

## APPENDIX 2: DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTIES

The Authority owns about 6070 hectares (15,000 acres) of property within the National Park. This is around 5% of the whole National Park area. The properties comprise of a very diverse mixture including a traditional tenanted agricultural Estate, disused railway lines converted to recreational routes, the HQ building at Bakewell, Ranger, Visitor and Cycle Hire Centres.

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.

It has been necessary for the Authority to review the future of its landholdings and, in particular, in the light of reductions in the Authority budget. A number of properties have already been reviewed and in particular, the Eastern Moors Estate and the Roaches Estate have been leased to partner organisations such as the National Trust, the RSPB and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. A significant number of woods have also been sold in the last 5 years.

### Stanage/North Lees Estate



Stanage/North Lees Estate was purchased in 1971 to protect its outstanding landscape and wildlife value in the face of intense visitor pressure. The land comprises 524 hectares (1,296 acres) divided between heather moorland, rough grazing and bracken, in-bye land enclosed by dry stone walls and woodland. Parts of the Estate are of considerable wildlife value, particularly for moorland birds. The moorland and rough grazing areas are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are also a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

The entire Estate, excluding woodland, consists of one farm holding. The farm including the farmhouse, buildings, in-bye and moorland is let on a farm business tenancy to a local farmer. A Countryside Stewardship agreement is key to the economics of the tenants business and aims to achieve a balance between farming and conservation objectives. Adjoining the farm buildings is an imposing Grade II\* Elizabethan tower called North Lees Hall

Central to the Estate is Stanage Edge, a spectacular crag that is under a great deal of visitor pressure due to its proximity to Sheffield and its widespread reputation amongst climbers. The Authority has provided car parks and toilet block. A campsite with 60 tent pitches and 7 camping pods (including an accessible pod) open all year is run in-hand by the Authority and is extremely popular, particularly with climbers and outward-bound groups.

### Warslow Moors Estate



The Warslow Moors Estate was acquired as a "capital transfer in lieu of tax" in 1986. It is a large but 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 classed as being of 'heritage quality' by the Government and is of high landscape and conservation value. Much of the Estate is part of the Leek Moors SSSI. Management is varied, as the Estate comprises of 14 main agricultural holdings and a further 6 'land only' 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.

A part time Estate Ranger is based on the Estate and carries out a range of practical duties including liaison with tenants, neighbours and contractors.

### **Minor Properties**

The Authority owns 20 smaller properties throughout the National Park. They range in size from very small amenity sites to 38 hectare (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 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 public include picnic sites, a wheelchair route for disabled people at Tideswell Dale and an archaeological trail at Roystone Rocks, near Ballidon. A number of the properties are in Environmental or Countryside Stewardship Schemes.

A review of the Authority's need to manage all these properties was undertaken. A number of properties were put on the market but only one was disposed of.

### **Woodlands**

Following the Woodland Disposal Project, the Authority now manages about 90 woods.

The woodlands are important for the following National Park purposes  
Much of the National Park is intensively farmed with little value for wildlife, so that woodlands provide a natural haven for wildlife and plants. Many woodlands that the NPA owns are on the sites of ancient semi-natural woodland such as Marianne Grace, Pigtor, and Millmoorehead. Others are part of SSSIs. The emphasis on managing such woodlands is to increase biodiversity.

Woodland has a unique ability to absorb visitors for them to enjoy recreation in the National Park. The NPA owns Shire Hill on the edge of Glossop that has full public access. A new hilltop woodland has been created at Kenslow Knoll served by a new public footpath. These are some of the 29 woodlands that have been dedicated under the CROW Act to provide access in perpetuity.

Economic activity- local contractors, sustaining skilled, woodland work in the countryside, manage NPA woodlands. Timber is provided to small-scale local users and for firewood. .

Small, isolated woodlands are characteristic of the landscape of the White Peak, standing out as dramatic features on a bare plateau. The NPA has acquired a unique holding of woodlands on hilltops and skylines such as Minninglow, Aleck Low, Beelow and Snelslow..

