

7. NATIONAL PARK CONSUMPTION BASED CARBON FOOTPRINT (EF)

1. Purpose of the report

To inform Members about the context, purpose and progress with the current consumption based assessment of the Peak District National Park's carbon footprint being undertaken by Small World Consulting.

Key Issues

- Small World Consulting (SWC) are producing a consumption-based assessment of the National Parks carbon footprint.
- The results will form a key piece of evidence for the National Park Management Plan review.
- The work is being undertaken alongside nine other National Parks and five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, demonstrating improved relationships between Authorities, as recommended by the Landscape Review.
- The assessment is National Park wide and as such any action to improve the situation will require partnership working through the National Park Management Plan.

2. Recommendation

- 1. To note the work currently being undertaken by Small World Consulting to develop a consumption based carbon footprint for the Peak District National Park that is consistent with other National Park Authorities.**

How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

3. The Climate Change Act 2008 as amended in 2019 commits the UK government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050.
4. The UK Government Vision and Circular for National Parks (2010) places climate change as central to National Park Authority objectives and describes their role in the following ways.
 - The Authorities are educators and in the area of climate change they have a vital role to play. They should spread important messages about the impacts of climate change and how individuals, especially visitors, can play their part in tackling it in ways which motivate lifelong behaviour change.
 - The Authorities have a role as exemplars of sustainability in enabling the natural environment to adapt to predicted changes (and being resilient to unpredictable events), in supporting the delivery of ecosystem services and in developing more resilient infrastructure (such as rights of way that are less vulnerable to flood damage).
 - The Parks themselves will be threatened by climate change and the Authorities must ensure that they protect the public assets which the Parks represent.
 - The Authorities should lead the way in sustainable land management to prevent further carbon loss from soils and to encourage carbon storage in trees and fens.

- The Parks should be exemplars in renewable energy.
 - Authorities need to work with local communities to reach a position where renewable energy is the norm in all Parks whilst not compromising their overriding duty under the 1949 Act.
 - The Authorities should promote energy efficiency within the Parks, reduce the emissions from their own operations and from those associated with visits, including through sustainable low carbon transport use.
5. The Authority is undertaking these roles through its policies and actions, both independently and in partnership. The National Park Management Plan 2018-23 includes the Area of Impact ‘Preparing for the future climate’ and the delivery plan actions for this are around the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, low carbon sustainable travel, peatland restoration, grasslands for carbon and integrating more trees in the landscape.
6. We have established a good track record of reducing the Authority’s own carbon emissions. Our Carbon Management Plan has a vision to be a new zero carbon Authority no later than 2050. At the end of the 2020/21 reporting period, the carbon emissions resulting from Authority’s operations have decreased by 50% compared with the 2009/10 baseline and by 12% during the reporting period. Our Carbon Management Plan outlines further measures to reduce the Authority’s carbon footprint.
7. Our Corporate Strategy 2019-24 has seven key performance indicators (KPIs) that are linked to climate change, as follows.
- KPI 1: Influence the development of a support system that properly rewards farmers and land managers for delivering a full range of public benefits.
2024 target: At least an additional 10% of Peak District National Park in environmental land management schemes.
 - KPI 2: Natural beauty conserved and enhanced.
2024 target: a) Assessment of landscape changes achieved b) 100% of planning decisions in accordance with strategic policy
 - KPI 3: Increase the amount of carbon captured and stored as part of routine land use and management.
2024 target: 3,650 tonnes net decrease in carbon emissions from moorland.
 - KPI 4: Increase the area of moorland blanket bog moving towards favourable condition.
2024 target: Restoration activities on 1,500 hectares of degraded blanket bog completed.
 - KPI 5: Sustain the area of non-protected, species-rich grassland through retention, enhancement and creation.
2024 target: Sustain at least 5,000 hectares of non-protected, species-rich grassland.
 - KPI 6: Increase the area of new native woodland created.
2024 target: Create at least 400 hectares of new native woodland.
 - KPI 23: To have a corporate Asset Management Plan.
2024 target: Plan to be adopted in 2019/20 and then implemented.

Background Information

8. The National Parks England Delivery Plan on Climate Leadership refers to establishing a consistent Carbon Budget baseline for all ten National Parks to understand how and where to prioritise actions to reach net zero by the fastest possible time.
9. The Authority’s Members’ Climate Change Steering Group supported this and encouraged a more consistent approach to benchmarking between National Parks. They viewed the implementation of the Small World Consultants’ consumption based

carbon footprint assessment as a step towards this. The group have been kept informed of progress at their subsequent meetings.

10. In 2010 Small World Consulting carried out a baseline consumption-based greenhouse gas audit for the Lake District National Park. By adopting consumption-based metrics alongside more traditional production-based, the Lake District widened the scope to areas such as food, shopping, business supply chains and travel by both residents and visitors to and from the National Park. In 2017 the baseline for the Lake District was updated. In 2019 it was proposed to extend this work to potentially cover all UK National Parks.
11. Area based greenhouse gas emissions are currently available for the National Park. These were used for Climate Change Summit in October 2019 and the subsequent revisions to the National Park Management Plan delivery in July 2020. However, these emission figures do not include the imbedded carbon in the products and services consumed within the National Park or emissions connected with human behaviours linked to the use of the National Park, such as travel beyond its boundaries. Therefore, the Authority has commissioned SWC to complete this assessment for the Peak District National Park.

