

Visitor Experience and Recreation Hubs October 2019

Programmes and Resources supplementary text

Our Policies and Legal Obligations

One of two central purposes of National Parks as amended by the Environment Act 1995 is:

“to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas [the National Parks] by the public”

This purpose takes its roots back to the original 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act with the campaigns for access and its origins in the health and well-being of the nation.

In 2016 DEFRA produced an 8 point plan. Amongst these were:

- **Connect young people with nature;**
- **National parks driving growth in international tourism;**
- **Everyone’s National Parks; and**
- **Health and Wellbeing in National Parks**

This has helped the Peak District National Park Authority to shape its own corporate plan priorities and has resonated with the creation of a new **National Park Management Plan** with Areas of Impact including:

- **A National Park for everyone**
- **Encouraging enjoyment with understanding**
- **Supporting thriving sustainable communities and economy**

Our Corporate Strategy 2019-24 has ten key performance indicators (KPIs) that are relevant to Visitor Experience and Recreation Hubs and these are across all strategy outcomes. The relevant indicators are as follows:

KPI 2a: Net enhancement of natural beauty

KPI 2b: 100% of planning decisions in accordance with strategic policy

KPI 8: 5% increase in audiences actively engaging with cultural heritage

KPI 11: Peak District National Park audience reach that is 30% closer to demographics of those within an hour’s travel time of the National Park

KPI 12: Peak District National Park connections is increased by 20%

KPI 13: Peak District National Park Authority awareness is increased by 30%

KPI 14: Generate an extra £500,000 sustainable gross revenue income

KPI 15: An extra £250,000 in volunteer support

KPI 19: 100% increase in individuals and groups actively using Peak District National Park Authority digital channels for community development

KPI 20: An extra 500 residents involved in community life due to PDNPA grants

KPI 26: To have a corporate Asset Management Plan

The Local Plan for the National Park also sets out a range of policies to guide our planning decisions in relation to recreation sites. Currently the Local Plan comprises:

Part 1 – Core Strategy (adopted October 2011)

Part 2 – Development Management Policies (Adopted may 2019)

The Local Plan as a whole has now entered a period of comprehensive review, which will assess the need for revised policies on recreation hubs at a “whole park” spatial scale.

Background

The Park support 13 million visits each year and this number will increase. The Authority has an important role to play in managing these visitors by:

- Offering relevant opportunities for engagement for all
- Increasing love and support for the National Park
- Ensuring that the impact of visitors on the special qualities of the National Park is minimised

The Authority has a long-standing ambition to maximise income alongside providing opportunities for enjoyment and understanding from its visitor experience assets and in order to do this must strive to be relevant to society as a whole and particularly to currently under-represented groups.

Visitors are key to achieving the Authority’s targets in relation to support (time/money/advocacy) but must be managed sensitively to ensure that the Park maintains the elements that attract those visitors to it.

Proposal

In line with the Corporate Strategy, the Authority is already undertaking many activities, both on its own and in partnership, that assist in meeting the ambition. These are set out in appendix 1 to this report. This illustrates our ambition and scope of activities that are currently assisting in achieving this.

Member Engagement

The activities outlined in appendix 1 to this report are all at different stages of development, however, there are opportunities for Members to engage with some key projects and a range of meeting opportunities are also listed at the end of Appendix 1.

Funding

The scope of current activities set out in appendix 1 that have funding and resources to deliver them are identified. There are activities that are currently unfunded and the funding mechanism cannot be defined at this stage. Funding for VE developments is currently limited by cost recovery targets and other agreed funding mechanisms set out in the capital strategy.