

Appendix 1

Peak District National Park Authority
Asset Management Plan 2010-2020

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1. Vision

We will demonstrate leadership in property management to achieve the best outcomes for the National Park and for the Authority. We will embrace innovation. We will, wherever possible, seek delivery partnerships to meet National Park Management Plan (NPMP) outcomes in a balanced, integrated and sustainable way. The Authority will own or manage property directly only when this contributes to key NPMP outcomes, and there is no other realistic way of achieving those objectives. Our focus will be on improving quality, community engagement and demonstrating value for money.

2. Executive Summary

This Asset Management Plan presents a strategy for managing the Authority's property assets over the next 10 years. The strategic approach for managing each type of property is presented in sections 7 & 8. Detailed recommendations for each individual property are presented in the Property Schedule at Annex 1. This Plan replaces the Asset Management Plan, May 2005 and the Phase 2 Portfolio Review, May 2006. An update on progress implementing the recommendations of the May 2006 review is provided at Annex 2.

The Authority's current portfolio of properties has been acquired for a variety of reasons since the 1970s. It contains some iconic National Park landscapes, such as Stanage, the Eastern Edges, the Warslow Moors and the Roaches. There are also 20 smaller rural "Minor Properties", woodlands, recreational facilities and operational buildings.

Collectively the properties make a significant contribution to a wide range of National Park Management Plan outcomes. This plan aims to clearly identify and maximise those contributions to outcomes and to focus resources on maintenance priorities and actively demonstrating good practice.

However, it is not necessarily essential to NPMP outcomes for the Authority to own property. Others, such as partner organisations, are also capable of managing many of the properties well. A priority for the 10 year strategy will be to achieve a much smaller but adequately resourced portfolio of retained properties, with other organisations and individuals contributing more to their management for the benefit of all.

This plan is, therefore, seeking radical change and new ways of delivering in order to achieve the vision. The focus of this plan is on fundamental reviews of the Authority's ownership and management of properties. It also sets out a framework for updating estate management plans and property strategies, which will specify management objectives and performance targets in much greater detail.

3. Consultation

This strategy document is available to the public (Part A). Only Annex 1, the Property Schedule, is confidential (Part B), as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Authority and others.

It is proposed that the main vehicles for stakeholder engagement will be the more detailed processes for reviewing disposal options for each property (or group of properties) and the development of new estate management plans (by the Authority or new owners/leaseholders).

4. Outline Description of the Authority's Property Portfolio

The Authority owns or leases approximately 6,070 hectares (15,000 acres) of land in 4 major rural estates, around 158 woodlands, 20 minor properties, 4 recreational trails, 49 car parks, 18 public toilets and 30 operational buildings (head office at Aldern House, environmental study centre at Losehill Hall, 4 cycle hire centres, 4 visitor centres and 20 Ranger operational properties). In total, this comprises around 4% of the National Park area. This is considerably more property than most other national park authorities manage. Further details are attached at Annex 3 of this Plan and a large scale map of the properties is available which can be viewed on request.

5. Context

The Authority is required by the Audit Commission to manage any retained assets effectively and sustainably to help deliver its strategic priorities and service needs (see Annex 4 for further details). Although there is no specific statutory requirement on the Authority to produce one, the most usual and effective means of doing so is through an Asset Management Plan.

This Asset Management Plan is tailored to meet the specific needs of this Authority but is based on good practice guidance contained in publications such as "Building on Strong Foundations – A Framework for Local Authority Asset Management" DCLG (February 2008); "Making the Most of Your Assets" by the East Midlands Centre of Excellence (Local Government Task Force) and the "Guide to Asset Management Planning in Wales" by the Consortium of Local Authorities in Wales.

The Authority acquired most of its Estate in the 1970s and 80s. At that time, threats to the conservation and recreation values of special places in the National Park were perhaps more apparent. There were also significant opportunities for enhancing the achievement of National Park purposes by purchasing key properties, with grant aid. Others were left to the Authority in lieu of inheritance tax.

It is now considered much less necessary for the Authority to own property in order to safeguard the special qualities of the National Park and achieve National Park purposes. For example, agri-environment schemes and advice are much more widely available and afford short to medium term protection (although this may be impacted upon by cuts to public sector spending). The level of protection is also much greater for designated sites, through Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), the Countryside & Rights of Way (CRoW) Act and Environmental Impact Assessment legislation. Some other organisations with similar objectives to the Authority are also actively seeking to expand their property portfolios.

The Authority does not receive any extra, or specific, budget allocation from Defra in recognition of its large property portfolio. In the current times of restricted government spending, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Authority to adequately maintain and enhance its properties alone. The strategic approach presented in this Plan is consistent with the Quirk Review, Centre for Local Government guidance, the Chancellor's 'tests' for public spending, Defra guidance concerning assets and the Government's 'Big Society' agenda. The general approach proposed by the most recent guidance may be summarised as: "the Authority should only own assets where ownership is essential and where other bodies, including civil society, are unable to take responsibility for those assets and develop them whilst protecting the environmental and public interests".

