

## 5. **LANDSCAPE AND NATURE RECOVERY AIM OVERVIEW (SLF)**

### 1. **Purpose of the report**

To inform Members about the Peak District National Park Management Plan (NPMP) and Authority Plan landscape and nature recovery aim, and the Authority's progress in landscape and nature recovery since April 2022 and what this means for the future.

#### **Key Issues**

- The July 2022 Authority meeting agreed to align the programmes for Programmes and Resources to the National Park Management Plan (NPMP) 2023-28 aims, and that the second paper would focus on the landscape and nature recovery aim.
- The NPMP vision includes the Peak District National Park (PDNP) being exemplary in its response to nature recovery and that its special qualities and resilience as a living landscape should be significantly enhanced.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan 2018 set out the framework and vision for what we will do to improve the environment within a generation. The Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) 2023 revises the original plan and sets out the plan to deliver the ten goals with the “apex” goal of thriving plants and wildlife. Specific Protected Landscape targets are also now in development.
- There has been a plethora of Government announcements about nature recovery including a Defra update on [Environmental Land Management \(ELM\) update: how government will pay for land-based environment and climate goods and services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), [Local Nature Recovery Strategy statutory guidance](#), the launch of the [People's Plan for Nature](#) and [BSI Defra Nature Investment Standards Programme](#). Biodiversity Net Gain will become mandatory for certain developments from November 2023, in alignment with new Conservation Covenants, and Nutrient Neutrality has already become a consideration for development within the Upper Wye catchment. Increasingly more “players” are getting involved with nature recovery and seeking ways to attract private as well as public funds.
- The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme has been extremely successful nationally and in the PDNP resulting in additional funding and a fourth year of the programme for 2024/2025 being announced as part of the EIP 2023. A report seeking permission to continue the temporary suspension of Standing Orders to enable a fourth year of programme delivery will be brought to Authority shortly.
- Since the last PDNP update reports on National Parks England (NPE) Delivery Plans for Wildlife and for Environmental Land Management in December 2021 and April 2022, the Authority has undertaken many activities, both on our own and in partnership, that assist in meeting our ambitions. These are outlined at paragraph 6, the majority of which will continue to be delivered and developed through 2023-24 together additional actions detailed in the Authority Plan 2023-28.

### 2. **Recommendations**

1. **To note the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2023-28 aim on landscape and nature recovery, progress in landscape and nature recovery since April 2022 and what this means for the future.**
2. **To note that a report will be brought to Authority seeking permission to continue the temporary suspension of Standing Orders to enable a fourth year of FiPL programme delivery.**

### **How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?**

3. The activities described in this report contribute to a number of our policies and legal obligations:
- The 30 by 30 target through which the Government has agreed to conserve (protect) 30% of land by 2030.
  - National Parks England (NPE) Delivery Plans for both Wildlife and for Environmental Land Management in National Parks.
  - All seven of the [special qualities](#), and Aim Two [Landscape and Nature Recovery](#) including the three objectives with their targets and headline delivery; and the [Authority Plan](#) Aim two actions.
  - The Landscape Strategy 2023 was approved by Members at the Authority meeting in December 2022. It describes what is special about the Peak District landscapes, sets out the issues affecting the landscape and provides management guidelines to address the issues, conserve and enhance the landscape (minute reference 99/22).
  - The Peak District Nature Recovery Plan is being developed with key partners and will complement the six future county-based Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Once completed the Nature Recovery Plan will sit as part of the NPMP and the revised Local Plan.

### **Background Information**

4. Members agreed at the 22 July 2022 Authority meeting to align the programmes for Programmes and Resources to the National Park Management Plan 2023-28 aims (minute reference 65/22). The same paper also agreed that landscape and nature recovery would be the second aim reported to Programmes and Resources. This paper fulfils that commitment.

### **Proposals**

5. As Programmes and Resources will be aware from the reports to this Committee in December 2021 and April 2022 that noted how the NPE's Delivery Plan for Wildlife and Environmental Land Management was informing the future National Park Management Plan (minute reference 38/21 and 15/22), the Authority is already undertaking many activities, both on our own and in partnership, that assist in delivering our landscape and nature recovery ambitions. The summary below updates Members on the activities we have focussed our resources on since April 2022 and look to continue and develop.
6. Influencing
- The work of the Authority's Officers at national stakeholder meetings representing both the English National Park Authorities and the PDNPA.
  - Substantial preparatory work with partners towards the production of the One Nature Recovery Plan for the Peak District.
  - Delivering the FiPL Programme for Defra, learnings from which are feeding in to the design of the ELM schemes.
  - Existing Landscape scale partnerships – Moors for the Future, South West Peak Landscape (completed June 2022) and the White Peak Partnerships.
  - Peak District Land Manager's Forum (representative range of farmers, land managers, land owners and organisations) met in December 2022 to explore the

challenges and solutions to nature recovery. Please see [Land Managers Forum 2022 Workshop Notes](#).

