





# SECTION 3.0

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The Strategies



# **SECTION 3.1**

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Spectacular landscape, wildlife  
and cultural heritage

## 3.1 SPECTACULAR LANDSCAPE, WILDLIFE, AND CULTURAL HERITAGE



### 3.1.1 AN OVERVIEW

The Lake District is one of the world's finest cultural landscapes. The spectacular landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Lake District is unique – and of such quality and universal value – that it entirely underpins how the area functions economically, socially and environmentally.

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The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as:  
 "An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors."

The World Heritage Site Operational Guidelines defines cultural landscape as:

**“Cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the “combined work of nature and of man”. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal.”**

These assets are the very reason why the Lake District has been a designated National Park since 1951. An area of natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, its Special Qualities can be enjoyed by all. There are specific components of these Special Qualities that are of such significance that we have identified them as attributes of Outstanding Universal Value and their existence – combined with our management approach to their protection – underpins the Lake District World Heritage Site nomination.

Landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage are the key elements of National Park designation, and the UK Government regard National Parks as conferring the highest status of protection to landscape and natural beauty. The coverage of environmental designations, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Special Areas of Conservation, is also significant as these cover approximately 20 per cent of the Lake District. The Local Plan provides a proactive, positive approach to managing development in the National Park, which derives from the many different, and often conflicting, interests that exist. A key part of the Local Plan is the policies that serve to conserve and enhance the spectacular landscape, biodiversity, and historic environment.

The strategies which sit under this Vision theme come together to ensure that the full breadth of the Lake District’s Special Qualities are effectively managed, conserved and enhanced. Furthermore, these strategies establish a framework to protect and sustain the specific attributes of Outstanding Universal Value that form the component parts of those overarching Special Qualities.

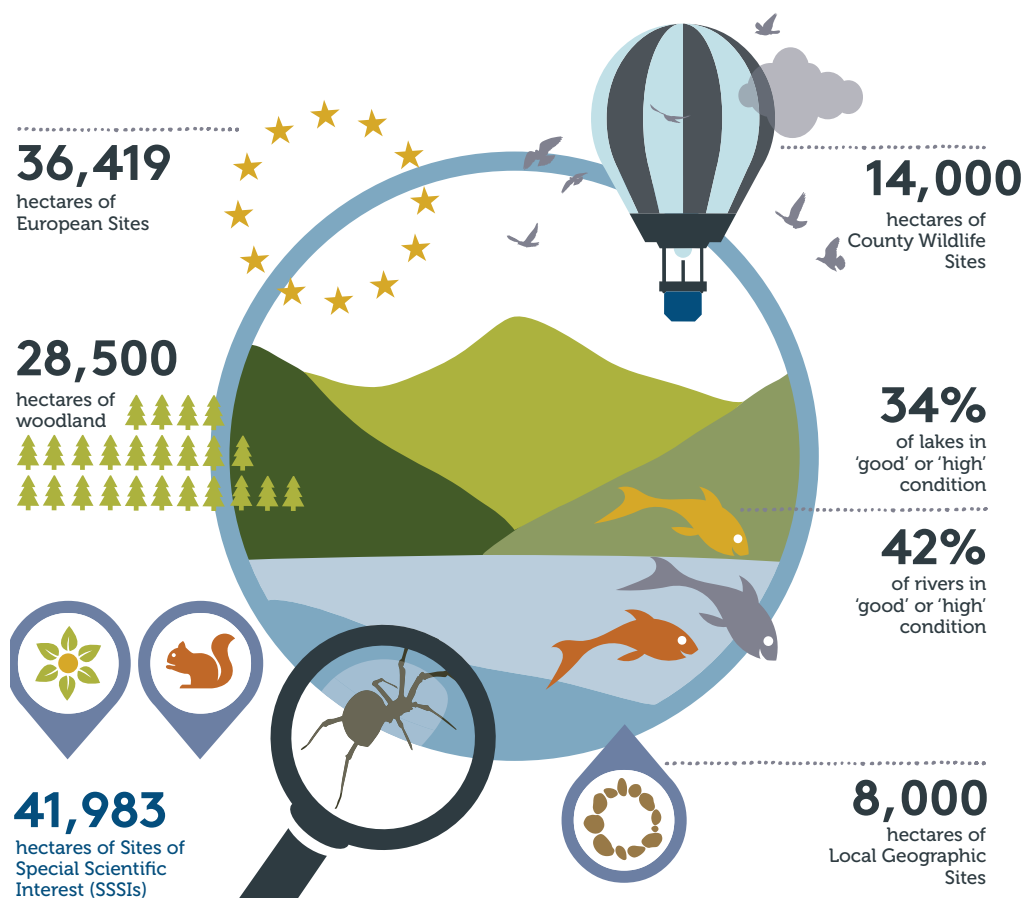
As the cultural landscape is a product of millions of years of natural forces and thousands of years of human influence, likewise the strategies reflect the breadth of factors that shape the Lake District. Strategies relate to managing and improving nature, guiding our ongoing influence upon it and the evolution of land and water management. This approach recognises what is of intrinsic importance, and gives a considered strategic response to the risks and opportunities that the cultural landscape faces. We intend to manage the Lake District in a way that responds to the opportunities and pressures that we know about, and prepares us as far as possible for the unknown.

To sustain what is valued in the Lake District, including the Outstanding Universal Value and Special Qualities of the site, our strategic approach to the cultural landscape’s protection must respect the socio-economic requirements to evolve and respond

to changing markets, pressures and risks. Our approach does not seek to protect the Lake District precisely in the same form that the interactions between nature and man manifest themselves today. Instead, it recognises how these interactions have always had to evolve. One current driver for evolution is to ensure that pressures upon biodiversity are managed, to enable habitats and diversity of species to recover and grow in a way that does not compromise the integrity of the qualities that give rise to the National Park and World Heritage Site designations.

The Lake District landscape's diversity is reflected in the varying character of its thirteen valleys. Each has a distinctive topography, pattern of land use and local building materials; each is home to a unique mix of flora and fauna.

FIGURE 26 Facts about the Spectacular landscape



### 3.1.2 A WORLD-CLASS LIVING CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The Lake District's National Park designation is principally based on the quality of its landscape. The World Heritage Site nomination develops this further, recognising the Lake District as the defining cultural landscape of its type. The nomination recognises that the Lake District has Outstanding Universal Value to the world as a prime example of the combined works of nature and man. World Heritage Site status would be a befitting celebration of this combination, but with a clear focus on ensuring that we manage the Lake District in a way that enables its ongoing evolution whilst protecting and enhancing those attributes.

This landscape reflects an outstanding fusion between a distinctive communal farming system (including common land, hefting, stone walled field and the field system) that has been present for at least a millennium and a “designed landscape” with improvements of villas, picturesque planting and gardens during the 18th and 19th centuries. This combination has attracted and inspired globally recognised writers and artists.

The diversity of the landscape is key to its beauty and significance and includes coast, lakes, distinctive farmland, fell, woodland, industrial activity and settlement. Each of the Lake District’s thirteen valleys has an individual distinctiveness based on landform, biodiversity and cultural heritage.

The character of the Lake District cultural landscape has evolved slowly over many centuries and will continue to evolve in the future under the influence of the knowledge and skills of the local community. How we see the Lake District now is just a snapshot in time. How nature and local communities shape it has always evolved. We are absolutely committed to allowing its managed evolution in the future and the shared Vision to 2030 will help us to achieve this.

We must continue to conserve, protect and improve understanding of the importance of these Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, and support farming, forestry and land management which are some of the key industries which influence the landscape. An integrated and holistic approach to supporting farming, forestry, and land management will help to achieve this and ensure that their economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits are delivered. Education establishments such as the University of Cumbria – home to the largest school of outdoor education in Europe, Freshwater Biological Association, National School of Forestry, and Newton Rigg College which includes the Centre for the Uplands provide important education and research capacity and facilities to assist in the understanding and conservation of the Lake District and work of the Partnership.

