and advice on Geography curriculum teaching- e.g. up to date issues/case studies on quarries, tourism, planning.

Other secondary and 6th form connections could be explored, particularly for students from farming families, with visits into school by specialists and some hands-on experiences.

Possible links to A-level subjects could be beneficial- Business or Media for example.

Other

Clarity on the expectations of being an Ambassador School would be helpful. Reassurance – are we doing enough? What does it mean to be an Ambassador School? What should we be doing? Regular keeping in touch.

A snapshot of the current programme:

School	Increased outdoor learning	Increased classroom learning of PDNP	Increased visits to green spaces/PDNP	PDNP interventions	Use of online resources	Added value
Anns Grove	Already doing	Yes	Yes -trip	No	No	Not sure
Burbage	Not yet	Yes	Yes-locally & trip	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lady Manners	Already doing	No	No	Yes	No	No
Litton	Yes	developing	Yes, locally	Yes	No	Yes
Pye Bank	Not yet	developing	Yes, trip	No	No	Yes
Spire	Yes	Not yet	Yes, trip	Yes	No	Yes
Youlgreave	Yes	Yes	Yes locally	Yes	Yes	Yes

Conclusions

Overall, the schools are very positive about the Ambassador Schools Programme and are keen to continue and do more. There is clearly an increased awareness of the PDNP in schools where students are taught about it in the classroom. There are vivid memories of experiences in schools where a visit to the PDNP has provided a stark contrast to the usual environment. There is a desire to build connections between the PDNP and the schools' communities. There is a broad understanding of the benefits of outdoor activity and learning for children. All the primaries expressed a desire to build more outdoor learning opportunities into the curriculum and develop staff skills throughout school in order for outdoor learning to be a sustainable element of the school's teaching.

The conversations demonstrated that the experience of being involved in the PDNP Ambassador Schools programme varies, depending on school stage and location.

Where primary schools are located in PDNP villages, they tend to have smaller numbers of pupils and a wider variety of outdoor locations to access. This enables them to take small groups out with less staff resource and to walk to nearby locations for learning, thereby cutting costs of travel. They also have links to their local PDNP rangers who deliver activities with them. They are surrounded by communities of people who live and, in many cases, work in the PDNP so they benefit from a wealth of knowledge and awareness of their PDNP environment.

In urban areas such as Chesterfield, Buxton and Sheffield, class sizes are larger, requiring more staff resource to support being out of the classroom or out of the school grounds. However, these schools are using outdoor spaces where they can. These schools all feel they need to be able to visit the PDNP in order to fulfil the expectations of the programme. This means that funding for transport and increased numbers of staff are required to support a trip for a larger number of children. Visiting the National Park is one of many trips the schools try to achieve throughout each school year. The communities surrounding the Sheffield and Chesterfield schools are made up of diverse and in many cases low-income families for whom countryside experiences are few.

Are the aims of the programme being achieved?

- **Build lasting relationships with schools and communities**

In schools where PDNP has delivered activity the relationships seem solid and communication between the schools and their communities is happening. Where funding has provided for annual PDNP visits, the relationship has lasted on that basis. All of the primaries are keen to continue to build and develop their relationships with the PDNP.

- **Promote the benefits of outdoor learning and connection to nature**

Village schools are embedding outdoor learning into the curriculum using their local environment. Youlgreave aims to plan one outdoor session per term for each year.

All primary schools have an aspiration to teach outdoors more often.

Anns Grove has developed its outdoor areas to enable more guided activity and links with the local park to deliver outdoor sessions.

Schools that are focused on getting the children outdoors report that they notice the difference in behaviour. Spire Juniors provide outdoor wet weather kit for playtimes to ensure all the children are able to play outside every day.

Forest schools' provision is present in some schools

- **Enable young people to enjoy, care for and take pride in the Peak District National Park.**

The PDNP is taught about in classrooms, raising awareness of its special qualities and the Countryside Code. At Burbage Primary the PDNP is now part of the curriculum for Y2 and Y5. In Anns Grove when they study rivers, they pick a PDNP river to focus on and with a mountains topic they pick a PDNP mountain. Online resources, when used, are appreciated and helpful.