Proposals

12. Small World Consulting with develop a consumption-based assessment of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) footprint for the Peak District National Park, using the standard methodology proposed to the 30th March 2020 meeting of the National Parks England Climate Change Member – Officer Task and Finish Group.
13. A consumption based assessment takes into account an estimate of the imbedded GHG emissions in products and services at the point of their consumption rather than just locally produced GHG emissions. This is a more sophisticated approach that seeks to present a more complete representation of the carbon footprint generated by activity. Importantly it places most emphasis on the consumer as the generator of GHGs rather than the producer. In the assessment appropriate land based emissions are reported as well as consumption based greenhouse gas emissions, under the following headings.
 - Household fuel (from staying in private homes).
 - Household electricity (from staying in private homes).
 - Vehicle fuel.
 - Car manufacture and maintenance.
 - Personal flights.
 - Ferry crossings and cruises.
 - Trains, buses and other transport.
 - Food and drink from shops.
 - Accommodation and eating out.
 - Other non-food shopping.
 - Water, waste and sewerage.
 - Other bought services.
 - Home construction and maintenance.
 - Health, education, other public services and administration.
 - Leisure, recreation and attractions.
14. The assessment also includes land based exchanges of GHG between the atmosphere and terrestrial biospheres in line with the government's reporting of land-use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF). This assessment includes both emissions and removals of GHG to produce a net position. The figures are produced using the categories of forest land, cropland, grassland, wetlands, settlements and harvested

wood products.

15. The role of LULUCF in climate change is significant because large quantities of carbon are stored in terrestrial ecosystems, and human activity has the potential to affect changes in the stocks of carbon both negatively and positively. It has long been considered that LULUCF in the UK was a net sink; meaning that more carbon was absorbed from the atmosphere than released. However, new data is challenging this assumption and it is expected that when the latest set of data is analysed and incorporated into the SWC report it will show LULUCF to be a net source of GHG. In the Peak District National Park, this is expected to be largely due to moorland emissions from degrading peat.
16. Currently nine National Park Authorities have commissioned SWC. They have programmed the phasing of the work in line with the timescales for each National Park's Management Plan review. The Peak District National Park's report is scheduled for final production between October and December 2021, so that it forms part of the evidence for the National Park Management Plan review.
17. Due to the unique nature of each National Park, Authority officers are currently working with SWC to ensure that the assessment fully reflects the local situation, and correctly identifies visitor patterns and behaviours.
18. The results will be a key part of our evidence base as part of the Management Plan, and underpin the intention to make the response to climate change a central feature of the new Management Plan's vision. The evidence will add weight to new proposals and provide continued support for any existing programmes that may be carried forward into the new plan.
19. The assessment will provide a high level National Park wide indication of the areas carbon footprint. Any actions to reduce this will require partners to lead or support relevant actions. Therefore, these actions will be in the delivery plan for the next National Park Management Plan, which commences in April 2023.
20. We will present the SWC assessment report findings to a Programmes and Resources Committee at the appropriate time. The Member led Climate Change Steering Group will be updated throughout the work.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

Financial:

21. The consultants work is funded from slippage agreed by Members in the May finance outturn report (minute reference 35/21). Any subsequent work to reduce the carbon footprint will be funded through the National Park Management Plan or Corporate Strategy.
22. The assessment relates to area wide emissions and therefore actions will need to be delivered in partnership through the Management Plan and hence the full cost will not fall to the Authority.

23. **Risk Management:**

24. The main risk associated with the delivery of this assessment is that the projected timescales for completion of the assessment to enable the findings to be meaningfully considered in the National Park Management Plan and Corporate Strategy review are very tight. Any slippage in the consultant's work means we may not have the findings in

time for the review. To mitigate this risk officers have clearly communicated to the consultants the timescales for the review so they are aware of the risk. In addition, we have been proactive and provided as much data and information to the consultants as early as possible so that element has progressed as smoothly as possible.

Sustainability:

25.

Baseline evidence is an essential step towards improving the sustainability of the National Park in the context of a changing climate. This assessment will add to our understanding of the GHG implications of the National Park.

Equality:

26.

There are no implications for equalities in this assessment.

27. **Climate Change**

1. How does this decision contribute to the Authority's role in climate change set out in the UK Government Vision and Circular for National Parks?

- a. Educators in climate change

The assessment will provide greater insight into the National Park's carbon footprint helping to shape decision making as we develop future action plans and policies. The findings will help to inform messaging about how people and partners can act to address climate change. A consistent approach between National Parks will add weight to our leadership role.

- b. Exemplars of sustainability

This highly sophisticated assessment supports the UK Government Vision and Circular for National Parks that they should lead by example in addressing climate change.

- c. Protecting the National Park

The evidence from the assessment will aid the development of the National Park Management Plan, which underpins the on-going protection of the National Park's special qualities.

- d. Leading the way in sustainable land management – As above.

- e. Exemplars in renewable energy – Not applicable.

- f. Working with communities – Not applicable.

2. How does this decision contribute to the Authority meeting its carbon net zero target?

Not applicable.

3. How does this decision contribute to the National Park meeting carbon net zero by 2050?

The assessment assists in calculating the carbon footprint for the whole National Park to enable progress towards net zero to be measured. A greater consistency in

measurement between National Parks will aid comparison and target setting.

4. Are there any other Climate Change related issues that are relevant to this decision that should be brought to the attention of Members?

None.

28. **Background papers (not previously published)**

None.

29. **Appendices**

None.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

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