Understanding the landscape and the influences upon it helps us to appreciate the distinctiveness in every valley. Locally distinctive and coordinated approaches in land management and development decisions are essential. Therefore, evidence such as the Lake District Landscape Character Assessment, which is an adopted Supplementary Planning Document forming part of the Local Plan, and which directly supports Policy CS25 of the Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1) ensure decisions are taken consistently and robustly recognising local distinctiveness.

**i****What is a landscape character assessment?**

A landscape character assessment is a tool for identifying the features that give a locality its ‘sense of place’ and pinpoints what makes it different from neighbouring areas. They provide a framework for describing an area in a systematic way. It lets different interest groups make better judgements by knowing what’s present and what is distinct. It can then be used to inform proposed changes to see if they respect local character, add to it, or even change it if that is what is desired.

### SL 1 – A world-class living cultural landscape

Our strategy is to:

- a. Protect and conserve the extraordinary beauty and harmony of the Lake District landscape and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value and Special Qualities by using and promoting the Lake District Landscape Character Assessment to inform land management and development management decisions to achieve a consistent, evidence-based approach.
- b. Increase coordinated management, understanding and appreciation of the landscape character at a valley scale. We will encourage local approaches to landscape management informed by the Landscape Character Assessment and monitoring landscape change.
- c. Maximise opportunities provided through funding incentives for landscape conservation available to farming, forestry, and land management. We will influence funding providers to recognise the importance of the cultural landscape in their criteria, such as the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) (also see strategy PE1 – Profitable land management, farming and forestry industries).
- d. Support the maintenance of traditional upland farming in the Lake District based on the open fell grazing of local breeds of livestock including the Herdwick sheep. This will include support for coordinated commons management, breeders' associations, and the culture and traditions which underpin this farming system to ensure these attributes which demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value are retained (also see strategy PE1 – Profitable land management, farming and forestry industries).
- e. Support initiatives and land management practices that specifically adapt to and mitigate the predicted effects of climate change, by reducing the Lake District's carbon budget whilst also sustaining the Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.

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#### What is a **carbon budget**?

A carbon budget is similar to a financial budget but for carbon. Like a financial budget, it aims to find out how much carbon the Lake District is responsible for, and then reduce the carbon 'spend' year on year. We seek to reduce the Lake District's carbon budget by at least one per cent a year every year.

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#### What is **RDPE**?

RDPE is the Rural Development Programme for England. It is a scheme that utilises European funding to develop rural businesses and improve their competitiveness in England.

**i****What is traditional upland farming?**

The form of farming that combines rearing livestock including both sheep and cattle, and growing crops including hay, cereals, and wood through pollarding and coppicing. It utilises the less agricultural productive fells and common land.

### 3.1.3 SUSTAINED DISTINCTIVE AND WELL MAINTAINED BUILT AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

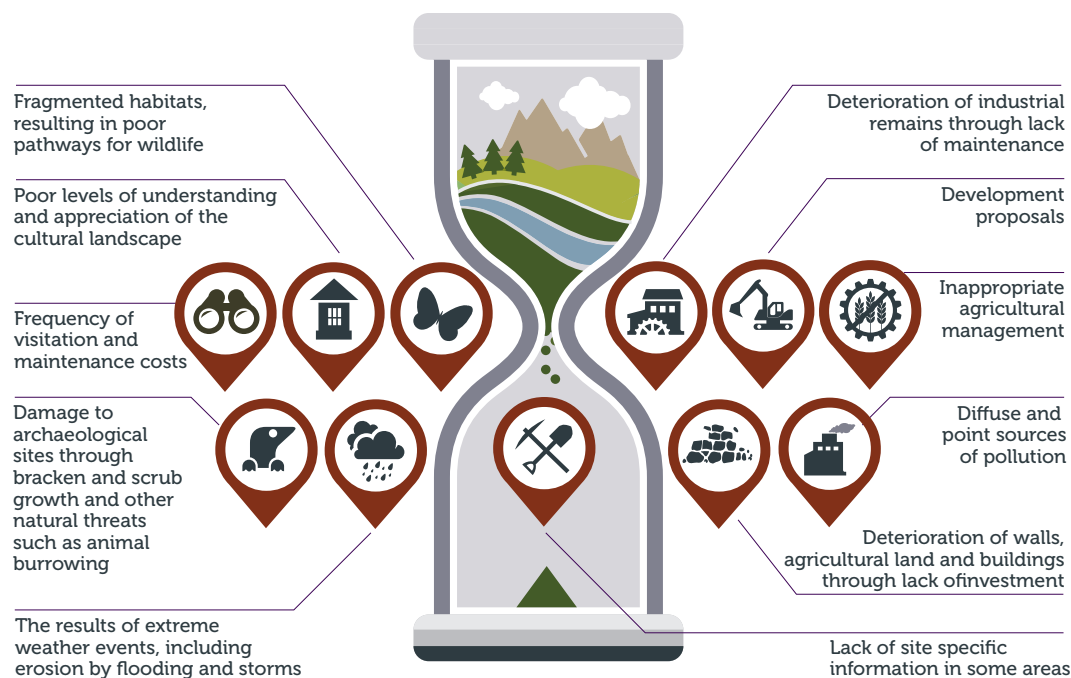
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The landscape, buildings and ruins, walls and historic remains are just some of the features that make up the historic environment. It is an asset of enormous cultural, social, economic and environmental value. It can be a powerful driver for economic growth, attracting investment and tourism, and providing a focus for successful regeneration. As one of the Lake District's Special Qualities and integral to the Outstanding Universal Value, the conservation and protection of the historic environment is essential.

Vernacular buildings have a simple functional character and often rugged appearance using local materials, and many of which are examples of attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. These buildings come in a variety of distinctive forms, such as long houses, bank barns, and hogg houses. There is also a distinctive range of buildings associated with trade, mining and industry, such as bobbin mills, lime kilns and packhorse bridges. The Picturesque interest in the Lake District led to the physical enhancement of the landscape through the construction of villas and gardens, designed landscapes and planting schemes. A diverse range of historic settlements types have emerged within a relatively small geographical area. This diversity is strongly related to the historic opportunities and constraints of the varied landscape, topography and geology.

Threats to the historic environment come in many forms. Our challenge is to make sure threats are managed in a way that looks after the historic environment and does not assume the historic environment is somehow a barrier to growth and change. It is an asset if we use it properly, and this is demonstrated by English Heritage's (now Historic England) 'Constructive Conservation' approach which aims to recognise and reinforce the historic significance of places, while accommodating the changes necessary to make sure that people can continue to use and enjoy them.

FIGURE 27 Risks to the landscape and historic environment that we manage



The built environment is changing all the time as new development appears. We are really pushing for high quality, innovative design through the effective implementation of the Lake District's Local Plan. The Local Plan does not aim for designs to be different for the sake of being different; instead it requires design that is functional, efficient, clever and which takes its inspiration from the cultural landscape in which it sits. It must provide a source of inspiration in its own right. The bar is set high and we as a Partnership are committed to this as we look ahead. The Lake District's quality warrants the best approach to its evolution and continual, respectful progress.

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#### What is Heritage at Risk?

Heritage at Risk is a programme run by Historic England which monitors and lists those sites most at risk of being lost through neglect, decay or inappropriate development.

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#### What is a Historic Environment Record?

A Historic Environment Record is a database which currently holds information on sites of archaeological and historical significance. It contains a full range of historic environment information such as buildings (listed and unlisted), artefacts, landscape features (such as dry stone walls and sheepfolds) and studies of the ancient environment.

**SL 2 – Sustained distinctive and well maintained built and historic environment**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Develop and maintain an awareness and understanding of the nature, extent, significance and condition of the built and historic environment. This will be achieved through undertaking and managing surveys, appraisals, and monitoring. It will inform the Historic Environment Record, and the local and national registers of Heritage at Risk.
- b. Develop projects and programmes for the coordinated management, conservation, enjoyment and understanding of built and historic environment assets, giving priority to attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, and according to significance and condition of asset. This will be delivered through mechanisms such as land management schemes, development management processes and the involvement of local community volunteers.
- c. Encourage and support design which is inspired by and complements the Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake District’s cultural landscape, guided by the principles within the Local Plan.