Introductory assemblies delivered in schools have offered an effective introduction to the PDNP. Visits into school by the PDNP to lead walks or nature activities have been very well received- schools see the PDNP as the specialists and are very keen to have their expertise in school.

Facilitated and funded visits to the PDNP have created lasting memories for children and an awareness of the PDNP.

At secondary school level, the Geography curriculum in the selected school Lady Manners focuses on the PDNP at Y7, covering a wide range of topics.



Teachers participate in CPD at Aldern House

Recommendations

Development of the Ambassador School Programme will naturally be dependent on time and budget resource for both the PDNP and the schools themselves. The recommendations below are based on the feedback from schools and my own interpretation of how both schools and the PDNP can work together to achieve the aims of the programme.

- **Build lasting relationships with schools and communities**

Raise awareness of the PDNP as a place to visit- schools could be the conduit of information for families and local communities. Share information on places to visit, events, free or discounted activities, information on transport links. Ongoing provision of information which schools can embed into their emails and newsletters will help to keep the PDNP profile raised and encourage greater connection.

Outcome: increased awareness of the PDNP and opportunities to visit, building positive relationships with schools and communities

Continue to keep in touch with the lead teachers to foster mutually beneficial relationships and enable conversations. Go into schools to meet staff and to deliver activity. Involve different PDNP staff where appropriate- as well as the learning team and rangers, staff working in farming, planning, marketing and visitor centres could have some engagement.

For village schools within the PDNP continue to offer local ranger contact to build and consolidate relationships.

Outcome: Positive and sustainable relationships with schools, leading to clarity of expectations between schools and the PDNP, reassurance for lead teachers, support for teachers to deliver curriculum and activity, to organise visits and contribute to the programme effectively.

- **Promote the benefits of outdoor learning and connection to nature**

Continuous Professional Development on Outdoor Learning for whole school staff as an INSET Day- to cover activities for outdoor learning and nature connection, risk management, effective outdoor teaching- enabling the whole school to offer outdoor learning opportunities in their school grounds and/or local area. Linked to curriculum topics to enable teachers to incorporate into their timetables.

Create a lending' library' of classroom resources linked to curriculum/outdoor learning activity

Organise online resources so that they are curriculum topic linked, making it easy for teachers to find and use.

Share information and links to other outdoor learning organisations e.g. Institute of Outdoor Learning (IOL), Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) which might be helpful.

Seek funding or in-kind support for outdoor kit and resources for schools.

Outcome: Improved health and wellbeing for young people, a greater connection to and understanding of the environment, enrichment and consolidation of classroom teaching. Support for teachers to deliver. All schools would benefit from this to enable them to make outdoor learning activity sustainable within their school and embedded in the curriculum rather than dependent on one lead teacher's influence.

- **Enable young people to enjoy, care for and take pride in the Peak District National Park.**

Work with schools to support the development of primary and secondary school curriculum topics on the Peak District National Park; what it is, its special qualities, the Countryside Code with online resources, assembly visits and up-to-date case studies (KS3).

Enable schools to share their planning where relevant.

For urban schools on the edge of PDNP—when funding is available, support visits to the PDNP. As a requirement of funding support, schools could enhance a visit with classroom and outdoor teaching as pre- and post-visit activity to consolidate learning.

Continue a programme of ranger visits into PDNP schools, with opportunities to care for their local environment.

Outcome: Increased knowledge and awareness of the PDNP as an enjoyable place to visit for young people. Young people have an understanding of how to care for the PDNP.

Overview

The Ambassador Schools Programme is an asset to the Peak District National Park as it has already established relationships and connections with schools inside the National Park and in urban areas on its outskirts. These relationships and connections have enabled children to learn about the NP, to experience being in a NP landscape and to have more opportunities to learn outdoors and connect to nature and the environment. The Ambassador Schools Programme has therefore had a positive impact on schools and has influenced change in that schools are now working towards teaching more about the NP, trying to develop outdoor activities and looking for funding opportunities to support visits to the Peak District. This is the end of the second year so change is gradual and developing.