6. Current Situation (September 2010)

In 2009-10, the Authority's net revenue budget for all property management was around £700,000p.a. This does not represent sufficient resources to adequately maintain and pro-actively manage the current property portfolio. There is a gap in revenue maintenance funding of around £140,000 per year, required to keep all properties in a satisfactory condition. The Authority is also planning ahead for predicted significant cuts in public spending over the period to 2013/14. This will be the subject of an accompanying document to this Plan, the Property Service Business Plan (to be written in 2011), but the greater proportion of budget savings would be realised from the disposal of assets identified in this Asset Management Plan. Capital needs and aspirations for the Authority's properties also far outweigh currently available sources of capital. These will be addressed in a separate, but linked, Authority Capital Strategy.

The initial focus of the Plan is therefore to significantly reduce the scale of the property portfolio through disposals; to make efficiency savings in the management of those properties wherever possible; and to seek greater investment in retained properties through partnerships, external funding, commercial income generation and reinvestment of capital receipts from disposals. When a property is disposed, we will strive to at least protect and wherever possible, enhance its contribution to NPMP outcomes.

This strategy will enable the Authority to focus its management and resources on a smaller portfolio of properties, which it can maintain in good condition, with improved environmental performance and to maximise their contribution to the achievement of Authority Objectives.

Despite a low level of resources, the Authority's properties are generally in satisfactory to good condition and meet NPMP outcomes well (see Performance Management section below). The challenge will be to continue this work, seeking additional investment of time and resources by others.

Work has already begun on disposals which seek to protect NPMP outcomes and gain additional investment. Examples include the recent decisions to lease the Authority's largest landholding, the Eastern Moors Estate to a partnership of the RSPB and the National Trust, due to commence in November 2010; the lease of Millers Dale Station to Derbyshire Wildlife Trust; and a review of the Roaches Estate, which is in progress.

7. Property Strategy

This strategy builds on the principles approved as part of the Asset Management Plan (2005) and the Phase Two Portfolio Review (2006). The Authority will manage a dynamic portfolio of properties, focussing resources and increasing investment in the properties which contribute most to National Park outcomes, for the benefit of all, through the following processes:

Acquisition

The National Park Authority will consider acquiring property:

- as a last resort; and
- where ownership or lease by the Authority is the only option of satisfactorily protecting NPMP outcomes; and
- which contributes (or has the potential to contribute) significantly towards the achievement of NPMP outcomes; and
- our ownership should normally be temporary, seeking to sell or lease on with suitable safeguards in place

Management through partnerships

We will strive to manage the Authority's properties as follows:

- Wherever possible, seek partners to help invest more in our properties. This may be by working together to jointly manage sites; or by leasing or selling with suitable safeguards, to enable partners to carry out the day-to-day management of those properties
- We will only dispose of the freehold of properties where we consider that the long term achievement of NPMP outcomes can be adequately protected. We will dispose of properties leasehold where a greater degree of control is required
- Efficiently and effectively, to provide good value for money in delivering NPMP outcomes and corporate objectives in a financially sustainable way
- as exemplars of good environmental performance, with minimal carbon footprints
- In accordance with up to date estate management plans and strategies which demonstrate how each property contributes to NPMP outcomes
- As exemplars of engaging people: both in management decisions affecting those properties; and in being actively engaged in their management
- Maximise external funding and income generation potential (in ways which are compatible with NPMP outcomes)
- As pilots/ test-beds for innovation, where appropriate
- Well maintained in good (or at least satisfactory) physical condition and meeting all health and safety and other legal and regulatory property requirements
- Authority operational properties will be managed to provide accommodation which meets the needs of occupying staff and the public services provided from them to at least a satisfactory standard
- The Authority's Procedure for the Disposal of Property Assets will be strictly adhered to (see Annex 5)

8. Specific Strategies for Property Categories

a) Rural Estates

The Authority's major landholdings will be fundamentally reviewed, examining the scope for partnership or disposal compared to retaining management in-house and demonstrate the value for money of those respective approaches. Their contributions to NPMP outcomes will be defined and maximised through up to date estate management plans. This will be achieved as follows:

- 1. Eastern Moors:** In accordance with the 2006 Portfolio Review recommendation, the Estate was fundamentally reviewed recently. As approved by Services Committee in June 2009, a partnership lease to RSPB & National Trust is being established to commence 1 November 2010. The partners are to develop a new estate management plan by 31 March 2013 and develop a master plan for the wider Eastern Peak District area, working with Sheffield City Council, the Authority, Natural England, the local community and other stakeholders.
- 2. The Roaches:** Further to the 2006 Portfolio Review recommendation, this is currently under review (2010-12). This has just commenced (2010) to assess all options (retention/partnership/or disposal). Working objectives are to be developed as part of this review process. A new estate management plan will then be completed by 2015.
- 3. Stanage/North Lees:** Assess disposal options 2010-12. This is a change to the 2006 Portfolio Review recommendation. The Estate was last reviewed in 2006 and it was decided to retain all but the buildings. It is proposed that the Estate should be reviewed again as soon as possible. The review should reconsider whether the Estate should be retained, leased in a partnership, or disposed. It is recommended that the previously approved (June 2006) proposal to lease the Hall, Farmhouse and Cruck Barn to the Vivat Trust for 150 years should be put on hold while this review is carried out. The estate management plan, produced through the Stanage Forum stakeholder engagement process, should also be reviewed in 2013/14, although it is anticipated that there would be no major changes to the existing (2002-12) plan.
- 4. Warslow Moors:** Further to the 2006 Portfolio Review recommendation, it is proposed that this be reviewed in 2011-13, followed by the development of a new Estate Management Plan. The review should seek to further develop existing excellent long term partnership working with, for example, Natural England, MoD, Housing Associations and tenants. Where it is appropriate, new partners will also be sought. Significant external resources have already been obtained to increase the income which has enabled very positive ongoing management to be carried out. Other opportunities to increase income through external funding, rent revisions and development projects will be sought. It is planned to make the Estate fully cost neutral within the next 3 years, whilst maintaining its contributions to many NPMP outcomes, including biodiversity, cultural heritage, recreation and local economy and community. The Estate was given to the Authority in lieu of Inheritance Tax and is inalienable, so disposal options are more limited. However, the Secretary of State's view in principle will be sought regarding the potential for disposal to suitable partner organisations (either as a whole or in appropriate parcels).