**3.1.4 WISE USE OF GEOLOGY CONTRIBUTING TO LOCAL AND NATIONAL NEEDS AND DEMANDS**

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Local materials, such as blue slate and stone, are central to the ongoing maintenance, repair and evolution of the historic and wider built environment. This local stone and slate is also in demand for some new development. As such, local quarrying and mining activity is vital to meet the Lake District’s needs for the materials that make such a positive contribution to local distinctiveness. There are also some nationally important buildings elsewhere in the country such as Tower Bridge in London that use some Lake District materials in their construction and therefore need a supply of Lake District-sourced slate for their maintenance and repair.

Whilst quarrying is a recognised part of our cultural landscape and industrial background, there is no escaping that quarrying also has impacts. So, we are clear that our support for quarrying is to meet the local demand for materials and national need, rather than a wider general demand for Lake District stone and slate. The Lake District Local Plan contains specific, criteria-based policies by which proposals for mineral extraction are determined, to ensure the need for stone is met appropriately.

The geology of the Lake District has directly resulted in the distinctive buildings and settlement character evolving as it has done, but the geology of the Lake District is of particular significance in its own right. It is the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, and geological structures which are exposed due to the stripping of covering material by glacial action that provides many opportunities for academic study and public appreciation.

### SL 3 – Wise use of geology contributing to local and national needs and demands

Our strategy is to:

- a. Support the extraction of building stone and slate where this is principally needed to maintain the Special Quality of 'distinctive buildings and settlement character' and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, in line with policies of the Local Plan.
- b. Ensure geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Geological Sites benefit from positive conservation management so they continue to offer study and research opportunities.

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#### What are Local Geological Sites?

Local Geological Sites are non-statutory areas of local importance for conservation that complement nationally and internationally designated geological sites. They were previously known as Regionally Important Geological Sites.

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#### What is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?

A SSSI is a conservation designation denoting a protected area in the United Kingdom. There are two types of SSSI – Sites notified for their biological interest are known as Biological SSSIs, and those notified for geological or physiographic interest are Geological SSSIs.

## 3.1.5 FLOODING

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Extreme weather events are one of the biggest risks to communities, businesses, recreation, and the landscape and environment of the Lake District. Small changes in rainfall and temperature can have a significant effect on the landscape; climate change is likely to affect the pattern of rainfall with more intense rainfall episodes likely.

In a number of valleys, there are flooding issues that result from the rate at which rainwater makes its way into watercourses, which as a result become overwhelmed and burst their banks. Flooding impacts across all themes of this Plan – at its worst, flooding can take lives and destroy property, but every flood has an environmental and economic cost. There are many ways in which flooding can be mitigated and managed, from hard defences in towns and villages to peatland restoration, and planting trees on higher ground to slow water run-off. Collaboration at a local level is often critical to understand the processes and implications at the local scale.

Unless remedial action is taken, greater extremes of wetting and drying throughout the year will accelerate soil erosion – which has impacts for water quality, landscape, archaeological features and farming. The combination of warmer winters and higher winter rainfall brought about by climate change also poses a risk of increase in pests and diseases. The severity of this could vary significantly, but the impact could be wide – potentially affecting farming, forestry, the historic environment, biodiversity and in turn the cultural landscape.

#### **SL4 – Increased resilience to flooding**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Increase the resilience of the Lake District to flooding events. Flood resilience schemes will be tailored to provide the optimum solution for the catchment as a whole, balancing the need to reduce flood risk in towns and villages against potential impacts up and down stream, including on agricultural land.
- b. Mitigate and adapt to the increased likelihood and severity of flooding that is predicted to result from climate change. We will work with others, including local communities, land managers, and farmers to develop plans and projects which aim to increase resilience, for example, slowing surface water run-off by increasing absorption and storage, or protecting settlements with hard defences (also see Strategies SL5 – Improved water quality and resources, SL6 – Well considered tree and woodland establishment and SL7 – Resilient and well-functioning habitats and wildlife).

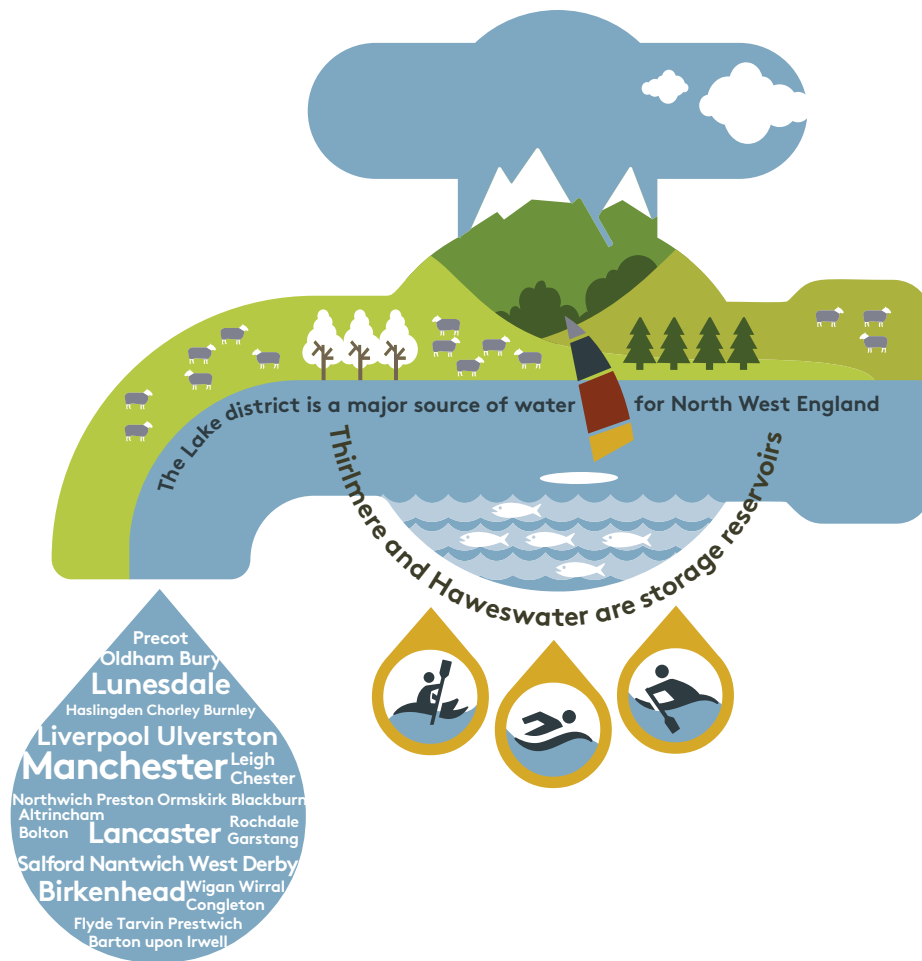
### **3.1.6 IMPROVED WATER QUALITY AND RESOURCES IN LAKES, TARNs, RIVERS, GROUND WATERS, AND SEA**

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Water is a major commodity for the Lake District. The Lake District is a critical supply source for North West England. Thirlmere and Haweswater are reservoirs with aqueducts which supply the region, supplemented by water from Windermere, Ullswater and Wet Sleddale Reservoir. Ennerdale, West Water and Crummock Water supply the west of the county, whilst rivers, ground waters and smaller lakes and tarns provide local supplies.

There are some particularly challenging water supply issues in West Cumbria. All the main sources of water in West Cumbria contain rare species, protected by law. Atlantic salmon, Arctic charr and many rare aquatic plants are present. The area also hosts England's only viable population of the internationally protected freshwater mussel. This is under threat because of water being used from Ennerdale Water. United Utilities, the Environment Agency and Natural England are key partners, committed to resolving these water supply issues whilst safeguarding these rare and protected species. This includes expanding the UK's largest interconnected water resource zone with new pipelines.