To deepen these relationships and make them more sustainable I recommend the NP put time and resource into developing professional development for primary school teachers, to be delivered at schools and to a whole school staff team as part of an INSET day. School leadership teams are increasingly aware of the importance of outdoor learning, connection to nature, learning about the environment and improving children's mental health. A PDNP INSET day can offer all of these opportunities. This would also enable all teachers to develop outdoor learning opportunities as part of their curriculum teaching, ensuring increased and sustainable outdoor experiences for children year on year. This is my primary recommendation as a means of really influencing impactful and positive change.

Funding to support school visits for children in urban areas may feel like a token gesture but if the visits are part of a whole school curriculum which teaches about the NP and delivers outdoor learning in school, supported by PDNP INSET days and online resources, this offers children a memorable experience which will be part of a much wider, educated context.

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Peaks of Health BMW Recharge in Nature project

- Overview
- Figures and impact
- Engagement
- Survey data
- Photographs
- Quotes
- Case Studies
- Legacy and what's next for Peaks of Health



Overview

Peaks of Health has enabled the National Park to grow and modify its health and wellbeing opportunities to reach new audiences and work in new ways with a wider network of partners, responding to the changing needs of communities seeking health and wellbeing opportunities. The project engaged with communities who have barriers to accessing the health and wellbeing benefits of visiting, walking, wheeling and cycling in the Peak District National Park supported participants to connect with nature, boost wellbeing, develop confidence and enhance the positive experience of being in a National Park.

The project has engaged with groups within the National Park and in surrounding urban communities supporting men's' groups, families with autism and neurodivergent children, adults with additional learning needs, women living with grief, people wanting support with mental health, physical disabilities, learning disabilities and people on low income, young carers, LGBT+ community groups and dementia support groups.

The project has met all the aims it set out in the application for the BMW Recharge in Nature funding outlined below.

Figures and impact

The duration of the project enabled growth in the engagement team with one new traineeship and a wellbeing project officer delivering the project, making new community contacts and growing networks in the southern part of the National Park.

55 connections made with community-based health and wellbeing organisations and networks (with a focus on the southern part of the National Park).

8 groups attended walks and/or cycling activities.

15 Guided Peaks of Health walks (including 2 cancelled).

5 Guided Peaks of Health cycling activities (including 1 cancelled).

221 people attended walks and cycling activities.

3 skills development training days for community-based practitioners and volunteers enabling a legacy for the project.

20 community group leaders upskilled and trained.

3 Health and wellbeing network meetings.

1 new traineeship within the Communities and Engagement team.

Development and design of a Peaks of Health information pack for community group leaders and volunteers.

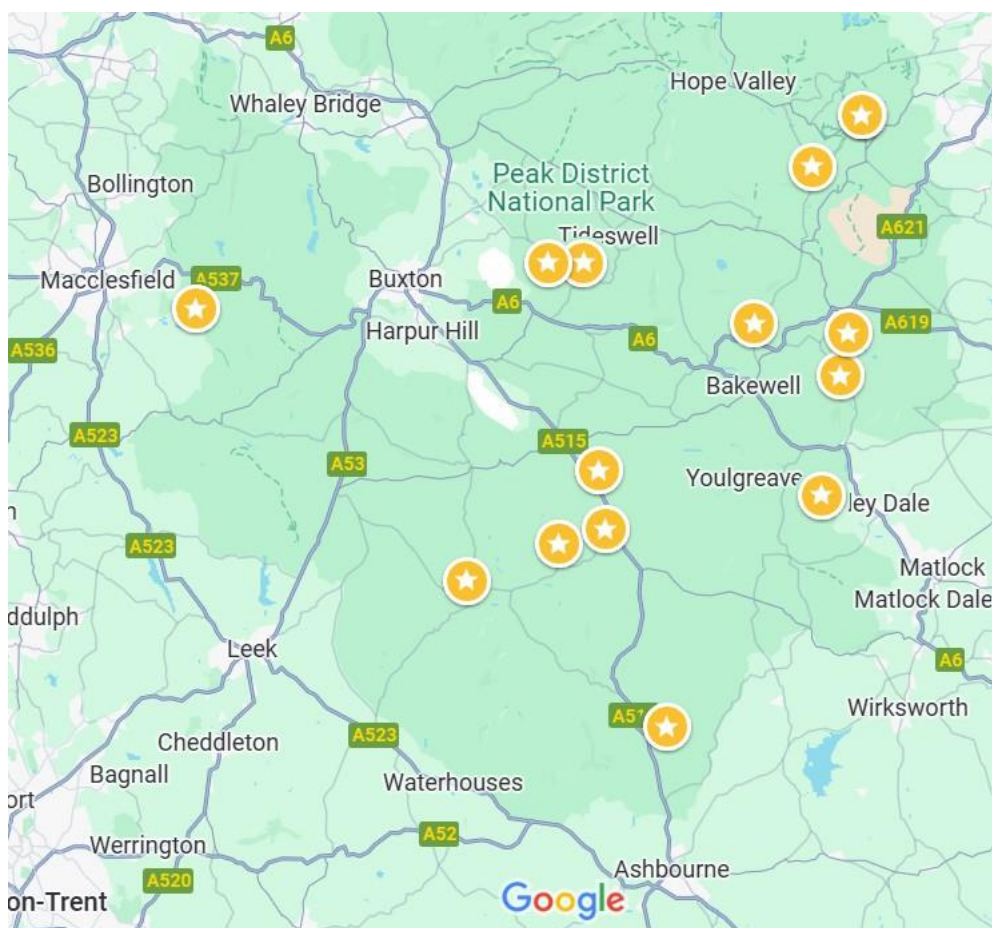
200 printed information packs.