5. Minor Properties: There will be a presumption for disposal, as long as their contributions to outcomes can be adequately protected. This is a development of the 2006 Portfolio Review recommendations, which proposed disposal or future review for most Minor Properties (see Annex 1 for details). The properties fall into 2 broad categories with regard to reviewing their future management:

a) Sites which contribute little to outcomes and are well protected.

Dispose with no, or limited, conditions to protect and maintain existing value. Some small sites (under 10ha) contribute little to objectives and others are well protected by SSSI and/or Special Area of Conservation and Scheduled Ancient Monument designation. Such sites may be disposed of with relatively low risk of impact on NPMP outcomes.

b) Sites which contribute significantly to outcomes and/or lack legal protection.

Some of the larger sites contribute quite significantly to a range of outcomes. For example: Hard Rake (40 hectares/100 acres), which was purchased in 2000 with Heritage Lottery Funding, and Tideswell Dale (22 hectares/55 acres) provide opportunities as demonstration sites for White Peak pastures and hay meadows with public access and engagement. As for the major estates, these properties should only be disposed if their ongoing contributions to NPMP outcomes can be adequately protected by conditions or disposal to partner organisations with similar objectives to the Authority's.

b) Recreational Facilities

1. Trails – Tissington, High Peak, Monsal & Thornhill Trails: A new Trails Management Plan will be developed by 31 May 2012. The Pedal Peak District Project has permitted shorter-term investment in order to extend the network to Buxton. Future funds may permit a further extension to Matlock. In the period 2011-14 it is planned to review options for disposal and partnership. The strategic approach may include Cycle Hire Centres and other recreational facilities relating to the trails network. The 2006 recommendation was for a review but this strategy is a development of that recommendation, with a different emphasis.

2. Car Parks, Toilets and Refreshment Concessions

It is recommended that these should fall into 3 broad categories for review. This is a development of the 2006 recommendations, which was to review them as part of a car parks strategy:

a) Associated with a major estate/other key asset. These should be included in the reviews of those major estates, as detailed above. The Trails car parks should be assessed for possible rationalisation following the completion of links to Buxton and Matlock through the Pedal Peak District project.

b) Stand-alone sites which contribute significantly to NPMP outcomes (eg. recreation and traffic management). These should be disposed if possible, with conditions to protect their contributions to outcomes. This may, in some cases, mean restricting disposal only to partner organisations with similar objectives.

c) Stand-alone sites which do not contribute significantly to NPMP outcomes. Sites which perform little or no traffic management function and add little to recreational enjoyment of the National Park (because there are limited opportunities from them), could be sold with no conditions or closed. However, implications on the local area and community will be considered.

NB. If pay and display car parks, which are net income generators, are sold/leased, the Authority would seek proper recompense from potential purchasers/leaseholders for the loss of that income as part of the business case assessment.

3. Campsites

The Authority owns 3 campsites: Eric Byne near Baslow, Fieldhead in Edale and North Lees, Hathersage. Eric Byne is shortly to be leased to the RSPB/National Trust as part of the Eastern Moors Estate. The other two are integral to the Authority owned properties within which they are situated. It is recommended that they should be retained but move to full cost recovery budgets in the short term; and reviewed along with the surrounding properties (Fieldhead Centre and North Lees Estate) in the medium term (see operational properties and rural estates sections). This is broadly in accordance with the 2006 recommendations (see Annex 1 for details).

c) Operational Properties

The need for operational properties will be governed by the Authority's vision and strategy, service business plans and the need for a headquarters building to house staff. They will be retained unless services are reduced or needs could be more effectively and efficiently met by moving to a different building. They will be managed to at least a satisfactory standard to meet the needs of occupants and the visiting public and to a high environmental performance standard.

1. Headquarters: Aldern House: Review all options in 2011-12, including retention/partnership/office sharing/disposal. This is a change to the 2006 recommendation to retain. It is considered that circumstances have changed sufficiently to require a review now. For example, environmental management requirements have increased considerably and other partner organisations are looking to share offices, as well as the financial imperative due to expected cuts to public spending.

2. Losehill Hall: Manage according to Losehill Hall Business Plan. Review ownership/disposal/partnership options 2010-11. This is a change to the 2006 recommendation.

3. Visitor Centres: Manage according to Visitor Centres Business Plan. Seek partnerships wherever possible. This is in accordance with the 2006 recommendations.

4. Cycle Hire Centres: Manage according to Cycle Hire Business Plan and review along with the Trails as links are developed between Buxton and Matlock. This is in accordance with the 2006 recommendations.