FIGURE 28 A source of water supply to North West England



The quality of water in our rivers and lakes is fundamental to sustaining the Lake District's spectacular landscape. There are significant pressures including nutrient enrichment from both diffuse pollution from rural land and waste water management sources, mine water pollution from historic metal mines, and pollution from pesticides and road drainage which all impact on the water environment. It is vital that those who live, work and visit in the Lake District both understand how their activities impact on the water environment upon which they depend, and take positive action to protect and improve that environment. Initiatives such as the Sustainable Catchment Management Programme (SCaMP), which has been developed by United Utilities in association with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), aims to apply an integrated approach to catchment management across all of our water catchment land, focusing on improving water quality alongside wider environmental benefits.

Our strategy for catchment management must reflect the local opportunities and pressures regarding issues such as water quality, land management, flooding, recreational use, water supply and habitats, all in the context of the increasing challenges presented by the changing climate.

We aim for the highest standards. We recognise an approach that is successful in one valley cannot automatically be applied to another. Locally distinctive issues often require a locally distinctive approach.

### SL 5 – Improved water quality and resources in lakes, tarns, rivers, ground waters, and sea

Our strategy is to:

- a. Achieve 'good' or better than 'good' water quality as defined by the Water Framework Directive in all lakes, rivers, tarns, and ground waters by implementing best practice catchment management through:
  - i. Developing locally distinctive initiatives to tackle key pollution sources, such as run-off, mineral waste and wastewater management.
  - ii. Achieve the optimum quality, diversity and extent of habitats and species, including meeting targets for protected sites, through management of the impacts of recreational use, invasive species and land use.
  - iii. Raising consumer awareness of the importance of water quality by influencing changes in consumer behaviour
- b. Sustain water resources in all lakes, rivers, tarns and ground waters by:
  - i. Managing the extremes of high and low water levels and flows, to achieve optimum ecological habitats and populations. We will focus on water use, land management practices and water supply to achieve this.
  - ii. Contributing to meeting water supply needs through the use of water bodies and provision of associated infrastructure where the environment, biodiversity, landscape, and public rights of use, including navigation, are protected.
  - iii. Raising consumer awareness of the importance of the efficient use and demand management of water by influencing changes in consumer behaviour.
- c. Achieve the highest attainable sea water quality including meeting targets for protected sites. We will do this by influencing all authorities and land users whose decisions affect the sea water quality to ensure their decision making recognises the Special Qualities of the Lake District.

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What does **water quality** mean?

The Water Framework Directive classifies water quality into five status classes: high, good, moderate, poor, and bad.

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What are **protected sites**?

Protected sites are designated areas of land, inland water and the sea which have legal protection to conserve important habitats and species. Examples of protected sites include Special Protection Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and Special Areas of Conservation.

**i****What are water resources?**

Water resources are resources that may be used for drinking water, industrial processes, agriculture, and environmental activities. Water resources also provide opportunities for recreation, such as fishing, boating and swimming. They include surface waters (such as the sea, lakes, and rivers) and groundwater.

### 3.1.7 WELL CONSIDERED TREE AND WOODLAND ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

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The Lake District has a great history with trees and woodlands, whether it is the picturesque planting in “designed landscapes” or the conservation battles such as in 1936 when Friends of the Lake District successfully prevented the commercial afforestation in the central fells. The Lake District also has one of the greatest concentrations in Europe of ancient trees many of which are found within the extensive areas of coppice woodland, parkland and wood pasture, and contribute significantly to the character of the cultural landscape of the Lake District.

Woodlands account for approximately 13 per cent of the land cover in the Lake District, some of these are ancient woodland which need protection and restoration, while others have been used for centuries as a source of raw materials for local industries. Pollarding, once more widespread nationally, was carried out to provide a winter food source for livestock in areas where dependence on hay would be precarious due to the inclement weather. Examples of this traditional practice are now mainly found in the Rydal and Ullswater areas, enhancing the distinctive sense of place. Coppice woodland was an important resource in the Lake District, providing a raw material for local industries and crafts. Coppice woodland is found scattered across the Lake District, though is most strongly associated with the extensive area of semi natural woodland between Lake Windermere and Coniston Water, one of the largest areas of interconnected woodland in England. Trees and woodlands offer a range of potential benefits to the environment, economy, and people including, for example, Forestry Commission woodlands which provide important recreational opportunities. Whether it’s new or long-established woodland, active management can reap rewards to achieve these benefits. Semi-natural woodlands in particular offer real potential to improve habitats and biodiversity.

**i****What are semi-natural woodlands?**

Semi-natural woodlands are woodlands composed of locally native trees and shrubs which derive from natural regeneration or coppicing rather than planting.

The Cumbria and Lake District Tree, Woodland and Forests Strategy and action plan provides a vision for resilient trees, woodlands and forests by providing employment and delivering environmental and social benefits. This strategy includes empowering owners to manage their woodlands, and ensuring they are resilient therefore it will be important for the delivery of actions in the Partnership's Plan. The proposals to designate a Woodland Enterprise Zone in Cumbria through the work of the Local Enterprise Partnership will also be an important way to deliver change within Lake District woodlands.

The character and sensitivity of the landscape from valley to valley and place to place will need to be given close attention when considering new woodlands, for example, using guidance from the UK Forestry Standard, to ensure the establishment of new trees and woodlands takes place in a manner that enhances the Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. However, a greater threat to the landscape and woodlands is their unplanned and uncontrolled loss from disease in particular species. New woodland creation must, as far as possible, be designed to be as resilient as possible.

Slowing the run-off of water can reduce the number and intensity of floods. One of the most effective ways of doing this is to increase tree cover where run-off is greatest. Trees don't just slow run-off of rainwater – they can improve water quality by acting as a natural filter. Their roots increase soil stability. But planting more trees and woodlands in areas which are currently used for livestock grazing is a contentious issue. It may mean farms need to reduce their stock levels and whilst grants and the value of timber can make this financially beneficial, it does alter the nature of the farm business and their culture and traditions. We advocate a locally led and coordinated approach in order to find the right balance between all these facts in establishing more trees and woodland (also see Strategy PE5 – Profitable land management, farming, and forestry industries).

#### **SL 6 – Well considered tree and woodland establishment and improvement**

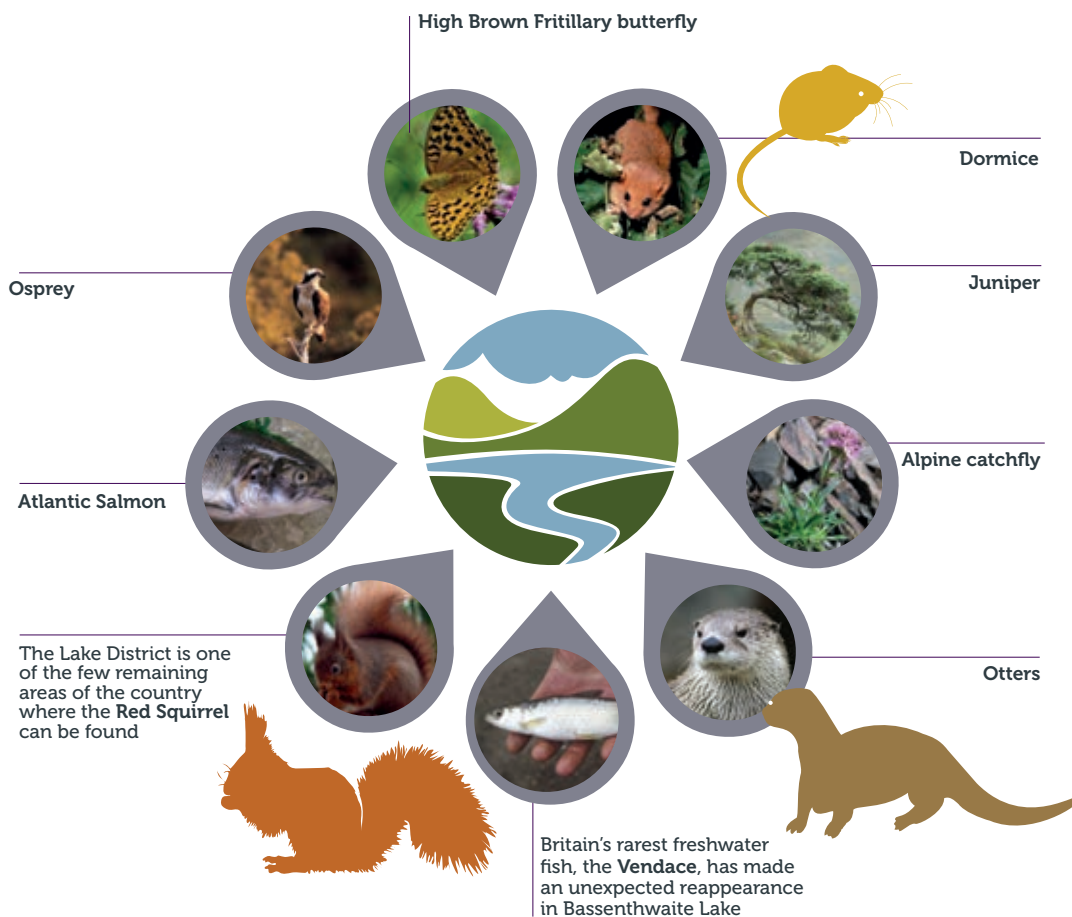
Our strategy is to:

- a. Maximise the number of established woodlands that are well managed. Priority will be given to semi-natural woodland and other identified woodland where there is a significant opportunity to enhance their resilience and contribution to the landscape including the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, biodiversity, recreation, flood prevention, carbon storage, and productivity. We will do this by engaging with and offering advice to woodland owners.
- b. Support and establish new tree cover at a locally agreed scale throughout the Lake District. There will be a particular focus to achieve the optimum balance between timber production, flood prevention, carbon storage, water quality, soil stability, biodiversity, historic environment, conservation of the cultural landscape, recreation, loss of grazing land, landscape change, hefting, and communal management of common land, where relevant.
- c. Have a coordinated approach to increasing the resilience of woodlands by managing the spread of disease in tree species, increase resilience to pests, and take a planned approach to landscape restoration if and where required.

### 3.1.8 RESILIENT AND WELL-FUNCTIONING HABITATS AND WILDLIFE

The Lake District hosts an abundance and variety of species and habitats. Proportionally, it has a greater variety of freshwater habitat and more ancient semi-natural woodland than most other areas of the UK. The high fells contain the most biologically diverse range of upland habitats in England, with internationally important fell habitats, including Arctic Alpine plants, heathland, upland lakes and tarns, rivers, peatlands, woodlands, and species-rich pastures. There are expanses of peat bogs supporting a unique assemblage of species and carbon stores. The coast boasts extensive sand dune systems and estuary habitats, and some of the finest raised mires. Species of European importance include the Dormouse, Otter, bats, Great Crested Newt, Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and Floating Water Plantain. We also have nationally important populations of red squirrel, red deer and freshwater mussels, and the fish Vendace and Shelly, which are absent from the rest of England.

FIGURE 29 Some of the important species in the Lake District



The Lake District's natural habitats have inspired residents and visitors for generations. The natural environment also underpins many services we rely on such as food, water, flood protection, clean air and carbon capture. A healthy natural environment is fundamental to the well-being and economy, including tourism and agriculture industries of the Lake District. By working on a landscape scale, including projects such as 'Living Landscapes', to ensure our habitats and species are protected and improved, including the many examples of rare flora and fauna, we acknowledge the many essential benefits they provide.

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#### What is a Living Landscape?

A Living Landscape is a recovery plan for nature championed by The Wildlife Trusts since 2006. It is a new way of thinking about how we manage land to do more for wildlife, people and the economy. It recognises the need for whole river catchments and entire tracts of upland to be improved for ambitious landscape-scale objectives to be realised, recognising that this may take many decades to achieve.

To promote the resilience and restore the function of these ecosystems, we need to have a thorough understanding of where they are and how they operate. This will inform the successful creation of bigger, better and more joined up habitats that are able to adapt to climate change and meet the needs of present and future generations. By doing this we will meet Government's expectations and targets (in Biodiversity 2020) to support the environment's ongoing role to underpin our economy, and most important of all, recognise these rich ecosystems for their own sake and intrinsic value.

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#### What is Biodiversity 2020?

It is Government's national strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services. It sets out the government's ambition to halt overall loss of England's biodiversity by 2020.

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#### What are invasive non-native species?

An invasive non-native species is any non-native animal or plant that has the ability to spread causing damage to the environment, the economy, our health, and the way we live.

### **SL 7 – Resilient and well-functioning habitats and wildlife**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Achieve bigger, better and more joined up resilient habitats and species in line with Biodiversity 2020 targets, by taking an ‘ecosystem approach’, delivering integrated programmes to enhance biodiversity, and restore ecosystem function through sensitive and improved management, recognising the multiple benefits for people and wildlife. We will work with the Local Nature Partnerships, and land management, farming, and forestry industries to achieve this, supported by establishing good quality available and accessible biodiversity data to improve our understanding on population, condition and distribution of species and habitats (also see strategy PE1 – profitable land management, farming and forestry industries).
- b. Develop projects and programmes to halt further degradation and benefit those protected sites, priority habitats and species, including locally native species most in need of appropriate management measures. We will work with Local Nature Partnerships and others to improve habitats and control and eradicate invasive non-native species.

### **3.1.9 THE CONTINUATION OF THE LAKE DISTRICT AS A SOURCE OF ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL INSPIRATION**

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The spectacular Lake District landscape is steeped in history and has had a huge influence on modern attitudes towards landscape. The interaction between people and the environment has inspired generations of internationally renowned artists and writers, and early recognition of the vulnerability of the Lake District was the stimulus of the landscape conservation movement. Public recognition of the significance of the Lake District together with concern over threats to it were prime factors in the formation of the National Trust, the movement for UK National Parks and more recently for the creation of the World Heritage category of ‘cultural landscape’. The Lake District will continue to stimulate people to develop and take forward new ideas for managing cultural landscapes, such as the creation of the Lake District National Park Partnership, recognising that the Lake District is a continually evolving cultural landscape.

The drama and inspiration of the Lake District’s cultural landscape is as strong now as it ever was. This has given further colour and brought to life by ongoing cultural traditions – some practical, some social. The Lake District does not intend to rely on the past for its future. But we do want to recognise, conserve and celebrate this historic and cultural significance as it truly has shaped the world as we know it.

We expect new examples of how the Lake District inspires people to emerge all the time – be it through architecture, art, literature or social media. Cultural inspiration means different things to different people. The challenge is to maintain the sources of this inspiration and make them accessible – recognising that there are sources from the past, present and future.

### SL 8 – The continuation of the Lake District as a source of artistic and cultural inspiration

Our strategy is to:

- a. Further understand and celebrate the breadth and depth of artistic and cultural inspiration (including as part of the preparation of the World Heritage Site bid, and through the Lakes Cultural Tourism Strategy) to realise and support opportunities for continued inspiration from the Lake District's cultural landscape and rich heritage.
- b. Conserve, maintain, manage and make use of cultural heritage assets through supporting and promoting how these assets are understood and interpreted, which will support the growth of cultural tourism in the Lake District.
- c. Sustain and promote the relationship between people and landscapes by creating opportunities for inspiration through further developing visitor experiences and locally-led initiatives and events (also see strategy VE1 -opportunity for experiences in a unique landscape).

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#### What are **cultural heritage assets**?

Cultural heritage assets are inherited assets which people identify and value as a reflection and expression of their evolving knowledge, beliefs, and traditions.

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#### What is the **Cultural Tourism Strategy**?

The Cultural Tourism Strategy is a plan which outlines how The Lake District – Cumbria will be promoted as a cultural destination.

To really understand the significance of the Lake District's cultural landscape, the World Heritage Site Nomination Document is an important reference point. We have approached this Plan from a strategic management perspective but the nomination dossier explains how special and unique an area we are responsible for managing. This provides the fullest picture of why all the strategies in this Plan need to ensure the effective and wholesale protection of the Special Qualities.