- Moorland Management Group has continued to work on five key topics – resilient sustainable moorland, visitor engagement, fire risk, moorland birds (including the Bird of Prey Initiative currently being reviewed), rural and wildlife crime. The focus in 2022/23 has been on the prevention and mitigation of moorland fire. Natural England have commissioned an independent peer review of the Pilot Project Wildfire Risk Assessment, the results of which are due shortly.
- The Authority's own land demonstrates environmental land management.

#### Delivering

- The work of the Authority's farm advisers with farmers and land managers brokering national agri-environment schemes and supporting the delivery of FiPL.
- Existing Landscape scale partnerships – Moors for the Future, South West Peak Landscape (through legacy projects) and the White Peak Partnership.
- A range of smaller-scale projects such as the invasive species project.
- The Countryside Stewardship Historic Building Restoration Pilot within the PDNP restored 16 traditional farm buildings, please see Appendix 1 below for more detail.
- Completion and sharing of the findings from the [Peak District ELM Test](#) and the continuing White Peak Practical Field Trials. The Authority has been asked to deliver a further ELM Test around local convenor and local delivery on behalf of the English National Park Authorities and this is currently being explored.
- FiPL has continued to deliver farmer and land manager projects under the four themes of climate, nature, people and place. Successful delivery of FiPL across all 44 protected landscapes has led to additional funding and an additional fourth year for the programme.
- The Woodland Trust Partnership extending and growing the arrangements for small-scale woodland creation using Nature for Climate funds.
- Authority owned land is also one of the key delivery mechanisms for landscape and nature recovery for example rewetting of a large proportion of moorland.
- Landscape Enhancement Initiatives and undergrounding overhead electric wires.

#### Regulatory

- Regulatory work, notably planning, including developing the Authority's approach for the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations advice and support.
- Land management consultations e.g. for felling Licences, Section 156 disposals (sale or lease of Water Company land).

Partners also continue to deliver for landscape and nature recovery, often with input from Authority officers, for example:

- Sheffield Moors Landscape Partnership.
- Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership led by Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust with a range of complimentary projects.
- Derwent, Dove and other Catchment Partnerships, including the Derwent Connections tree planting and Natural Flood Management project led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust with funding from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund.
- The Natural England (NE) led partnership LIFE in the Ravines is mitigating the impacts of Ash Dieback on the designated ash woodlands of the dales.
- NE continues to work towards our collective ambitions for nature recovery in the White Peak including working with Severn Trent Water who provide funding for nature recovery.
- The National Trust have been renewing their vision for the High Peak Estate with a focus on nature recovery.
- Wild Peak project led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.

**Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?**

**Financial:**

7. The activities in the early years of the Authority Plan 2023-28 and National Park Management Plan 2023-28 have funding and resources identified to deliver them. However, this will need to be reviewed following the Authority's organisational change process and future funding as we move through the delivery period.

**Risk Management:**

The main risks of the Authority being unable to deliver to the landscape and nature recovery aim is the resource challenge of both the Authority in terms of a flat cash settlement, its partners and the adequacy of financial incentives, such as ELM scheme payments and requirements for farmers, land managers and land owners to engage with landscape and nature recovery. Whilst these risks are being mitigated by focussing on the priority aims and objectives in the Authority Plan they are not wholly within the control of the Authority.

**Sustainability:**

8. Our work on landscape and nature recovery directly improves the sustainability of the National Park as a place.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:**

9. There are no direct implications for equalities in the activities contained within this report. Indirectly, responding to landscape and nature recovery could have a positive impact on the nine protected characteristics by providing a more resilient environment.

**10. Climate Change**

Many of the activities being delivered for landscape and nature recovery also contribute to the Authority's role in climate change. The work with farmers, land managers and land owners supports the conservation and enhancement of moorland, woodland and trees, species rich grassland, herbal leys and water corridors. The use of both national and private sector funding are involved. There is growing interest in regenerative farming and in particular the use of herbal leys and wood pasture.

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

None.

**12. Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Countryside Stewardship Historic Building Restoration Pilot.

**Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date**

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