5. Ranger Briefing & Volunteer Centres: Retain but rationalise and manage in accordance with the Ranger Service Business Plan. Many of these properties are leased and/or operated in partnership with others, such as water companies. This is in accordance with the 2006 recommendations.

d) Woodlands

These are managed according to the existing Woodlands Asset Management Plan, which details a rolling programme of acquisitions and disposals to rescue woodlands under threat or in need of restoration. This is to be reviewed, which is in accordance with the 2006 recommendations.

Woodlands are currently (2010) managed in a different Directorate (Conservation and Development) to the other Authority properties. Management plans for each woodland are being updated with the intention that they are managed by the Property Service from 2011/12. The basic strategy is to acquire woodlands as a last resort to protect and enhance them; to manage them for NPMP outcomes, particularly biodiversity, landscape, recreation and local community and maximise income generation potential; and then to dispose wherever possible with adequate conditions to protect them for the future. However, there are limitations on the disposal of many of the sites because they are leasehold.

9. Capital Strategy for Properties

The disposal of properties will add to the Authority's available capital reserves. These will then be available for capital (high value, long lasting) projects. The anticipated capital receipts from disposals and the capital spending needs of each property have been identified. These will be prioritised along with all other demands on the Authority's available capital in a separate Capital Strategy.

10. Financial implications

Confidential information is provided at the end of the Property Schedule in Appendix 1 to the Part B report.

11. Performance management

Targets and timescales for the review of each property asset are detailed in the confidential schedule attached (in the Part B report). Specific targets for each property will be set in the Estate Management Plan or strategy for each property or property type.

There are two key measures which give a good indication of the overall condition of the property portfolio:

a) Condition assessment

A stated aspiration of the Property Strategy is that all properties should be well maintained in good (or at least satisfactory) physical condition.

Using the RICS recommended approach, as assessed by the Property Service, currently (September 2010) out of 90 properties:

- 26 (29%) are in condition A (good)
- 33 (37%) are in condition B (satisfactory)
- [So 59 (66%) are in at least satisfactory condition (A+B)]
- 24 (27%) are in condition C (poor)
- 7 (8%) are in condition D (bad)

b) NPMP Performance assessment

Another stated aim is that, through up to date estate management plans and strategies, we will demonstrate how each property contributes to National Park Management Plan outcomes. As part of a larger, working Property Schedule, we are in the process of defining which outcomes each property contributes to and how well they are performing in achieving those outcomes. All properties have been assessed in outline by the Property Service as follows (out of 88 properties, excluding offices):

- 32 (35%) perform excellently in delivering NPMP outcomes
- 50 (57%) perform well
- 6 (7%) perform poorly

12. Monitoring and evaluation

When a property is disposed, the desired outcomes will be specified. These will then be monitored regularly and reviewed to check that the disposal is achieving the desired outcomes and providing value for money. The degree to which this is done will vary according to the nature of the property and the legal arrangement.

The overall condition and performance figures above will be updated annually.

13. Review

The confidential schedule attached (in the Part B report) will be constantly updated and progress reported to the Authority's Senior Management Team at least once a year. It is anticipated that progress will be reported to the Authority at least every 2 years. The Plan will be reviewed in 5 years, although it is designed to last for 10, so a major review is not anticipated until then.

14. Property Schedule

Attached at Annex 1 (Part B report only) is a schedule which provides detailed recommendations and rationale for each of the Authority's properties. This is a summary of a much larger working document which specifies all aspects of those properties relevant to decisions about their future management. The larger document includes details such as: contribution to NPMP outcomes, performance score, condition score, revenue budget, maintenance budget need, capital budget

need, nature of ownership, etc. For simplicity, this has been distilled into the summary information attached to this report but a fuller version is available to members on request (as a confidential Part B item).

In addition to this schedule, the Property Service holds more detailed records including a capital and maintenance schedule and records which are being compiled into a Property Database. These are working documents which are too detailed for a strategic Asset Management Plan but members should be aware of their existence.

Annex 2 - Update on disposals since May 2006

<u>Property</u>	<u>Estate</u>	<u>2006 Recommendation</u>	<u>Action taken</u>	<u>Financial implications of disposal</u>	<u>Impact on NPMP outcomes</u>	<u>Impact on condition</u>
BINN GREEN CAR PARK, CONCESSION + TOILETS	Car park, Toilets	Ask United Utilities and Oldham MBC to take on management of site with pay and display income as part of area review	Surrendered leasehold interest to UU as landlord, who then leased on to RSPB 1 April 2010, as approved by RMT November 2009.	Saved a net revenue budget of £7,500p.a. and a further need of £825p.a (which was not being met) from 2011/12 onwards.	Improved as a recreation facility, protected contributions to traffic, understanding and economy outcomes	Improved from D (bad) to B (satisfactory)
No 1 HARTINGTON STATION COTTAGES	Minor Properties	Dispose when appropriate	Sold 11/01/10 to service tenant, with local occupancy conditions, as approved by Services Committee 5 June 2009	Saved no revenue budget but saved a budget need of approximately £2,000p.a. (which was not being met). Generated a £99,000 capital receipt.	Protected community outcome by local occupancy condition	B (satisfactory) No change
CROWDEN YOUTH HOSTEL	Hostels	Surrender of head lease to allow YHA to lease directly from UU (as previously agreed in Services Committee)	Lease surrendered 2008, as approved by Services Committee	No financial implications other than a limited staff time saving.	No change to recreation and understanding outcomes	B (satisfactory) No change
CROWDEN CAMPSITE	Campsite	Surrender of head lease to allow the Camping & Caravanning Club to lease directly from UU (as previously agreed in Services Committee, 7 October 2005)	Lease surrendered 22 July 2008, with Caravan Club taking a new long term lease of the site from UU	Saved a net revenue budget of £850p.a. and gained further revenue and capital investment in the site by CCC (in updating the ablution facilities, access road, drainage, LPG tank and electric hook-ups)	Improved as a recreation facility, limited contributions to understanding and economy outcomes protected.	Improved from C (poor) to A (good)