# **SECTION 3.2**

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Prosperous economy

## 3.2 PROSPEROUS ECONOMY

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### 3.2.1 AN OVERVIEW

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The Lake District has a strong tradition of industry supporting its communities and generating wealth. This has had a big influence on shaping the Lake District's cultural landscape; agriculture, predominantly hill farming, has underpinned the economy of the Lake District's rural communities for centuries, and this has had a major influence on creating the cultural landscape. The significance of traditional farming practices and their evolution is reflected by a number of specific attributes of Outstanding Universal Value associated with the industry.

The creation of the Lake District National Park in 1951, and the rise of the National Trust dating back to 1895, focused on conservation but also sought to promote the area to a wider audience. The subsequent unsuppressed growth of the visitor industry in the Lake District rapidly overtook agriculture as the dominant economic driver. Approximately 15.5 million visitors came to the Lake District in 2013 which supported almost 15,500 direct jobs. Agriculture supports more than 13,000 jobs in Cumbria, of which farming in the Lake District accounts for 2,500. The indirect contributions of these industries to other sectors are much higher.

In other sectors, some industries have come and gone such as the tanneries, ironworks and bobbin mills, while others such as slate quarries and micro-brewing and timber production remain well established. We want the Lake District to be a place where businesses come because of the opportunity, environment and lifestyle on offer. We want businesses to make the most of the commercial opportunity to ensure maximum benefit for the whole of the Lake District, as this will help to manage and protect the Lake District in the future.

The Lake District's economy is underpinned by the communities it serves, and by the spectacular cultural landscape which land managers have helped create. Its function and prosperity are also inextricably linked with areas outside its boundaries. The ways in which different Distinctive Areas' economies operate with areas outside of the Lake District can be complex. The presence of major industry outside the park, accessibility and transport networks, and suitably skilled workforces all influence and shape these Distinctive Area relationships with areas outside the Lake District. The Lake District 'brand' meanwhile drives the visitor economy in Cumbria and this brand is capable of benefiting Cumbria's industries as a whole.

### 3.2.2 FARMING, FORESTRY AND LAND MANAGEMENT

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Farming, forestry, and land management practices have shaped many of the Lake District's Special Qualities and attributes Outstanding Universal Value. The ongoing viability of these industries is crucial in order to maintain those attributes of Outstanding Universal Value that relate to it. These include the character of the cultural landscape and its biodiversity, woodlands, the open nature of the fells, and the 645 square kilometres of Common Land which is the largest concentration in the UK.

Farming practices reflect how Lake District farmers have always worked in some of the most challenging land in the county and indeed the country. It therefore comes as no surprise that 90 per cent of the designated Less Favoured Areas of Cumbria are in the Lake District. This means farming is characterised by sheep and beef production. The Lake District is famous for its native Herdwick sheep, and the Herdwick Breeders Association has recently secured Protected Designation of Origin status for "Lakeland Herdwick". Other important sheep breeds include the Rough Fell, Swaledale, and North of England Mule.

#### *i*

##### **What are Less Favoured Areas?**

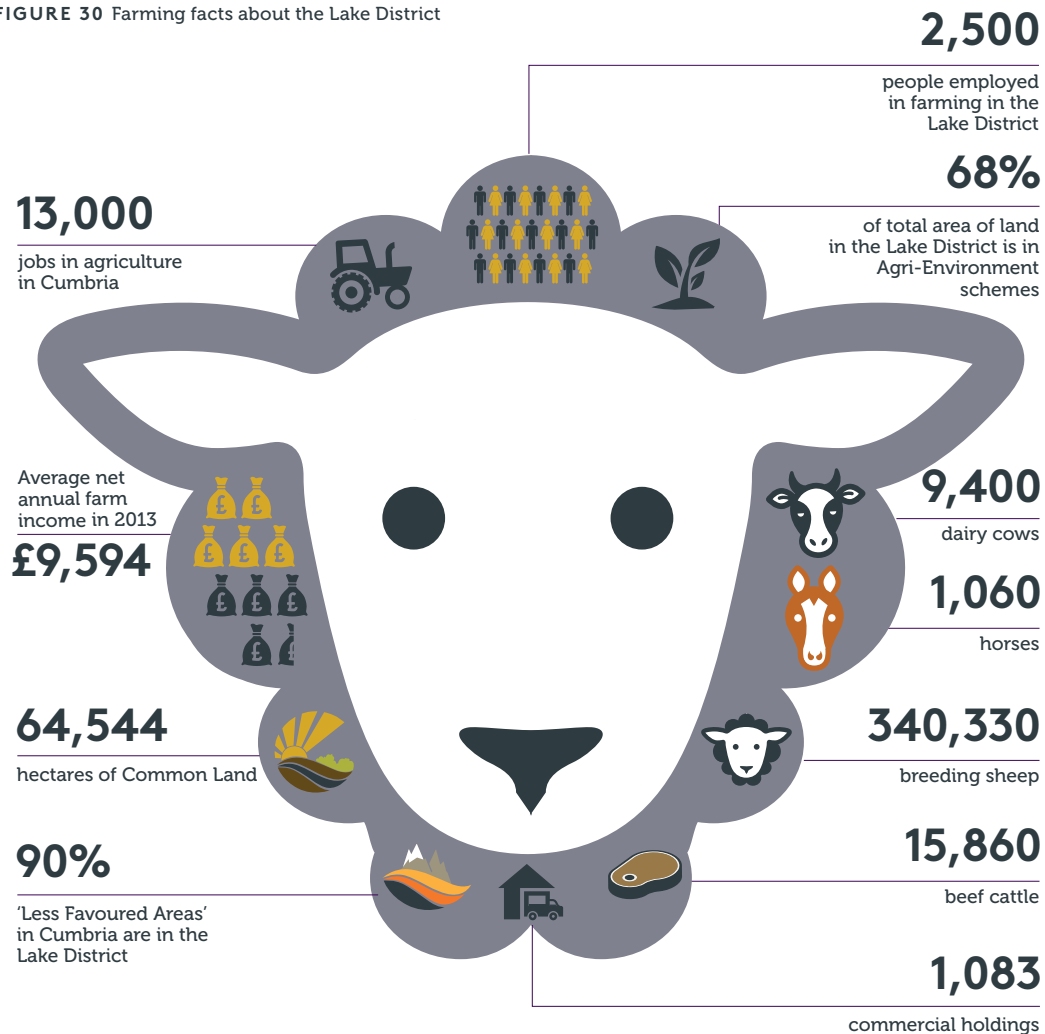
Less Favoured Areas are areas of land located and included in the list of less favoured areas adopted by Article 2 of European Council Directive No.75/268EEC on mountain and hill farming. Farmers in Less Favoured Areas usually face significant handicaps deriving from factors such as remoteness, difficult topography and poor soil conditions. They also tend to have lower farm productivity and, often, higher unit production costs than farmers in lowland areas

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### What is Protected Designation of Origin status?

Protected Designation of Origin is one mark of the EU Protected Food Name scheme which highlights regional and traditional foods whose authenticity and origin can be guaranteed. Protected Designation of Origin products are produced, processed, and prepared within a particular geographical area, and with features and characteristics which must be due to the geographical area.

FIGURE 30 Farming facts about the Lake District



Whilst we continue to recognise the importance of, and support, traditional upland farm and management practices in order to manage and protect the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value and Special Qualities, it is also important that farming continues to evolve. Farmers and land managers must be supported to maintain the health and welfare of livestock, protect and enhance natural resources (for example: wildlife, carbon storage and water quality), and make greater efficiencies by using new technology and sources of energy to reduce costs. Given the physical and natural constraints of the land, adopting new technologies is not always practical. For example, modern tractors and equipment may be too large for traditional buildings, field entrances, narrow lanes, and steep fields.

