

Peak District National Park Management Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2018-19

Foreword

The first year's delivery of the 2018-23 Peak District National Park Management Plan has successfully focused attention on some of the more difficult challenges facing the National Park.

While moorland fires demonstrate the fragile nature of what we are trying to conserve, they also demonstrate the urgency of what we are trying to achieve through a wide range of initiatives to help ensure that the uplands have a sustainable future.

It is heartening to see that the Moors for the Future Partnership continues to deliver excellent results, showing leadership in confronting some of the challenges faced by the local uplands. In particular the challenge of stabilising and improving our precious blanket bogs.

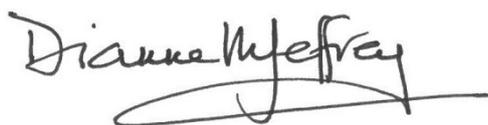
The challenges of the UK's departure from the European Union have been embraced constructively and the newly formed White Peak Partnership is making progress in ensuring that, whatever arrangements follow, they are as best suited to local needs as possible.

Action is starting to take shape to improve visitor experiences through better events management and a fresh look at the countryside code. Issues close to local residents have figured strongly in the action plan and the partners represented on the National Park Management Plan Advisory Group have begun to address those concerns where they are able.

At this stage, progress is naturally stronger in some areas than others and it will take the full life of the plan to prove whether we have been successful in all that we set out to achieve. If we are to be successful in the widest possible sense, we must strive to continue and expand engagement with the plan.

The following pages provide more detail on our progress in delivering the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23. Please feel proud of what we have achieved so far and consider how you may support delivering these intentions in the future. This Autumn's conference will focus on climate change with the ambition of working towards a carbon zero Peak District. As perhaps the biggest challenge we currently face I encourage you all to support this conference and the actions it proposes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dianne Jeffrey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the bottom.

Dianne Jeffrey
Independent Chair of the Peak District National Park Management Plan Advisory Group

Introduction

The National Park Management Plan provides the framework that encourages everyone to work together to achieve national park purposes. It is not a plan for an individual organisation or group but a plan for the place. It is, therefore, a partnership plan. It is the single most important strategic document for the Peak District National Park. It shares with everyone what the main issues and priorities are. It then sets out how, together, we are going to tackle those issues over the next five years.

Since 2007 the National Park Management Plan has been overseen by an Advisory Group of partners who have monitored delivery and provided advice to the organisations involved. The group contains representatives from the following organisations:

Business Peak District
Derbyshire County Council
Environment Agency
Farmers & Land Managers Forum
Friends of the Peak District
Historic England
Local Access Forum
Local Nature Partnership
National Park Authority
National Trust
Natural England
Peak Park Parishes Forum
Rural Action
Sheffield City Council
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Visit Peak District

The management plan is organised around six main themes known as Areas of Impact, which are in turn broken down into a series of intentions.

Areas of Impact

- 1: Preparing for a future climate
- 2: Ensuring a future for farming and land management
- 3: Managing landscape conservation on a big scale
- 4: A National Park for everyone
- 5: Encouraging enjoyment with understanding
- 6: Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy

Area of Impact 1: Preparing for a future climate

Intention 1.1: Reduce the effects of climate change on the special qualities

To reduce the effects of climate change on the special qualities, we will know which special qualities are most affected by climate change, and focus action on reducing these impacts. We will undertake a climate change vulnerability assessment on the special qualities of the National Park & produce a mitigation/adaptation plan setting out priority actions.

Update

All the special quality features have been ranked using a robust methodology. This has provided the top 25% of special quality features that the climate change vulnerability assessment will be undertaken on. The vulnerability assessment will commence in Q1 of 2019/20.

More details can be found via the following [link](#)

Future Actions:

- Identify mitigation actions & priorities 2020-2021.
- Establish / determine delivery partnership 2021.
- Start implementing mitigation / adaptation plan

Area of Impact 2: Ensuring a future for farming and land management

Intention 2.1: Secure funding for future land management to benefit all

To secure funding for future land management to benefit all, we will seek to create an ideal future farming and land management payment scheme in the Peak District National Park which helps to conserve and enhance the special qualities.