## 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 crags known collectively as the Eastern Edges dominate the western edge. 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 and there are numerous Scheduled Ancient Monuments. It is popular with walkers and, on the edges, with climbers. The moorland is now all 'open access'. Limited car parking is provided for visitors.

The Authority granted a 15-year lease of the Estate in January 2011 to a partnership between the National Trust and the RSPB (The Eastern Moors Partnership). The Authority still has an input into the future management of the Estate by attending a bi-annual Key Stakeholders meeting with the Partnership.

## 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 problems with 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.

Rockhall Cottage, an 18th century 'folly' on an 'island' site on 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 intense recreational pressure on the Estate. 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.

The Estate was leased to the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust on a 125-year term from 2013. The Authority has a limited input into the current management.

## 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. Many thousands of people use the Trails 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, Millers Dale and Minninglow/Roystone

Some of the railway infrastructure remains and the most substantial site is Miller Dale Station where the derelict goods shed and ticket office remain. The Authority secured a grant of £320K for the goods shed in 2019 and restoration is currently underway. The building will be used as an

interpretation space to encourage exploration of the surrounding area, benefitting the rural economy.

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, an exciting project commenced to open up four closed tunnels and link the Trail to Buxton.

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

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

### **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 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 on to 18 sites. These machines now produce significant revenue for the Authority. The Countryside Maintenance and Projects Team collect litter deposited on the car parks.

### **Toilets**

Eighteen public toilets are provided on the above car parks plus one stand –alone toilet block at Dovedale situated adjacent to the main privately owned car park.

Some toilets are serviced by a part-time cleaner employed by the Authority; a private contractor on behalf of the Authority maintains others.



## **Cafes and 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. In addition, new cafes have recently been established at Castleton Visitor Centre and Millers Dale Station car park.



## **Campsites**

Two sites are owned but managed as follows:

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

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

## **Visitor and Cycle Hire Centres**

The Authority has four Visitor Centres at Bakewell, Castleton, Edale and Fairholmes with a small information point at Millers Dale Station on the Monsal Trail. These centres attract about 400,000 visitors per year.

The Authority also manages four-cycle hire centres at Ashbourne, Derwent, Parsley Hay and Hulme End. Around 450 cycles are available for hire including a range of specialist cycles. For use by disabled people.

## **Corporate Office sites**

Aldern House is the headquarters of the National Park Authority. The building is a large country house (Grade 2 Listed) with various 20<sup>th</sup> Century additions, there is also extensive car parking, gardens and grounds. The site currently provides good quality office accommodation for approximately 175 staff and 15 tenants who generate a significant income.

Significant effort and resources have been invested in improving the accommodation on offer and making better utilisation of the space available over the last 5 years and a programme of work has been undertaken to improve the property so that it is fit for purpose. This is a continuing initiative and it is hoped that the property is now more adaptable and able to more easily accommodate the changing needs of the organisation. The site has also undergone significant improvements to improve its environmental performance and it is now used as a case study for how efficiency improvements and use of renewable energy can be achieved within a listed building.



The Authority also operates the majority of the Moorland Centre site at Edale as a corporate office facility housing the Moors for the Future team as well as ranger staff. This site has also undergone significant improvements recently to better accommodate the teams based there and now provides accommodation for 30+ staff as well as a significant amount of storage and lab space for the operations of the project.

### **Ranger Briefing Centres, Learning and Discovery bases, Workshops and Ashford Store**

There are 13 Ranger Briefing Centres, Learning and Discovery bases and workshops.

Ashford Store is situated near Bakewell and is currently being renovated as a work base for the Countryside Maintenance and Projects Team.



### **Conservation Volunteer Centres:**

Two Conservation Volunteers centres providing residential accommodation, the Authority owns workshops and storage space. One is based at Brunts Barn, Grindleford in the North of the Park and the other at Marsh Farm, Near Leek in the South.