We want to ensure land continues to be managed and farmed in a sustainable way in the Lake District, recognising that farms need to be financially viable and sustainable, and that the structure of farming and land management is changing due to a range of global economic pressures and subsidy reform, which makes income from farming unpredictable. Helping farm businesses to be profitable in a way that conserves the overall Outstanding Universal Value and Special Qualities of the Lake District is fundamental for them to be sustainable and continue to effectively manage the land. It is their land management practices ultimately that create the cultural landscape, which is of Outstanding Universal Value in its own right, but this also underpins the visitor economy, which is so heavily relied upon.

We anticipate changes in land ownership and tenancy over the next decade which is likely to result in a polarisation in farm sizes, as current trends indicate large farms will continue to expand in size and number, often taking on land outside the Lake District. There is also an increase in smaller, non-commercial lifestyle units. It is important that job opportunities should continue to exist in order to retain skills needed to manage the land.

The unpredictable nature of farm incomes has resulted in many farming families considering or having already considered opportunities to diversify and supplement their income away from traditional food production and livestock breeding. Emerging opportunities include supplementing their income through off-farm employment or entering into new markets such as payments for public benefits like biodiversity conservation, payments for carbon storage and offsetting, energy generation (such as small scale hydro power; small scale wind energy; solar photovoltaics; biomass; anaerobic digesters; and heat pumps), as well as more traditional tourism-related diversification. Initial start-up costs for these alternative opportunities can be off-putting or present significant risks for businesses, especially in new and emerging markets. Securing profitability as a business is critical in the face of declining revenue support from Government and the European Union, and we recognise that we have a role in assisting with the development of these opportunities to reach a commercially viable scale.

There is increasing interest and demand for local produce linked to the Lake District's provenance, including the "Lakeland Herdwick". There is also a growing market in other products such as carbon brokering and woodfuel. In addition, biodiversity offsetting is an area where there is potential for further exploration and the Partnership intend to develop a protocol to enable this. The Lake District 'brand' is increasingly beneficial to the local economy, because it is largely being used in a manner that manages or makes sensitive use of the Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, helping to sustain them. Agriculture and the natural environment underpin the Lake District's wider offer so new business approaches are needed, and we are looking for ways to help the farming, forestry and land management industries successfully rise to what is undoubtedly a considerable challenge to ensure their continued longevity.

**i****What is biodiversity offsetting?**

Biodiversity offsets are conservation activities that are designed to give biodiversity benefits to compensate for losses.

**i****What is carbon brokering?**

Carbon brokering matches land management projects with potential private investors who purchase the carbon benefits delivered over the lifetime of project. The sale of the carbon benefits allows the project to go ahead.

**PE 1 – Profitable land management, farming, and forestry industries**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Support and encourage initiatives that ensure sustainable land management, farming and forestry remain or become profitable through diversification, adding value to their products, securing efficiency savings, and identifying and establishing new markets. We will do this by sharing best practice and piloting opportunities and initiatives that can be developed further and capitalised upon by the wider industry.
- b. Maximise the relevant opportunities for Lake District land management, farming and forestry industries to access funding that transforms businesses to remain or become profitable. We will do this by influencing the design and coordinating the delivery of funding streams such as the Rural Development Programme for England, including LEADER.  
(Also see strategy SL1 – world class living cultural landscape)

**i****What is LEADER?**

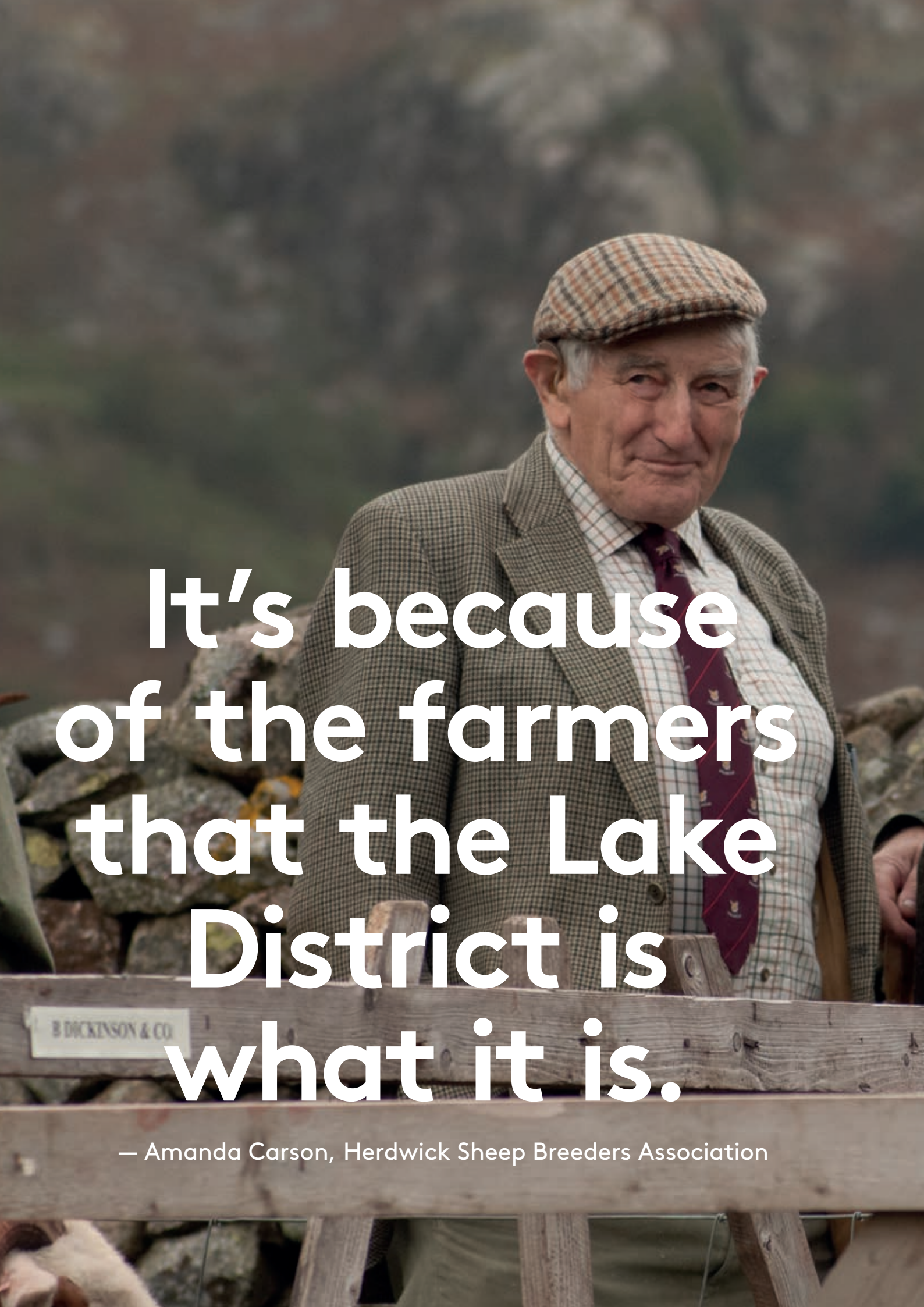
The LEADER approach is a bottom-up, community-led approach to the delivery of Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) funds for projects, which will benefit rural communities in specific LEADER areas. The Lake District is predominantly covered by the Cumbria Fells and Dales LEADER Local Action Group.

Two of the best examples of how forests can maximise opportunities can be seen at Whinlatter and Grizedale. In addition to forest products they offer destinations for the arts and adventurous recreation. However, many smaller woodlands in the Lake District remain under-managed. There is definite potential to add value to wood-based products through better management, helping to support the economy and manage the landscape and wildlife in tandem. Strategies VE1 and SL6 in this Plan outline our approach to these issues.

The ageing population of farming communities risks losing cultural traditions, knowledge, and skills. Attracting the next generation into the industry is critical for its future prosperity and, in turn, the ongoing protection and conservation of the Lake District's Special Qualities. Family farming succession is important and we want to support the provision of traditional skills training needed to maintain the authenticity and integrity of the Lake District. We also want to help develop the commercial acumen and business development skills which will support those entering agriculture, land management and forestry. This will support them in developing and running diverse and profitable businesses. Being located in the Lake District must become a business advantage, despite the challenges it presents.