133 hours of Peak District National Park volunteer time including development opportunities to lead health and wellbeing walks/cycling activities.

4 cycle hire assistants with training to support and lead groups on the trails using the adapted cycling equipment.

20 identified accessible walking routes within the National Park.

Engagement: Map of walk, wheeling and cycling locations



Number of attendees

Date	Community Group	Participants		Location
		Adults	Young People	
01/08/2024	Barrow Hill Group through Growth Activities	12	3	Longshaw
29/08/2024	Barrow Hill Group through Growth Activities	9		Chatsworth
23/08/2024	Re:Think Mental Illness Leek	4		Warslow
20/09/2024	Re:Think Mental Illness Leek	7		Hartington
02/08/2024	Our Vision Our Future Chesterfield	13		Monsal trail
07/08/2024	Derbyshire Young Carers	7		Grindleford
18/09/2024	Our Vision Our Future Chesterfield	13		Longshaw
14/09/2024	Derbyshire Young Carers	3	1	Stanton moor
30/08/2024	The Connection Space	9		Hartington
16/09/2024	The Connection Space	18		Chatsworth
30/10/2024	PDNP Volunteers	6		Parsley Hay
27/11/2024	Our Vision Our Future Chesterfield	24		Parsley Hay
01/12/2024	Impact 4 Life	14		Tissington trail
14/01/2025	Multiple group leaders	11		Aldern House
21/01/2025	Zink	18		Macclesfield Forest
18/02/2025	Zink	18		Monsal trail
19/02/2025	Derbyshire LGBT+	14	4	Tissington trail
25/02/2025	Multiple group leaders	7		Parsley Hay
28/02/2025	Still Waters	7		Parsley Hay
		Total adults: 214	Total YP: 7	

Survey Data

Participant demographics

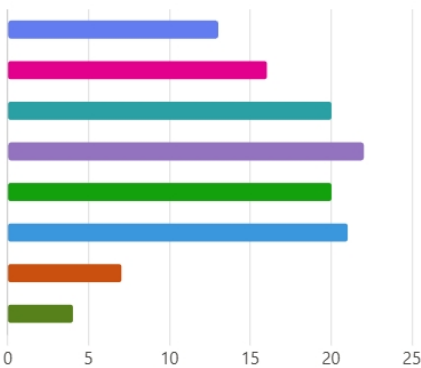
3. What gender do you identify as?

Woman	72
Man	46
Non-binary	4
Prefer not to say	0
Other	1



4. What is your age?

16-24	13
25 - 34	16
35 - 44	20
45 - 54	22
55 - 64	20
65 - 74	21
75 - 84	7
85 +	4



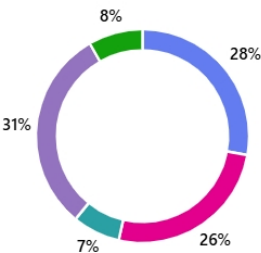
5. What is your ethnicity?