Annex 3

Description of the Authority's Estates

The estates are a very diverse mixture ranging from iconic National Park landscapes; to a traditional tenanted agricultural Estate; to disused railway lines converted to recreational routes. Several properties are the base for a number of services to the public that the Authority provides directly such as cycle hire, visitor centres and campsites.

The Authority has acquired the properties over the years either for specific operational reasons or because acquisition was seen as the best or only means of achieving National Park purposes.

The Authority's broad objective has been to achieve high standards of land management which serve National Park purposes while meeting the proper needs of tenants, graziers and others with an interest in the land. The Authority has also been conscious that other land managers within the National Park will look at its own management, and as such, hopes to demonstrate good practice. The practical experience gained by Authority staff in managing the property has been very beneficial in their understanding of issues facing private owners.

The estates are managed by the Estates Management Team within the Authority's Property Service.

THE RURAL ESTATES

The main upland estates amount to about **5463 hectares (13,500 acres)** and a brief description of each is given below:



Stanage/North Lees Estate

Stanage/North Lees Estate was purchased in 1971 to protect its outstanding landscape and wildlife value and provide for its enjoyment by the 250,000 or so people who visit it every year. The land comprises **524 hectares (1,296 acres)** divided between heather moorland, rough grazing and bracken, in-bye land enclosed by dry stonewalls and woodland. The Estate is of considerable

wildlife value, particularly for moorland birds. The moorland and rough grazing areas are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). There are also a number of sites of archaeological interest.

Central to the Estate is Stanage Edge, a spectacular crag that is one of the most popular areas of countryside in Britain, due to its proximity to Sheffield and its widespread reputation amongst climbers. The Authority has provided car parks and toilet block. An interpretation plan has also been implemented. A tented

campsite with 60 pitches open all year is run in-hand by the Authority and is extremely popular, particularly with climbers and outward-bound groups. The Management Plan for the Estate was completed in 2002. The Plan evolved through the Stanage Forum: a consensus building process involving all interested parties. The Forum has an ongoing role in the management of the Estate. An Estate Ranger maintains the car parks, footpaths, woodlands, moorland and assists visitors.

The entire Estate, excluding woodland, consists of one farm holding. The farm is let on a farm business tenancy to a local farmer. The farm carries a flock of Swaledale ewes and suckler cows including Highland cattle. Most of the buildings are traditional but a modern stock building was erected in 1994. A Higher Level Environmental Stewardship agreement aims to achieve a balance between farming and conservation objectives. Adjoining the farm buildings is an imposing Elizabethan tower called North Lees Hall. It has been leased since 1988 to the Vivat Trust, a historic buildings charity, who let it as two self-catering holiday apartments. The Vivat Trust have ambitious plans to develop the Hall and adjacent traditional buildings.



The Roaches Estate

The Roaches Estate was purchased in 1980. This followed pressure on the Authority from conservation and recreation interests to secure its future after a period of heavy overgrazing by sheep and attempts to restrict access to the climbing crags. The Estate extends to **394 hectares (975 acres)**, comprising mostly of moorland but also semi-improved grazing land and woodland. Virtually the whole Estate is within the Leek Moors SSSI.

The moorland and farmland amounting to 242 hectares (600 acres) is let on a farm business tenancy to a neighbouring farmer but this is currently under review. The South-West Peak Environmentally Sensitive Area Agreement held in the name of the tenant is due to expire in the near future and an application to enter the whole Estate into a Higher Level Stewardship Scheme is currently being explored.. A flock of Swaledale ewes is kept.

Rockhall Cottage, an 18th century 'folly' in the middle of the Estate was purchased and subsequently refurbished in 1992. It is now let on a 50-year lease to the British Mountaineering Council as overnight accommodation for climbers.

The dramatic rock edges are a focal point for the hundreds of thousands of people who visit the Estate. A Management Plan was produced in 1981 and reviewed in 1993. The Plan attempts to balance the great conservation interest on the Estate with the recreational pressures on it. Car parking restrictions (and improvements) were introduced in the early 1990's in order to control the overwhelming car numbers coming that were causing traffic hazards and blocking the roads for

agricultural and emergency access. A 'park and ride' scheme was also introduced in 1993 but this was discontinued in 2007 due to lack of funding. . An Estate Ranger is employed to manage the estate on the ground. His role involves predator control, walling, fencing, footpath repairs, and liaison with the tenants and with neighbours. The sporting rights on the Estate were purchased in 1995 and are no longer exercised in accordance with the Authority's policy.

