

5. NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN - OVERALL PROGRESS REPORT 2018-23

1. Purpose of the report

This report provides Members with overall progress on implementing the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23.

Key Issues

- Section 66 of 1995 Environment Act requires National Park Authorities to produce and update a National Park Management Plan every 5 years.
- At the end of our fifth year (2022-23) of the National Park Management Plan, an overall progress report has been produced, which forms Appendix 1 to this report. This provides a more detailed update on all sections of the Management Plan referred to in this report.
- Following the adoption of the 2023-28 National Park Management Plan and the intention to form a new delivery group to support the implementation of the new plan, the current Advisory Group chaired by Dianne Jeffrey was disbanded at the end of March 2023. We thank Dianne for her time and commitment over the last two Plan periods.

2. Recommendations

- 1. That Members approve the National Park Management Plan - Overall Progress Report 2018-23.**
- 2. That any necessary changes to the proposed wording of the Overall Progress Report 2018-23 are delegated to the Chief Executive.**

3. How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

Requirement to produce and update the National Park Management Plan

1. Section 66 of 1995 Environment Act requires National Park Authorities to produce a National Park Management Plan which 'formulates policy for the management of the relevant Park and for the carrying out of its functions in relation to that Park' and should reflect national park purposes. This should be updated at least every 5 years.
2. The UK Government vision and circular 2010 for the English National Parks and the Broads states that 'Park Management Plans are the over-arching strategic document for the Parks and set the vision and objectives which will guide the future of the Park over the next 10 to 20 years. The Park Management Plans are for the Parks and not just the Authorities. They should be supported by clear strategies with evidence of significant 'buy-in' from key partners and stakeholders, including communities, land owners and land managers. The Government expects public agencies and authorities active within or bordering a Park to cooperate in the development of the Park Management Plan and the achievement of the Management Plan objectives.'
3. This means the National Park Management Plan is not a plan for the work of the National Park Authority, or of any one organisation, but about what can be achieved by everyone with an interest in the National Park and its future.

The plan is therefore a partnership plan reflecting ambitions across the whole National Park and reflects the input of numerous organisations.

4. Through Our Corporate Strategy 2019-24, the National Park Authority delivered its contribution to this National Park Management Plan.

4. Background Information

The Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 was adopted by the Authority at its meeting on the 25th May 2018 (minute reference 21/18). The Management Plan focused on six areas of impact:

- 1: Preparing for a future climate
- 2: Ensuring a future for farming and land management
- 3: Managing landscape conservation on a big scale
- 4: A National Park for everyone
- 5: Encouraging enjoyment with understanding
- 6: Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy

5. Proposals

Delivery Progress

Under each Area of Impact, there were a set of intentions that provided further detail on what we aimed to achieve. In total there were fifteen intentions. An Annual Monitoring Report has been produced at the end of each year to outline the progress made in terms of implementing actions in the delivery plan.

Overall, despite resources being directed to dealing with covid during some of the plan period, excellent progress has been made across every area of impact to implement the actions in the delivery plan over the last five years. Particular successes include the Moors for the Future Partnership continuing to deliver excellent moorland restoration works alongside scientific monitoring. #PeakDistrictProud (#PDP) has shared the positive ways in which people can help care for the National Park and the countryside code has been refreshed and released, including being available in 21 languages. The White Peak Partnership supported the development and implementation of the Peak District Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMs) test. The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme was an unexpected opportunity which was developed in a very short period with Defra, launched in July 2021 and is now successfully delivering at a landscape scale for climate, nature, people and place.

The areas where we made less progress than anticipated or not as originally envisaged are the sustainable travel and integration of more trees into the landscape elements of intention 1.1 climate change and the monitoring at a landscape scale element of intention 3.1. In terms of sustainable travel, this was included as a new action just before the covid pandemic started, so we lost the first year of delivery due to people's attention being on managing the impact of the pandemic. Since then, we have developed partnerships across the various transport boundaries that cross the National Park and started to collate our existing travel data. We have also built on the success of the Hope Valley Explorer, which offers visitors an alternative sustainable travel experience.

However, we haven't progressed this to the stage of being in a position to offer a low carbon sustainable transport which supports and encourages a new sustainable travel hierarchy.

In terms of integration of more trees into the landscape, we haven't planted as many trees as anticipated due to larger-scale planting proposals taking time to come to fruition. They often necessitate existing agri-environment scheme agreement amendments, which can be a barrier, and the complexity and number of different funding sources is confusing and can be off-putting.

In terms of monitoring at a landscape scale, we have reconsidered how we undertake this action, and are currently working on a different methodology than at the start of the NPMP. We are now using a method of reassessing changes to the landscape using repeat detail Landscape Description Unit (LDU) photos.

The Overall Progress Report 2018-23 can be found at Appendix 1. Members are asked to approve this Overall Progress Report. This is the final monitoring report associated with the 2018-23 Management Plan as the new five year management plan is in place from April 2023.

As Member's are aware, the 2023-28 National Park Management Plan was adopted by the Authority at its December 2022 meeting (minute reference 98/22). Partner engagement during the review was the highest it has been in recent years, which led to a lot of support for the final plan. To ensure that the engagement continues and that the delivery plan is implemented a new delivery group and partnership group will be established. This means that the National Park Management Advisory Group, which was established in 2007 to advise on delivering the Plan was disbanded at the end of March 2023. We are grateful to all the partners that have been represented on the group since its inception, and their commitment to implementing the Plan. We are especially grateful to the independent Chair of the group, Dianne Jeffrey for her enthusiasm, time and commitment in Chairing the group over the last two Plan periods. Dianne has been instrumental in ensuring all voices were heard and that the annual conferences were well received.

6. Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

1. Financial:

None, as delivery of the National Park Management Plan 2018-23 has ceased.

2. Risk Management:

None, as delivery of the National Park Management Plan 2018-23 has ceased.

3. Sustainability:

None, as delivery of the National Park Management Plan 2018-23 has ceased.

4. Equality

None, as delivery of the National Park Management Plan 2018-23 has ceased.

7. Climate Change

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?

None, as delivery of the National Park Management Plan 2018-23 has ceased.

1. How does this decision contribute to the Authority meeting its carbon net zero target?
None, as delivery of the National Park Management Plan 2018-23 has ceased.
2. How does this decision contribute to the National Park meeting carbon net zero by 2050?
None, as delivery of the National Park Management Plan 2018-23 has ceased.
3. Are there any other Climate Change related issues that are relevant to this decision that should be brought to the attention of Members?
No.

8. Background papers (not previously published)

None

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Peak District National Park Management Plan - Overall Progress Report 2018-23

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Sarah Rowley, Data, Strategy & Performance Officer, 20th April 2023