

10. OUTSIDE BODY AND CONFERENCE FEEDBACK REPORT

Name of Body	National Parks UK Chairs Forum
Date of Meeting	2 December 2020
Member in attendance	Andrew McCloy
Supporting Officer	None
Issues raised at the meeting of significance to the Authority	
1.	Chairs shared reflections on the pandemic experience so far, including: NPs in the news a lot more; greater interest in NP activities and member recruitment more successful; much wider public discussion about health and wellbeing benefits of being outdoors, plus relationship with nature and the environment.
2.	Positive embrace of virtual meetings among NPAs, with financial savings and better attendance by members; less travel time; easier access for public to view meetings; but IT and local broadband issues still need addressing. NPAs likely to embrace hybrid approach in future - mix of virtual and face to face meetings.
3.	With more home working and virtual meetings do some NPAs need such extensive workspace and meetings facilities? And does it mean we are likely to need greater data storage facilities?
4.	New hard to reach audiences have effectively been delivered to us on a plate, but how best now to engage and educate and not lose this opportunity? At the same time we also have to deal with real challenges, including crowd management at honeypots, eg 600,000 visitors reached Snowdon summit in 2020 - doubled since 10 years ago; lots more open water swimming in Broads has caused safety issues (4 deaths on the water in 2020); more camper vans, motorhomes and 'fly camping' in some remoter parts of NPs.
5.	Climate Change: 15 UK NPs have produced a position statement, broadly similar to NPEs and including delivery plans across all 3 countries. The delayed COP26 in Glasgow (now Nov 2021) will have 5 themes: net zero with nature, adaptation and resilience, energy transition, green finance, zero emission vehicles. NPUK's 2021 Chairs' Forum will be hosted by Loch Lomond & Trossachs NP to coincide with this.
6.	Net zero with nature is Defra's specific area and NPs will be contributing, although there was a shared appetite among NP Chairs to endorse the UN's global Race to Zero campaign and looking for other ways for NPs to show leadership.
Issues on which the views of Authority Members are sought	
1.	To consider the reflections of Chairs on future meeting arrangements and implications for Authority accommodation and property.
2.	To note the shared enthusiasm across all 15 UK NPs to show leadership and ambition on climate change and look to see how we can best contribute to COP26 and beyond.
Relevant documents such as reports and hyperlinks	
1.	https://www.nationalparks.uk/ - newly re-launched website for all 15 UK national parks (impressive website - well worth a look!) https://www.nationalparksengland.org.uk/ - see NPE's Climate Change delivery plan
2.	https://ukcop26.org/ - official website for this autumn's event

OUTSIDE BODY AND CONFERENCE FEEDBACK REPORT

Name of Body	Meeting, Member Champion: Natural Environment, Biodiversity & Farming, & PDNPA Officer
Date of Meeting	12 January 2021
Member in attendance	Lydia Slack, as Member Champion for Natural Environment, Biodiversity and Farming
Supporting Officer	Sue Fletcher
Issues raised at the meeting of significance to the Authority	
1.	Update on the Agricultural Transition Plan & Farming in Protected Landscapes. More details to come.
2.	Short discussion on upcoming Land Managers Forum and the challenges that may be faced by stakeholders due to it taking place digitally.
Issues on which the views of Authority Members are sought	
1.	
Relevant documents such as reports and hyperlinks	
2.	The Path to Sustainable Farming: An Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 – 2024 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954283/agricultural-transition-plan.pdf

OUTSIDE BODY AND CONFERENCE FEEDBACK REPORT

Name of Body	National Parks England Board Meeting
Date of Meeting	28 January 2021
Member in attendance	Andrew McCloy
Supporting Officer	Sarah Fowler
Issues raised at the meeting of significance to the Authority	
1.	Chairs noted the Government's strategy to 'build back greener' and the PM's announcement of new national parks, Landscape Recovery projects and a 'Green Industrial Revolution', but remain concerned that existing protected landscapes are adequately resourced. They welcomed the new 3-year Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme that will support farmers and land managers to deliver environmental outcomes and lay the groundwork for the new Environmental Land Management scheme - of considerable significance to NPs. The value of the programme is estimated at £52.5million across the three years. PDNPA's Suzanne Fletcher is part of a key working group advising Defra on the new programme.
2.	Nature recovery remains one of NPE's four strategic aims and progress is being helped with the temporary appointment of a nature recovery coordinator. The Government is preparing a new Nature Strategy as promised in the 25 Year Environment Plan, but in conflict with recommendations in the Landscapes Review it is continuing with developing Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) based on county boundaries, which would mean NPAs like the Peak District having to deal with multiple strategies from multiple constituent authorities.
3.	The lead National Park Officer for NPE reflected that the pandemic has resulted in increased visitor numbers for NPs, with a new and more diverse base, demonstrating the importance of access to, and enjoyment of, our National Parks. "Nevertheless, the increase in visitors has not been without consequence. Many National Parks have experienced significant issues in terms of anti-social behaviour (increased litter, BBQs and wildfire risk, fly camping, verbal and physical abuse of staff etc.) Understanding and ownership of these issues within Defra appears to be lacking and there seems to be little prospect of increased resources, new powers or tools to manage visitors. It is worth reflecting on the fact that it was MHCLG, and not Defra, that led work on re-opening of the countryside after the first lockdown. The Landscapes Review had little to say about visitor management other than the need to reach out and diversify our visitor base. Too often there is little or no recognition of the tension that exists between increased visitor numbers, 'nature recovery' and community cohesion; and the importance of positive management to mitigate this impact. These conflicts (real and potential) are not irreconcilable but balancing a warm welcome with environmental enhancement and community cohesion is a challenge."
4.	Landscapes Review: Chairs were told that a Ministerial Statement setting out the Government's response to the Landscapes Review and likely direction of travel was initially promised before Christmas, then in January, but it has now been delayed further. <u>It is understood that it will confirm the setting up of a new statutory National Landscapes Service to deliver many of the key the recommendations of the Landscapes Review</u> , but this has yet to be confirmed. In a Ministerial meeting in February 2020 NPE secured a promised that it would be engaged in the Government's response to the Landscapes

	Review, but in reality this has not happened and there has been limited involvement at the top level. Despite this, Chairs continue to discuss ways to ensure cohesion and consistency relating to NPE's response to the National Landscapes Service and will be trying to secure a further meeting with the Minister prior to any formal announcement.
Issues on which the views of Authority Members are sought	
1.	To note the above.
2.	Once the Government makes a formal announcement on how (or if) it intends to take forwards the recommendations of the Landscapes Review, it is recommended that members of PDNPA should meet to consider the issues and our overall position (perhaps through a Members' Forum discussion).
Relevant documents such as reports and hyperlinks	
1.	https://www.nationalparksengland.org.uk/
2.	