A review of the future of the Estate is taking place in 2010/11.



Eastern Moors Estate

Eastern Moors Estate was purchased from the (then) Severn Trent Water Authority in 1984, with financial assistance from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Countryside Commission and the (then) Nature Conservancy Council. The largest of the Authority's estates, it comprises **2505 hectares (6,190 acres)**, mainly of heather and grass moorland. Dramatic gritstone

craggs known collectively as the Eastern Edges dominate the western edge of the Estate. The land is almost wholly unaffected by buildings or other man-made structures. It is of exceptional ecological and archaeological interest. Much is designated as an SSSI, SPA and SAC and there are numerous Scheduled Ancient Monuments. It is one of the most popular sites in the Peak District with walkers and climbers.

The Authority continues to operate a long-running agisted grazing system for sheep and summer cattle grazing. Most of the estate is now under a Countryside Stewardship agreement with joint tenants. The tenants of Big Moor have also entered into a Sheep Wildlife Enhancement Scheme with Natural England. A management plan, written in 1986 and revised in 1993, determines management policies. There are programmes for heather burning, bracken and birch control aimed at enhancing the wildlife interest of the moorland. The effects of management are monitored. There is also a drystone wall-rebuilding programme under which 1,000 metres of wall per year have been rebuilt since 1993.

The moorland is now all 'open access'. Limited car parking is provided for visitors. An Estate Ranger, Shepherd, Estate Ranger/Assistant Shepherd staff the Estate on the ground.

The Authority is in the process of granting a 15 year lease of the Estate to a partnership between the National Trust and the RSPB. The Authority will also be a partner at a strategic level in the future management of the Estate.



The Warslow Moors Estate

The Warslow Moors Estate was acquired as a "capital transfer in lieu of tax" in 1986. It is a large but very fragmented Estate of **1902 hectares (4,700 acres)** spread over a 10 mile distance north to south. The nucleus is around Warslow village. The majority of the Estate is of high landscape and conservation value and is part of the Leek Moors SSSI and South West Peak

ESA. Management is complex, as the Estate comprises of 14 agricultural holdings, 12 cottages, church/former schoolroom, a public house as well as seasonal mowing and grazing land, extensive tracts of moorland and blocks of woodland. Approx 607 hectares (1,500 acres) of the moorland is leased and licensed to the Ministry of Defence as part of the Upper Hulme Military Training Area.

The landscape and conservation value of the Estate is being enhanced in particular by working with the agricultural tenants to include their holdings in conservation grant schemes. The majority of the tenants are now in the South West Peak ESA agreements although many of these are shortly coming to an end. The tenants will need to apply for new Higher Level Stewardship agreements. New lettings include 'conservation clauses' in the tenancy agreements, which oblige tenants to farm in an environmentally sensitive way. Rents reflect these commitments.

The Authority has also recently entered into three Higher Level Stewardship agreements in its own name and this has brought in significant extra resources to manage the 'in hand' land on the Estate. There is an annual programme of heather burning and cutting, predator control, wall building, fencing and woodland planting and management across the Estate.

Native breed Highland and Belted Galloway cattle have been introduced to graze a number of the heather moorlands.

The Authority acquired a largely 'unmodernised' Estate. After a nearly 25-year programme of repairs and improvements to farmhouses, cottages and farm buildings (including several slurry and farmyard manure stores), the property is beginning to meet modern domestic and agricultural standards. Much further work is however required. In particular there are over 40 small field barns in a very poor condition. These are no longer useful for modern agricultural methods but are nevertheless an important part of the landscape. A programme to repair some of the most important is currently underway.

A Management Plan written in 1986 and a Joint Management Plan with the Ministry of Defence (reviewed 1995) guide principles of management. An Estate

Ranger, with game keeping skills, is based on the Estate. A predator control contractor is also employed for 10 months of the year.

Minor Properties The Authority owns 20 smaller properties throughout the National Park. They range in size from very small amenity sites to 38hectare (95 acres) of agricultural land. They are largely owned and managed to promote their high conservation value with appropriate integration of agriculture and recreation. Most of the sites have high ecological or archaeological interest and some are within SSSIs and SACs (Special Areas of Conservation). Many of the sites were purchased in order to carry out reclamation schemes to reinstate disused quarries, lead rakes and refuse tips. They now contain locally rare and attractive plant species and display interesting geology.

Annual programmes of dry stone wall rebuilding and maintenance of traditional buildings is also required to enhance the living landscape. Most of the properties are grazed during the summer by livestock from local farms. This is a vital tool used to enhance species-rich grassland and provides income towards the maintenance of the estate.

Recreational facilities for the general public include picnic sites, a wheelchair route for disabled people at Tideswell Dale and an archaeological trail at Roystone Rocks, near Ballidon. Mini management plans are currently being compiled or reviewed for each minor property of significant size, particularly with a view to increasing income to the estate. A number of the properties are in Countryside Stewardship or Higher Level Stewardship Schemes. A Property Manager, partly supported by field staff but mainly using local contract labour, manages the estate.

The Authority also owns or manages four houses, which are occupied by staff that need to reside near their place of work.

THE RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES

The Team manages a number of properties which cater for the recreational needs of visitors to and inhabitants of the National Park.