Update

A proposed blue print for the new environmental land management scheme has been submitted to DEFRA. DEFRA has advised that they have selected elements of the White Peak Pilot Ideas for phase 1 testing. This is linked to the new White Peak Partnership with further details given under Intention 3.2

Future Actions:

To have a new support package available from 2023.

Note: The new Agriculture Bill and policy statement provides a planned timescale of 2025 to have new environmental land management arrangements in place

Intention 2.2: Ensure that the management of upland moors delivers environmental, social & economic benefits

To ensure that the management of upland moors delivers environmental, social & economic benefits; we will seek to restore populations of birds of prey to at least the levels present in the late 1990s, with the addition of hen harrier as a regularly successful breeding species.

Focusing on:

1. Fire risk
2. Visitor engagement
3. Resilient sustainable moorland
4. Moorland birds

Regular monitoring of progress against these areas of focus is carried out in partnership between Natural England, the Moorland Association and the National Park Authority. There is also an annual up-date on progress and agreement on the focus for the future year's activity with moorland owners, agents and keepers.

Update

Fire Operations Group

Discussion has taken place to develop a strategic approach to wildfire mitigation, including mapping of existing tracks of tracks, routes and watering points and areas of greatest fire risk. The group are working on developing fire mitigation zones across the National Park in order to help slow any fires progress and enabling earlier intervention with a series of fire management techniques.

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The National Upland Management Group are looking at developing a template for all estates to adopt and the Peak District is at the forefront of this work.

With the concern about wildfire risk increasing due to a dry winter, it has been agreed that a Strategic Peak District Moorland Fire Risk brief is developed with the National Park Authority taking the lead. All partners will be looking to help secure funding to help facilitate this work. A small working party made up of members of the Fire Operations Group and Sustainable Moorland Management Group will support this work and a first draft of the brief will be available in May 2019.

Access and Engagement

The main activity under this theme was the events management workshop which was held in January 2019. It is hoped that a way forward can be developed from the workshop that works for both event holders as well as local residents. The outcome of the workshop is provided under intention 5.2 Ensure shared responsibility

Work on the Countryside Code is starting with a stakeholder workshop in July being jointly led by the National Trust and the National Park Authority. Some of the issues that will be considered include; dog handling guidance, signage across the national park, communications channels through social media, and education.

Sustainable Moorland Management Group

We have organised and held a 'What does good blanket bog habitat look like and how to achieve it' session with the Peak District gamekeepers. Thanks to the support of the Fitzwilliam Estate we spent the day out on Bradfield Moor with most of the Peak District gamekeepers looking at the techniques and issues around better blanket bog management. It was an excellent day supported by Moors for the Future and Natural England with plenty of robust and challenging discussion around wildfire management, concerns over increased fuel loading, a demonstration of heather cutting with a robotic cutter and finally sphagnum inoculation and planting, which given the very dry spring and summer has taken well at Bradfield.

Work on developing the infrastructure workshop day has started. Potential sites for visits are being looked at and land owners approached for permission for access. The Natural England position statement on the cessation of burning on blanket bog has now been launched and further discussion with the moorland community is taking place. An extraordinary meeting of the group was held in April 2019 to explain further the implications of the statement and how this will affect moorland management going forward.

Work on long term management plans have slowed down while the infrastructure and burning on blanket bog issues are clarified. Public scrutiny of both areas of activity remains high and it continues to be a sensitive issue in the Peak District.

Moorland Birds

The Birds of Prey Initiative – Following the announcement of the Birds of Prey Initiative report and its finding, the report has now been published with a joint statement from all of the remaining Initiative partners which is an important achievement. All current members agreed to continue the Initiative for a further year with the focus on successful breeding populations of the full suite of birds of prey in the Peak District with the current targets. Also to continue to build on the 2018 improvements to collaborative working between landowners, agents, keepers and raptor groups with the aim of developing quality relationships built on trust.

Breeding Bird Survey – The Peak District Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) is designated for several species of moorland birds. First surveyed in 1990 and again in 2004, the analysis of data from 2018 will help us to understand how factors including land use, management practices and habitat types and condition, can influence bird populations. The 2018 Breeding Bird Survey was completed by a team of 12 surveyors, surveying approximately 500km² of moorland across April, May and June. The British Trust for Ornithology are analysing the results which are due for release along with the survey report in Autumn 2019.