Asian or Asian British	3
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	2
Mixed or multiple ethnic backgrounds	0
White/White British	115
Other	3



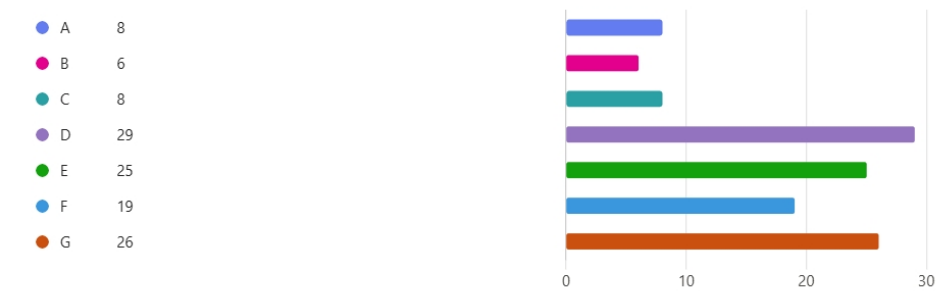
6. At the moment, are you experiencing any of the following?

A physical disability	27
Mental health condition (e.g. anxiety , depression)	25
Other health condition	7
None of the above	30
Prefer not to say	8



Before engaging with Peaks of Health

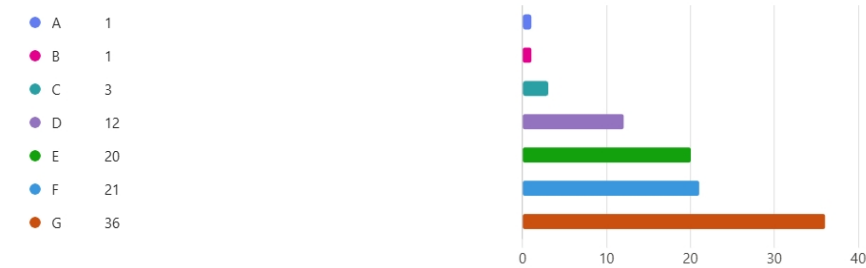
7. How connected do you feel to nature? Which picture best describes your connection to nature?



Nb. A – not at all connected
G – entirely connected

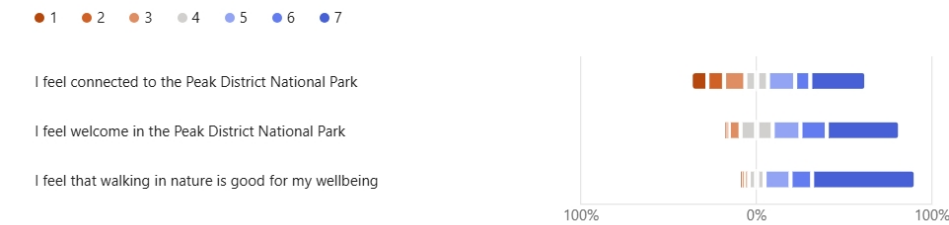
After engaging with Peaks of Health

11. How connected do you feel to nature? Which picture best describes your connection to nature?



Before engaging with Peaks of Health

8. On a scale 1 to 7, 1 being "not at all" and 7 being "fully" how well do these statements describe your feelings?



After engaging with Peaks of Health

10. On a scale 1 to 7, 1 being "not at all" and 7 being "fully" how well do these statements describe your feelings?



7. On a scale 1 to 7, 1 being "not at all" and 7 being "fully" how well do these statements describe your feelings?

[N](#)

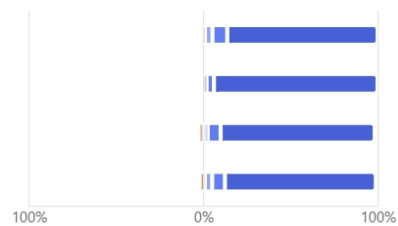
● 1 ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 ● 5 ● 6 ● 7

The walk was suited to my needs

The staff and volunteers delivered a high quality experience

I feel more content after this walk

Attending this walk has helped me feel more positive



Participants aged 16 – 85+ engaged with the project, plus a handful of children under the age of 10.

Participants report a significantly greater connection to nature after engaging with Peaks of Health.

Participants report improved connection to the National Park and feel more welcome in the National Park after engaging with Peaks of Health activities.