Trails: Four former railway lines which have been converted to multi use recreational paths for use by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The High Peak and Tissington Trails were designated as definitive public bridleways in 1999. The Trails are used by many thousands of people each year. There are a number of car parks (on the sites of former stations) along the Trails which have a variety of facilities including toilets, picnic areas and refreshment concessions (see below). There are also cycle hire centres at Parsley Hay (on the High Peak Trail) and at Ashbourne (on the Tissington Trail). The Trails are also of high conservation and cultural heritage value with a wide variety of floristic interest on the cuttings and embankments, woodland and geological formations. There are over 100 railway structures including listed structures at Monsal Dale, Millersdale and Minninglow/Roystone

Tissington Trail - opened in 1971 and runs for 13 miles between Ashbourne and Parsley Hay.

High Peak Trail - opened in 1973 and runs for 10¹/₄ miles within the National Park between Dowlow (south of Buxton) and Longcliffe.



Monsal Trail - opened in 1981 and runs for 8¹/₂ miles between Bakewell and Blackwell Mill (three miles east of Buxton). In 2009/2010 the exciting "Pedal Peak District" project commenced to open up 4 closed tunnels and link the Trail to Buxton.

Thomhill Trail - opened in 1995 and runs for 1 mile between Bamford and the Ladybower Reservoir.

The Trails are staffed by the Senior Trails Ranger and Trails Ranger who are based at Tissington.

Car Parks:

Forty eight car parks are managed throughout the National Park. These range in size between 10 and 150 spaces and provide parking for a total of 2,500 vehicles. Up until 1994, 10 of these car parks levied a modest charge through an honesty box system. Since 1994 pay and display machines have been introduced onto 18 sites. These machines now produce significant revenue for the Authority. Litter deposited on the car parks is collected by the Authority's Litter Service Officer as part of his regular patrol around the National Park.

Toilets:

Eighteen public toilets are provided on the above car parks. Of particular interest is a compost toilet installed in 1995 at White Lodge car park near Bakewell. This is one of the first of its type in the country. Each toilet is serviced by a part-time cleaner employed by the Authority.



Refreshment Concessions:

Fifteen refreshment concessions are let on the car parks.
Five of these are rooms within buildings on the site, the remainder are mobile units.



Campsites:

North Lees (Hathersage) - managed in hand as part of North Lees Estate and particularly popular with climbers using Stanage Edge.

Eric Byne (Baslow) - leased to a neighbouring farmer. A basic site for 30 tents. This is about to be leased to the RSPB/NT partnership as part of the Eastern Moors Estate.

Fieldhead (Edale) - leased for 5 years to a private operator. The site now provides good accommodation for 45 tents.

Further details of our operational properties are yet to be compiled in this format.

Annex 4

Audit Commission Requirements for Authority Asset Management

Use of Resources Assessment 2008 /2009

Key Lines of Enquiry

KLOE 3.2

The organisation manages its assets effectively and sustainably to help deliver its strategic priorities and service needs

The Authority strives to meet level 3 but must at least meet level 2:

Level 2

Performing adequately

- Strategies and plans for assets show how assets will be developed to meet priorities, operational and service needs and outcomes for local communities.
- Financial plans support the delivery of asset strategies, either through investment, disposals, transfers, and rationalisation or by more efficient asset use.
- There is managed reduction of high levels of backlog maintenance.
- Capital investment is targeted to achieve best value and maximum effect on priorities, needs and outcomes for local communities.
- Policies, decision making structures and roles underpin the management of assets as a corporate resource.
- The organisation has comprehensive information on assets which supports its strategies and decision making on investment and dis investment.
- The performance of assets is managed, benchmarked and monitored against targets for improvement.

Level 3

Performing well

The organisation challenges whether all its assets are required, fit for purpose and provide value for money to meet current and future needs. Under performing or surplus assets are rationalised or disposed of.

The organisation is improving the performance of its assets to provide buildings that are

- fit for purpose
- deliver better access and outcomes for the community
- improve value for money
- mitigate adverse impacts on the environment and prepare for climate change.

The organisation evaluates the best option for significant investment decisions in property developments using option appraisal and whole life costing techniques.

The organisation is developing a strategic approach to working with others, for example the third sector, local public agencies and community groups, to identify opportunities for shared use of its assets, and alternative options for the management and ownership of its assets, to derive wider community benefits.

Annex 5

Procedure for Disposal of Property Assets

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is Government policy that local authorities should dispose of surplus land (and property) wherever possible but not divest themselves of valuable public assets unless they are satisfied that the circumstances warrant such action.
- 1.2 The Asset Management Plan (May 2005) expresses a clear intention to review all property assets currently held by the Authority against its strategic objectives. The aim of the review is to achieve a significant rationalisation of the property portfolio over a five-year period.
- 1.3 The criteria for disposal in the Asset Management Plan include:
 - 'Property will be viewed against the Authority's strategic objectives'.
 - 'If objectives can be met by means other than ownership of direct management...then the option of disposal will be seriously considered'
- 1.3 The Asset Management Group will play a key role in implementing the Action Plan, including property disposals.
- 1.4 This procedure shall apply to all disposals of property of the Authority.
- 1.5 Property includes land and buildings.
- 1.6 Disposal includes sale, lease of more than 7 years, assignment of unexpired term of lease and grant of other rights such as easements.