Area of Impact 3: Managing landscape conservation on a big scale

Intention 3.1: Establish monitoring at a landscape scale

We will have agreed and established a system of monitoring at a landscape scale encompassing landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage. Discussions have taken place within the Authority to agree a draft objective and to explore how landscape monitoring could be aligned with monitoring of the National Park's Special Qualities. The draft objective is:

A strategic sustainable partnership approach to landscape monitoring of the Peak District National Park to help us understand how, where and why the landscape is changing. Monitoring needs to encompass all aspects of the landscape i.e. natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. We want to 'join up' and develop our monitoring work effectively and efficiently to deliver a clear picture of large-scale changes to the landscape. It will help us determine whether changes are positive or not, how they might impact on the special qualities and how we should address the changes.

A stakeholder workshop is planned to explore a partnership approach and methodology for landscape monitoring in quarter 2 of 2019/20. With the expectation that the work will be brought in line with the expected time frame by the end of 2019.

Intention 3.2: Develop a White Peak partnership

The White Peak Partnership is working through task and finish groups on key areas for development, particularly post-Brexit. The White Peak Pilot Ideas proposal has been accepted for phase 1 of Defra's Tests and Trials for the new Environmental Land Management scheme.

Defra have asked us and the other proposals to look at certain key policy questions. The White Peak Project will test:

- Use of a National Character Area framework to deliver public goods and the 25 Year Environment Plan in language accessible to land managers.
- Development of a 'ready reckoner' to show the public goods being delivered eg carbon
- Trial of a nature recovery network

Other progress:

- Water vulnerability mapping – seeking to bring together work by Natural England and the Environment Agency to identify high risk areas linked to the peculiar hydrology associated with limestone.
- National Trust and partners were successful in a £60,000 bid to the Water Environment Grant for re-naturalising the River Dove.
- New webpages are now online and accessible via this [link](#).

Intention 3.3: Maintain existing landscape scale delivery

To maintain existing landscape scale delivery we will develop a clear long term vision, plan and have funding in place for the Dark Peak and South Pennines to 2050. We will develop a clear future plan and funding to develop and continue landscape scale delivery on the South West Peak.

Moors for the Future Partnership's biggest delivery year has been successfully completed and is having a significant effect on reducing the amount of state 2 degraded blanket bog. The Moor Business Project is now underway, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, to increase the business management and fundraising effectiveness of the partnership. This is progressing well and will continue into a delivery phase in 2019/20, putting new business mechanisms and a new business vision in place. A workshop funded by the National Trust took place as first step to producing a vision for the place: the Dark Peak and South Pennines. The vision has undergone various consultations and a draft is imminent.

Planning for the water industry's Asset Management Plan 7 delivery in 2020-2025.

Successful determination for all 3 submissions worked on by Moors for the Future Partnership. United Utilities & Severn Trent Water were amongst the three best business plan submissions and have been fast tracked by Ofwat for delivery. Expression of Interest to the LIFE programme only missed a bidding invite by two points, MFFP will rework this if a Brexit transition deal is put in place.

Future Actions:

Agreed targets for the percentage of blanket bog in the Dark Peak and South Pennines in improved ecological condition:

- 30% of Blanket Bog across the Southern Pennines to be in state 6 by 2050
- 90% of Dark Peak Blanket Bog moved out of state 2 by 2023 (bare peat to be revegetated)

- 25% of the Southern Pennine Blanket bogs to be moved out of state 2 by 2023

Area of Impact 4: A National Park for everyone

Intention 4.1 and 4.2 Overcome physical and perceived barriers to access

By 2023 we will be encouraging a wider range of people to enjoy the Peak District National Park at an appropriate scale and adding value to the visitor economy.

A draft Peak District State of Tourism Report 2019 has been produced. This consolidates information on volume and value, the market, the destination, impacts and issues. The report will be shared with partners once it has been through internal National Park Authority consultation.

Area of Impact 5: Encouraging enjoyment with understanding

Intention 5.1: Balance opportunities for enjoyment with conserving a fragile environment

To balance opportunities for enjoyment with conserving a fragile environment we will provide a refreshed Countryside Code underpinning a Peak District brand which all relevant partners promote equally and consistently.