Peaks of Health has positively impacted people's physical and mental health.

Peaks of Health in Photographs

Historic Padley chapel



DERBYSHIRE YOUNG ADULT CARERS

Time to socialise and share the views



Flower appreciation



Exploring



PEAK
DISTRICT
NATIONAL
PARK

Peaks of Health

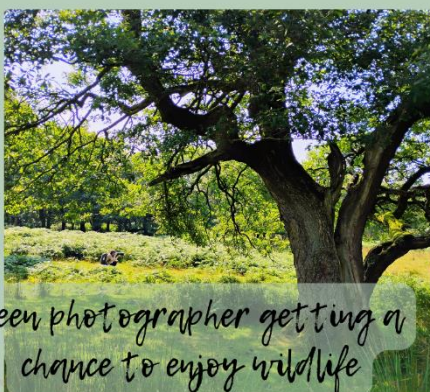
Time to rest and
connect



GROWTH ACTIVITIES WOMEN'S GROUP

Sharing a walk at Longshaw

"It has given me a bit more
confidence to visit
this place"
-Walk participant



Keen photographer getting a
chance to enjoy wildlife
photography



Bird
spotting



PEAK
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PARK

Peaks of Health

Cycling for health on the Tissington trail



First time cyclist



OUR VISION OUR FUTURE

A summer outing on the Monsal trail



"When can we come again?"



A tramper ride on the old railway line



PEAK
DISTRICT
NATIONAL
PARK

peaks of Health

Learning the best places to go for wild flowers



STAFF & VOLUNTEERS LEARNING ABOUT CYCLE RIDES & NATURE CONNECTION



Noticing nature's beauty

Engaging with PDNPA volunteers training on use of adapted cycles



PEAK
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PARK

peaks of Health

Connecting to nature with
simple activities



ZINK-FOOD BANK & SUPPORT SERVICE

Boosting woods with the winter sunshine



"Like an escape
from everything" -
walk participant



PEAK
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NATIONAL
PARK

peaks of Health



PARSLEY HAY CYCLE HIRE CENTRE



staff & volunteer training



Strengthening our
relationship with
the cycle hire centre
& training
volunteers in use of
the adapted bikes



PEAK
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NATIONAL
PARK

peaks of Health

Quotes: In the words of group leaders and participants

We found the day really interesting, helpful & inspiring.

Colette and Ruth, group leaders (ANSA) following a training day.

The project was amazing. The members loved Rachel and Kate, they always said they are both such lovely people. The members did really well and are still talking about how much they enjoyed their walk and bike ride with you. We are hoping to plan some spring activities outside soon.

Chloe, group leader (Our Vision Our Future) following their attendance at a walk and cycle ride.

Thanks for a lovely morning. It was very upbeat and everyone really enjoyed the positivity! It was lovely to get out of Buxton and Zink for the morning and be in the forest. On behalf of Zink I would like to thank Rachel and the team for such a positive morning! I loved how engaging and friendly the rangers were with us all. We were made to feel very welcome!

Liz, group leader (Zink) following their attendance at a walk.

A big, big, thank you for all your support this year and putting on two fantastic walks and training events for our volunteers!

Training session attendee

The Rangers led our group on a wonderful nature walk in Macclesfield Forest. We paused at different spots to appreciate and enjoy the beautiful views. We all benefitted from being outside and learning about how people lived in the past and the importance of the natural environment to their lives.

Group participant

Getting involved with Peaks of Health has given me a bit more confidence to visit the National Park. I want to bring my friends here!

Group participant

I noticed my mood is better after the walk.

Group participant

When asked "will you do anything differently as a result of Peaks of Health?" - *I'd like to lose some weight and find more nice places to walk.*

Group participant

Take time to stop and appreciate the healing benefits of being in nature, especially listening to water and bird life.

Group participant

Two flyers made by Logan, volunteer and walk participant at Zink:





Case Study: Peaks of Health Traineeship



Health & Wellbeing trainee

With a background in counselling and a passion for nature I was searching for a way to help others benefit from time outdoors. I know that a lot of mental health difficulties can be helped by spending time outdoors and feeling connected to the natural world. When I saw this role advertised I knew I had to do everything I could to get it. I was inspired to see that the National park where I live and explore was being active in tackling the mental health crisis that our country is in.

