



Apr-May 2022

# NPE Monthly Activity Bulletin

## A Message from Andrew McCloy, NPE Chair:

*Thank you to everyone who helped produce our compendium of case studies showcasing the great work that National Parks are delivering on the ground. It has landed very well, with Lord Benyon responding on behalf of the Secretary of State to say that he was "encouraged and pleased to see references to many priority themes" in the document. It has also reminded other key partners of the breadth and ambition of our work, despite all the challenges, and strengthened our hand as we move forwards.*

## Meeting Highlights

- **Tripartite Agreement** - NPE Chair, Deputy Chair, Lead NPO and NPE Executive Director attended a virtual meeting for the Tripartite Agreement with the Chairs and CEOs from Natural England and National Association of AONBs on 17 May. The next in-person meeting will be taking place in the Yorkshire Dales NP on the 4th July where Lord Benyon is due to join.
- **Research & Engagement: ethnic diversity & visitors** - NPE is involved with two Defra research projects on engagement with protected landscapes for youth and ethnic minorities. A joint steering group meeting will be taking place on the 18th May - Mary Jane Alexander from NYMNPA and Tony Gates, CEO of Northumberland NPA, will be attending for NPE. This work forms part of our Landscapes for Everyone priority, the lead NPO for which is now Tony Gates.
- **Landscapes Review** - CEOs and Chairs from NPE attended a consultation feedback session with Defra on 1st April to ask questions and make comments on the Government's response to the Landscapes Review Consultation.

- **Landscapes, Parks & Trails Partnership (LPT)** - Trevor Beattie and Hoda Gray continue to meet with Defra, NAAONB, NE, and National Trails UK regarding the LPT partnership. The partnership is now referred to as the Landscapes, Parks & Trails Partnership instead of the National Landscapes Partnership. These meetings are now every 3 weeks.
- **ENPOG** - CEOs, as lead Officers for NPE, attended the first in person meeting since the Covid-19 pandemic on the 11th/12th April in London

## Key Events & activities

- **Landscapes Review consultation** - NPE submitted its response to the Government consultation. Thank you to everyone across the National Park family for their input. We also co-ordinated a press statement, along with social media posts, to highlight our response, and were the focus of an ENDS Report article which highlighted our messaging around resources.

*continued overleaf...*

## Spotlight

**Nature Recovery** - National Parks England worked collaboratively across the National Parks to submit a detailed response to the Government's Green Paper on Nature Recovery (NR). Co-ordinated by Paul Hamblin, our response highlights what changes are required to enable National Parks to be the backbone of the new Nature Recovery Network. As part of the consultation process, Officers from the English National Parks also took part in a series of Defra deep dive sessions to discuss the Green Paper. These included a session on forestry, green finance, species management, arms-length bodies and biodiversity net gain.



## Key Events & activities

*continued*

- **Health and Well Being Strategy Group** – this group brings together NPA officers, Members, and public health representatives and met in April. This meeting kicked off our thinking for developing a new agreement with the Office of Health Inequalities and Disparities (OHID), and we heard how the UK Communications Work Programme aims to strengthen people's connection with the natural world
- **CEO Collaboration** - David Butterworth has arranged a series of development sessions run by an external consultant Jonathan Males for CEOs within NPE. These sessions have been designed to build upon, and develop, collaborative working within NPE
- **Nature Recovery: business case** - this work to support our ambitions as leaders in nature recovery in National Parks is near completion. It is being led by Alison Barnes, with support from Briony Fox, NYMNP Director of Conservation and Climate Change, and Paul Walton, NFNPA Head of Environment and Rural Economy.

- **Mental Health Awareness Week** - NPE has been utilising social media to highlight some of the great work across the National Parks which support health & wellbeing as part of our Landscapes for Everyone priority (see image below).
- **More social media highlights** - we took the opportunity to highlight key messages from our Climate Leadership and Nature Recovery priorities along with case studies from across the National Parks. This included scheduling tweets about World Curlew Day, and celebrating the fact that Dartmoor NPA won the Gordon Miller Award for their *Miles Without Stiles* work
- **Facts and Figures** – supporting your case with powerful facts and figures can really strengthen it. Working with NPA Data Officers, Paul Hamblin has been updating our collective data for use throughout the year

