

Corporate Objective:

1. Achieve the priority actions in the Landscape Strategy (priority level 2)

The Landscape Strategy and Action Plan for the Peak District was completed in June 2009, setting out priority actions to ensure that Peak District landscapes are protected, managed and planned in line with the European Landscape Convention (March 2007). It is one of only 4 European Landscape Convention Action Plans to have been done to date nationally.

Our continued work means that 86%% of the landscape character of the National Park is conserved and enhanced, maintaining the work done in previous years.

Key actions in the Plan that have been progressed during the year include substantial input into agri-environment schemes and planning issues, including windfarm proposals adjoining the National Park at Carsington Pastures and Matlock Moor (the former approved, the latter refused on appeal in April); training events for planners and farm advisers for staff from the Authority and partner organisations; input to the East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment; and work on light pollution monitoring in partnership with Macclesfield Astronomical Society.

Significantly, following extensive consultation, the Eastern Moors Estate will be leased from the Authority to a partnership of the National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. The partners plan to engage with the public and organisations in the area to create a 20-year master plan for the future management of the Estate and wider area, improve access to the land and carry out climate change adaptation and monitoring work.

The plan to lease is the result of a review of the Authority's properties, which recommended the site was leased to an organisation able to meet the objectives and increase investment in the Estate. The Authority is now developing a similar review of the future management of the Roaches Estate.

The Authority continues to manage 158 woodlands throughout the National Park, particularly small woodlands of high landscape but low economic value. Work has included boundary maintenance, thinning and restocking, ride maintenance and ensuring tree safety.

Electricity providers removed 2.55 kilometres of overhead wires at Perrydale and Hope, in partnership with the Authority and Friends of the Peak District.

A key aspect of conservation is the high priority given to enforcement action where there is a significant impact on the environment due to unauthorised development, and ensuring that all planning applications approved are within policy. In 2009/10, 19 enforcement notices relating to protecting the wider landscape were served, significantly higher than the annual average (over the past 4 years) of approximately 12 per annum.

Looking ahead to 2010/11

We will have been successful if we increase to 87% the percentage of the landscape character of the Park conserved/ enhanced and if landscape character areas have climate change impacts embedded.

Key actions for 2010/11 include:

- *Training key authority staff, members and key partners*
- *Achieving substantial progress on updating the map required by section 3 of the Wildlife and Countryside (amendment) Act 1995 with sensitivity towards the subtleties of the Landscape Character Assessment*
- *Developing a framework to help communities value their landscapes*

- *Undergrounding 5 kilometres of overhead lines under Ofgem's 5 year programme*
- *Facilitating agri-environment scheme agreements throughout the National Park, notably advising on Higher Level Scheme and Upland Entry Level Scheme applications*

Eastern Moors Partnership Lease

The day-to-day management of the Authority's largest landholding will be handed over to the National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. A partnership of the two organisations with similar values to those of the Authority will bring additional investment to the landholding and build on the achievements to date in relation to the Authority's objectives.

Neither partner organisation has worked in this way before, but the partnership has the ability to bring significant increased investment to the area. A new estate management plan will be produced with significant public engagement to detail exactly how the Eastern Moors will be protected and enhanced and still deliver a wide range of benefits in line with the National Park Management Plan.

There are expected to be clear benefits in terms of greater promoting understanding to the public, increased engagement among target audiences and demonstrating best practice in conservation and recreation site management. The partners will work with local communities and the visiting public to encourage a sense of shared ownership in the Estate. There will be improved access with more bridleways and events/ guided walks for visitors.

The moorland heath and blanket bog habitats will continue to be conserved and enhanced with an expectation that the 6,000 acres of Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) land will reach favourable condition within 10 years rather than the 20 years it would have taken using the Authority's own resources. By actively demonstrating good practice it is hoped that the partners will be able to influence national policy on the management of the British uplands.