The role being at trainee level meant that I finally had the opportunity to get into the outdoor sector. Getting into a job in this sector is extremely competitive and without experience it can be almost impossible. Having an entry level job meant that I had a chance to make a start and gain experience.

Proudly putting on my uniform on my first day

All About Connection

- This traineeship has been a chance for me to connect with other people in the sector and learn from their expertise.
- It's been a chance for me to connect with community groups who do amazing work
- to collaborate with their leaders and volunteers, supporting people to connect with nature.
- I've had the chance to deepen my own connection to the natural world
- I've connected with people and place
- to my passion and to my sense of purpose.



"Sometimes a tree tells you more than can be read in books" C.G. Jung

On the project...



"I want to bring my friends here" Participant quote



I've learnt what it takes to get a project off the ground, the hard work that goes in before the fun bits can happen. I've gained experience in the organising, safety considerations and admin that must happen before you can take a group out for a nice walk or cycle ride.

I learnt the hard way when the first project officer moved to a new role and I worked to keep the project rolling until we got a new project officer.

My work paid off and I got five community groups signed up for the project. With each walk I got to meet new people and share different places with them. I organised walks in beautiful, natural places and had great feedback from the participants.

I've also learnt about the many barriers stopping people from being able to get out. Transport being one of the biggest issues, people either can't afford it or don't have the public transport routes to get out and enjoy the countryside. Being able to support people to get out has been so rewarding and I hope that I can find ways to keep doing this.



As a Peak District trainee I have...

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 01 | Organised & led safe & fun walks and cycle rides | 08 | Attended a National park conference |
| 02 | Planned & delivered nature connection workshops | 09 | Learnt about flora & fauna |
| 03 | Supported people with additional needs | 10 | Learnt & taught willow & bramble weaving |
| 04 | Learnt & taught mini dry-stone walling | 11 | Liaised with community group leaders |
| 05 | Supported on school field trips | 12 | Run teacher training |
| 06 | Worked with people of all ages | 13 | Built connections with local organisations |
| 07 | Organised volunteers & other staff members | 14 | Planned & delivered safe & engaging outdoor activities |

Plus so much more....

Confidence building

- The project work has given me the opportunity to work with a diverse range of people, building my skills and confidence and experiencing the joy of working with people in the outdoors.
- Leading activities such as walks and cycles rides has taught me a lot about myself and my delivery style. I've had the chance to learn from others and also find my own way of doing things.
- Working with such dedicated volunteers has inspired me. It has been amazing to see how many people believe so much in the importance of this kind of work.



External Training

During my traineeship I have been able to take external training courses that have built my skills and abilities. Some things included have been:



Hill & Moorland leader qualification



Mindfulness & movement in nature weekend



Basket weaving

Some of my favourite things...



Environmental art



Cycle rides with amazing volunteers & team



Forest school lessons



Seeing people loving being out, even in the winter months



Learning about nature connection



Christmas crafts with junior rangers



Moving forward

After 10 months with the Peak District I am further down the path and heading in the right direction. This traineeship has fuelled my passion and drive to help others access the natural world's therapeutic benefits. I've seen the positive affects spending time outdoors has on people. Although time in nature is extremely beneficial to mental and physical health, there are still not that many jobs in this work. Sadly, the Peak District has recently decided to cut down it's health and community work.

Yet, more and more research is being done into nature's health and wellbeing benefits and green social prescribing is a growing area. I've learnt many new skills to bring nature into my counselling work and I will continue to work with nature to support people's wellbeing.



Thank You

Case Study: Accessible cycling in the Peak Park

Our Vision Our Future (a self-advocacy group for people in and around Chesterfield with learning disabilities), joined the project in November 2024 for a mindful cycle ride and walk along the Tissington Trail.

The Peaks of Health team considered cancelling the activity due to cold weather but agreed with the group coordinator and volunteer to go ahead, with lots of blankets, layers, gloves and increased time within the centre with hot drinks and snacks. Everybody had a brilliant time in the frosty sunshine, with some of the group walking and wheeling on the trail, and some hiring the accessible fleet of 3-wheel bikes and trampers, plus electric bikes.