2. The principles guiding disposal procedure:

- 2.1 Section 123 Local Government Act 1972 imposes a legal obligation on the Authority not to dispose of land (otherwise than by way of a short tenancy not exceeding 7 years) for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained, except with the consent of the Secretary of State, either through the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 (a copy of which is attached), or through specific consent.
- 2.2 Disposals are also subject to the principles of open competition, fairness, transparency and reasonableness.
- 2.3 Disposals must comply in all respects with the Authority's Standing Orders

3. Timing

- 3.1 The timing of disposals will be considered against the background of the Authority's budgetary requirements, together with the current state of the market and other factors, which may affect the value of the asset.

4. Method of Disposal

- 4.1 The method of disposal shall be the most effective method to secure the best terms reasonably available, as recommended by the Corporate Property Officer (CPO) in consultation with the Head of Finance for acceptance by Services Committee or Resource Management Team in accordance with the procedure at paragraph 7 below.
- 4.2 An open market valuation will be obtained from either the District Valuer or from a suitable RICS qualified surveyor.
- 4.3 The return from any disposal is to be maximised by giving all potential purchasers an opportunity to tender/submit an offer, unless either
 - a) A "special purchaser" is identified, namely one who has a legal interest in the asset, such that significantly diminishes the value of the Authority's freehold reversion **and** is prepared to pay a premium for the asset over the market value as assessed by the District Valuer or a RICS qualified surveyor, or
 - b) there are justifiable overriding factors. These overriding factors must be such that are considered by the Authority to be likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area, having regard to the Authority's strategic outcomes as identified in the National Park Management Plan.
- 4.4 Where overriding factors have been identified under b) above, the Authority may invite tenders from a select list of parties identified by reference to relevant criteria pertinent to the asset in question, or in exceptional circumstances the disposal may be restricted to a single party.
- 4.5 In the case of a disposal to a single party under 4.4 above, the disposal will be treated as a disposal at an undervalue, even though the Authority may be achieving the best consideration reasonably obtainable. In this case the progress of negotiations shall be recorded in writing and the procedure set out at paragraph 5 below will be followed.

5. Disposal at undervalue

- 5.1 The Authority may dispose at less than best consideration reasonably obtainable under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972 General Disposal Consent (England) 2003, providing:-
 - 5.1.1 the disposal is likely to contribute to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the whole or any part of its area or any persons resident or present in its area, having regard to the Authority's strategic outcomes identified in the National Park Management Plan, **and**
 - 5.1.2 the undervalue is less than £2m.

Any disposals at less than the market value which do not fall within these two parameters require the specific consent of the Secretary of State for

Communities and Local Government, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 5.2 In assessing whether the proposed sale is at an undervalue the Authority must obtain a valuation of the property following the advice provided in the Technical Appendix to the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003.

6. Other Considerations

- 6.1 Sale of open spaces - s 123(2A) Local Government Act 1972 requires an LA to advertise its intentions in a local newspaper for 2 consecutive weeks and to consider objections before a decision on disposal is made.
- 6.2 Land held for planning purposes (s226 Town and Country Planning Act 1990) cannot be disposed of for less than Best Value without specific consent of Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (s233 Town and Country Planning Act 1990).
- 6.3 In some circumstances where land was acquired under a Compulsory Purchase Order, there are specific requirements to seek out the original vendor and offer it back (Crichel Down Rules). In such circumstances further legal advice will be sought.

7. The Procedure

Step 1 – Identification

Property is identified as appropriate for disposal as part of the Asset Management process.

Step 2 – Alternative Use

The CPO will consult through the Asset Management Group (AMG) on possible alternative uses of the property. If an alternative use is proposed for the property, the AMG will consider and make proposals to Resource Management Team (RMT) if appropriate.

Step 3 – Valuation

Valuation advice will be sought, either from the District Valuer or from a RICS qualified surveyor, following the guidance provided in the Technical Appendix to the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 (attached).

Step 4 – Disposal

If there is no alternative use for the property or the RMT does not support any proposals then there will be a Business Case on disposal with valuation advice and risk assessment to RMT (if the value is over £5,000) and then Services Committee (if the value is over £20,000) with a recommendation that the property be disposed of and as to the method of disposal.

All reports to RMT and Services Committee will include the CPO's view on the proposed method of disposal to achieve the best consideration reasonably obtainable and, where a method of disposal other than open competition is recommended, describes how this duty will be satisfied.

Services Committee approval is required in disposals of **any** value where it is proposed that the disposal is expected to be for less than best consideration reasonably obtainable or where the method of disposal is other than open competition, with Part A dealing with the principle of disposal and Part B dealing with the valuations and price. The report will contain the reasons for and against seeking best consideration and, following consultation with the Solicitor, will specify the relevant legal powers of the Authority to accept less than best consideration.

Step 5 – Planning

Where receipt is likely to be increased if the site is sold with the benefit of planning permission or a planning and development brief, then these will be sought after approval of the Business Case and before the property is marketed.

Step 6 – Marketing

The CPO will recommend a marketing strategy for acceptance by RMT.

Step 7 – Terms for the disposal

The principal terms of disposals if significantly different from those approved in step 4 above will be reported to Services Committee (if the value is over £20,000 or in the case of disposals for less than the best consideration reasonably obtainable) or RMT.