Inspiring Generations group has agreed to take responsibility for this action. A Partner Workshop is to be held in early summer 2019 as part of National Trust's Peoples Landscape Project. The National Trust will be leading with Peak District National Park support.

Intention 5.2: Ensure shared responsibility

To ensure shared responsibility we will review and develop the current arrangements for events management in the Peak District.

A workshop was held at the Rutland Arms on 16th January, which produced a series of proposals to improve events management in the Peak District. An Event Notification System group has since been established and its first meeting is planned for May 2019 to start implementing actions following the workshop, which are:

1. Improve pre event communication
2. Overhaul the events notification system to make it more effective and efficient
3. Develop Peak District specific best practice guidelines to aid event's organisers
4. Work with Natural England to improve the consents process
5. Seek evidence of the extent of community and environmental impact within the National Park.

Intention 5.3: Develop an awareness and understanding of the benefits of the Peak District National Park

Utilising the valuable work of Inspired by the Peak District and the Peak District Environmental Quality Mark, consider a revised approach to the promotion of the peak District brand so we

establish a provenance which is coherent and effective at promoting the link between business development, the special qualities and the unique offer of the Peak District National Park.

Two meetings with partners have been held in January and May to focus on the policy and delivery of business and economic development in the National Park.

Area of Impact 6: Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy

Intention 6: Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy

To support thriving and sustainable communities and economy, we will first define what is meant by thriving and sustainable communities, in the context of the National Park Management Plan.

Two pieces of research have been initiated: An update of population projections and demographic / work-force changes; and a comprehensive audit of communities as a basis for engagement with communities on what a thriving community is.

Work commenced to complete a village statement and audit for every parish by 2020, enabling a state of communities report to be drafted and an index of key indicators to be created as part of developing issues and options for a the new Local Plan. Parish statements are now nearly complete and on-target for consultation with all parishes during the spring 2019.

Intention 6.1: Improve access to services

To improve access to services we will work with providers to improve broadband and mobile connectivity across the National Park in line with the UK's Next Generation Access (NGA) standards.

A meeting with Digital Derbyshire and Derbyshire Dales District Council took place on 29 January. Roll out is continuing. Detailed coverage information is to be provided based on National Park postcodes. The National Park supported Abney broadband link via the community fund. This project is now complete and an article will appear in the Parklife magazine.

Intention 6.2: Support the provision of locally needed housing

To support the provision of locally needed housing we will work through the National Park Management Plan Advisory Group Housing Sub-Group to address the local need for appropriate housing in the National Park.

Work has been undertaken with High Peak Borough Council to identify potential capacity through a Strategic Housing Land Assessment. The report is now finalised. This will assist the National Park Authority policy team in understanding the contribution the National Park can make to strategic housing numbers. Further work will be undertaken over the next 12-18 months to create the evidence base necessary for understanding housing needs in readiness for consultation into issues and options. The Authority has agreed a new project plan and methodology for reviewing the Local Plan with an expectation of consulting on issues and options during 2021-22.

During the year 2018-19 there were applications approved for 33 new build affordable local needs houses including 30 at the Lady Manners site in Bakewell and one conversion. The Authority also approved three agricultural worker's dwellings and 18 additional open market houses. In the previous year there were 108 open market dwellings under construction, 25 completed and a further 46 with planning permission where construction had not yet started.

Intention 6.3: Enable local businesses to thrive in a way that is compatible and wherever possible enhances the special qualities of the Peak District National Park

To enable local businesses to thrive in a way that is compatible and, wherever possible, enhances the special qualities of the Peak District National Park, we will assist the development of businesses in conjunction with relevant bodies. Linking business support, grant aid, planning and economic development.

Business Peak District, High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council & Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire and the Local Enterprise Partnership agreed to meet on a regular basis to progress this action, with a series of meetings which began in September 2028.

In the previous year there were 31 applications for shops of all types including restaurants and drinking establishments of which 29 were approved. There were 14 applications for business developments, all of which were approved. Work has commenced on a significant redevelopment of the Riverside Business Park in Bakewell where there is permission for new business units and a hotel. In March a new ALDI store opened on Ashford Road, Bakewell.