There were 24 people attending, with Rachel, Kate and Chris making up the staff team, plus 4 Peak District National Park volunteers who joined – incredible support on the walk/ride, inclusive with the group, stepping up to make over 40 brews and toast and serve up warm crumpets. At the end of the day, one volunteer (Stuart) said to Rachel (project officer), *“in seven years of volunteering, this has been the best day I’ve had”*. A deep sense of pride for our team and enabling something that otherwise, the group wouldn’t have experienced, encouraged continuation of activities through the winter months (as weather allowed), hiring village halls and spaces to ensure groups were comfortable and adapting the offering to suit the season.

Chris, one of the OVOF group, permanently requires the use of a wheel chair, and was thrilled with the flat trail with no steep incline/decline. He had the best day he has had for a really long time, and didn’t stop smiling. “I want to make a TV programme about Parsley Hay and show everybody how great it is here”. This was the third event organised for OVOF; Chris wasn’t able to attend the first two as his wheelchair was broken, making him house-bound.

Ryan, who has dyspraxia, almost didn’t come along as he was afraid of cycling having fallen off a bike previously. After being supported by one of the cycle-hire assistants, Chris, to try a three-wheel bike he came out on the ride and had so much fun, it really built up his confidence. The group loved being in nature, learning about the limestone, touching soft spongy moss and noticing how winter is changing the landscape.

“I am so, so proud of our team, and grateful to Kate (wellbeing project Trainee) for the lengths she went to, borrowing tables from our main office and bringing toasters and mugs so that we could transform the bike centre into an indoor space for some of our time together”.
- Rachel, Project Officer

Prior to inviting groups into the National Park to attend a Peaks of Health cycling/wheeling activity, the team organised with + 5 volunteers to trial the accessible fleet which proved to be a really useful exercise. It ensured the team were familiar with what was available in the accessible fleet (and what wouldn’t be suitable) as well as the trail navigating larger vehicles that are less user-friendly to turn around. Not only that, but they were fun and provided a good opportunity for volunteers and staff to connect and build stronger relationships.

Case Study: Contributing to other National Park projects

The Peaks of Health team have worked to integrate the project within the National Park, contributing to other walks, conferences, events and engagement activities.

Feedback from the Nature Connection workshop that teachers attended as part of the Ambassador Schools Conference (September 2024)

- Very well delivered by informative staff, I can use the resources Kate and Rachel shared at school. The wellbeing activities were great.
- Quality of delivery was very good - passionate staff. Good ideas to use with children.
- Really useful with our new OPAL outdoor play & learning initiative and getting children outside - PSHE links - wellbeing
- A really great start to the day! Some great ideas to take away.
- Really well thought out activities delivered by knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff. It was great to be given the time and opportunity to connect with nature ourselves.
- Very insightful, I have left with lots of ideas to take back. I like that all the activities were delivered without expensive resources so it's something we can do.
- It taught me how to be connected with nature more and slow down and engage with the environment. The ideas of how outdoor space could be used were fantastic and it was an enjoyable experience.

Learning has also fed into the Nature Prescriptions project in collaboration with the Peak District National Park, local health and wellbeing individuals and organisations, volunteers and the RSPB.

Legacy and what's next?

- Peak District National Park going through a phase of Organisational Change (January 2025 onwards).
- Experience in delivering traineeships within the Engagement team. Traineeship case study and leavers interview to inform future traineeships across the Park.
- 20 trained community group workers and volunteers based within and near to the National Park.
- Multiple upskilled Peak District National Park volunteers who are able, inspired and motivated to lead health and wellbeing walks and cycling activities within the National Park.
- Peaks of Health informational pack - Printed and digital resource for community groups and volunteers to use, encouraging and advising groups to enjoy the National Park from an inclusive and accessible perspective.
- Bank of images to be used on the website and social media to inspire future visitors and demonstrate accessible routes and health and wellbeing benefits of the National Park.
- Re-established relationship with cycle hire centres and skilled staff who are able to confidently support groups with adaptive equipment and inspire cycling/wheeling activities.
- Wider promotion of cycling opportunities within local health and wellbeing networks and community groups.
- Severn Trent application in process to take the learning and achievements from Peaks of Health into an ongoing project within the Severn Trent supply area.