## UK Collaboration

- **Collaborating on NPE and NPP position on LPT** - Hoda Gray, Trevor Beattie, Naomi Conway and Gordon Watson have continued meet twice a month to discuss the Defra Working Group sessions. This feeds into proposals being made at the Defra working group meetings on the LPT.
- **All the Elements** - the first phase of this work has now concluded and the cross-UK CEO steering group is digesting the findings and considering next steps. This is a 'scene setting' piece of work which aims to map the current situation on diversity and inclusion in UK National Parks. This work has been steered by Hoda Gray, Alastair Barber (NPUK), Hélène Rossiter (NPUK) and Soraya Abdel-Hadi, who founded the All the Elements initiative.
- **Nature Recovery & private finance** - monthly working group discussions will be taking place between Naomi Conway, Hoda Gray, James Winkworth, Alison Barnes, Kevin Bishop, Paul Walton and Briony Fox to draft a set of principles to guide private finance in nature recovery projects.



Young Rangers at a 'Digital Detox' camp,  
© North York Moors National Park Authority





Tree planting along the River Esk, © North York Moors NPA

May-June 2022

# NPE Monthly Activity Bulletin

## A Message from Andrew McCloy, NPE Chair:

*"NPE's face to face board meeting and AGM in June was a reminder that despite the uncertainties and resources challenge there is plenty to be positive about. We have a Minister who's engaged with the agenda; our higher profile around delivery and constructive contribution to discussions over governance reform and national landscapes is landing well; and Government appears to recognise that a collaborative and representative NPE is a key player going forward. Our collective effort to be upbeat, visible, and articulate has and will continue to work in our favour."*

## Meeting Highlights

- **Access projects** - Hoda Gray and Sue Smith (PDNPA, Access Officers Working Group Lead) met with Defra in May to discuss capital funding for access projects in protected landscapes. Details of this funding were being made available as we go to press.
- **AGM and Board Meeting** - NPE held their AGM meeting at our London office, and on-line, attended by Chairs and most CEOs. Andrew McCloy was re-elected as Chair
- **ENPOG** - CEOs, as lead Officers for NPE, attended a virtual meeting on 20th June

- **Landscapes, Parks & Trails Partnership (LPT)** - As discussed in previous updates, Trevor Beattie and Hoda Gray continue to meet on a 3-weekly basis with Defra, NAAONB, NE, NPP, and National Trails UK regarding the LPT partnership.

## Key Events & activities

- **NPE Programme Lead** - we have been recruiting for a new role at NPE - a Strategic Lead for Nature Recovery, who will be focused on delivering the next phase of the Wildlife Delivery Plan. We hope to have them in post in August, supporting our work until March 2023.

*continued overleaf...*

## Spotlight

**NPE Business Plan** - The one-year Plan 2022/23 was approved by the National Parks England Board in June. It reinforces the vision of National Parks England, and sets out how through our activities, NPE shall help ensure that the nation's National Parks are protected, remain at the cutting edge of delivering sustainable development, are relevant to wider society, and continue to be held in high regard.



## Key Events & activities

*continued*

- **APPG** - the NPE Secretariat has been supporting NPE Lead for Nature Recovery Alison Barnes in preparation for the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) meeting on 12th July. This includes the production of a postcard inviting support for investment in nature recovery.
- **NPE ED Maternity Cover** - Hoda Gray has begun her transition with Joanna Swiers, who will be interim ED, whilst Hoda is on Maternity Leave. Joanna is due to start with NPE in mid-August.
- **Social Media Highlights** – we supported the CNP Park Protector Awards by sharing a series of tweets to help encourage nominations. We also celebrated the recent discovery of bluebells in Bye Wood, Exmoor, as part of our priority around nature recovery.

- In addition, we highlighted the fantastic work which has been done in the North York Moors which has seen around 300ha of woodland restoration so far.
- **LinkedIn** - we are developing our profile on LinkedIn, including the promotion of our new Nature Recovery role. We also reported on the result of the AGM Chair and Deputy Chair elections. We are hoping to utilise this platform more going forward, to help engage with the wider policy environment.

## UK Collaboration

- **Nature Recovery & private finance** - we were delighted to see Revere, the UK-wide initiative to create a sustainable funding model for restoring nature in National Parks, win the *Nature based Project of the Year* award at the Business Green Awards. Monthly working group discussions are continuing to take place between Naomi Conway, Hoda Gray, James Winkworth, Alison Barnes, Kevin Bishop, Paul Walton and Briony Fox. A draft set of principles to guide private finance in nature recovery projects are being drawn up.



*Carpet of re-activated bluebells at Bye Wood, Exmoor  
© Exmoor NPA*

Young Rangers at a 'Digital Detox' camp,  
© North York Moors National Park Authority