#### **PE 2 – Maintaining traditional land based skills**

Our strategy is to encourage and support young people into land management, farming and forestry to maintain traditional and develop new skills, and the knowledge necessary for maintenance of the cultural landscape. We will work with education providers and business to address skills gaps, raise the profile and career opportunities within these industries, support ongoing workforce upskilling, and to provide training opportunities and events.

An elderly man with a friendly expression, wearing a tweed jacket, a patterned shirt, a dark tie, and a tweed flat cap. He is standing behind a wooden fence. The background is a blurred natural setting, possibly a farm or a rural landscape. The text is overlaid on the image in a large, white, sans-serif font.

It's because  
of the farmers  
that the Lake  
District is  
what it is.

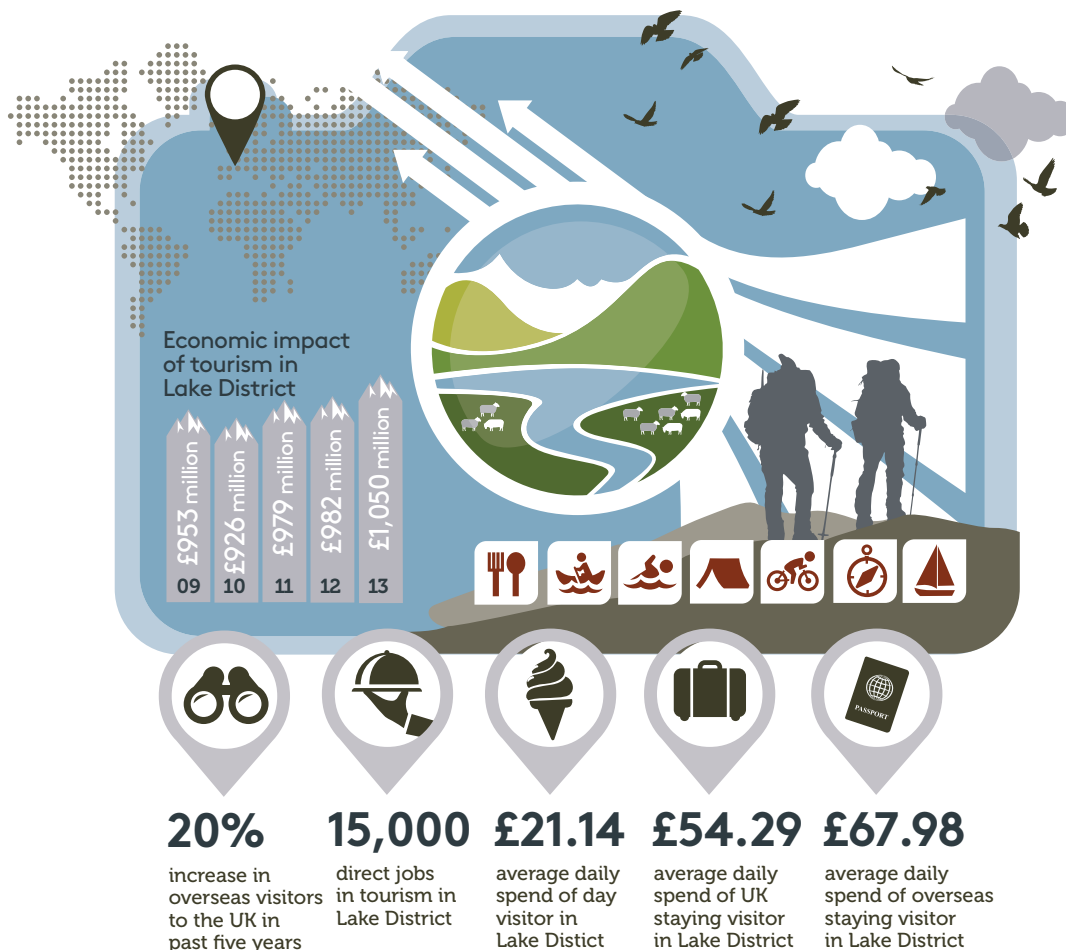
— Amanda Carson, Herdwick Sheep Breeders Association



### 3.2.3 THE VISITOR ECONOMY

The visitor economy is crucial to the Lake District and so we need it to continue to prosper. There is a growing interest in National Parks as UK holiday destinations as visitors come to enjoy the spectacular landscape and experiences available. Nomination of the Lake District as a World Heritage Site, together with the presence of Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site will grow interest in the Lake District further. Innovative measures such as those that brand or market the place and its traditions can both help develop a more sustainable economy and support landscape protection. This offers economic opportunity, as recognised by the Strategic Economic Plan of the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, but reinforces the need and urgency for significantly improved visitor infrastructure whilst sustaining the spectacular landscape which underpins the visitor economy.

FIGURE 31 Benefits of tourism



**i****What is the Strategic Economic Plan of the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership?**

The Strategic Economic Plan is the county's strategy and 'ask' to Government to attract funding for the next 10 years for projects which will deliver growth in Cumbria and the UK.

Visitor markets are highly competitive both domestically and overseas. The number of international visitors to the UK has increased by approximately 20 per cent over the past five years. Unfortunately Cumbria has seen only a negligible increase. The appeal of the Lake District has significant growth potential with international audiences across the world; however the current number of overseas visitors is relatively small. The UK receives 32.8 million visits every year from overseas visitors, but Cumbria only attracts 238,000 of these. VisitBritain suggest that the 'Lake District' is relatively well known especially in Commonwealth countries, the European Union, USA, and in many parts of Asia in comparison to many other areas of the UK. However, this is not being converted into actual visits so we need to work together to increase the number of overseas visits. Emerging visitor markets of South America, China, Japan and India provide further opportunities to increase overseas visits. We have the opportunity to change this situation. The heightened status and awareness which World Heritage inscription will generate can be used by the tourism industry to increase sustainable tourism in the Lake District, through appropriate marketing and new provision of facilities.

To be successful, the Special Qualities and Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake District need to continue to be protected, increasingly understood and appreciated. Businesses associated with the visitor industry have a responsibility to ensure the Lake District's Special Qualities and Outstanding Universal Value are protected, understood, and appreciated too by delivering initiatives such as 'responsible visiting', as they ultimately benefit from the high quality environment. The visitor experience also must meet undoubtedly high expectations so the strategies for these Vision themes are equally important in delivering this ambition.

International visitors typically stay for longer and spend more than UK visitors, offering significant potential for the industry. But domestic visitors account for the majority of visitors to the Lake District so are hugely important too. The National Park designation itself recognises the Lake District as a national asset to be used and enjoyed by the UK population. Our approach is to encourage growth in international visitor markets, whilst ensuring the needs and expectations of domestic visitors are also met. Therefore we want to encourage longer stays which support a year round visitor industry. This will encourage greater spend to enable the Lake District's visitor industry to offer increasingly improved wages and permanent positions, and reduce the seasonality of the industry, while not putting undue pressure on the qualities that make the Lake District special.

### **PE 3 – Increasing the number of staying visitors**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Increase the number of overnight and longer stays by establishing a strong cultural tourism brand. This will showcase the high quality arts and cultural offer including the Lake District's heritage, and take advantage of the areas candidate World Heritage Site status. We will do this by implementing the Cultural Tourism Strategy to attract both UK and overseas visitors (also see Strategy SL8 – the continuation of the Lake District as a source of artistic and cultural inspiration).
- b. Promote areas which illustrate the reasons for National Park and World Heritage Site designations, with a particular emphasis on three Showcase Areas, as shown in Figure 34. Within these areas we will make it easy for visitors to move between attractions and destinations (see figures 34, and 35 -38, and strategy VE6 – Easy access to from and within the Lake District).

The Lake District has a wide appeal to visitors and a range of experiences available at different times of the year. The local economy would benefit from less seasonality. Whilst seasonality is inevitable to an extent, due to the suitability of the weather for some activities, and the nature of school holidays, some destinations and attractions are suitable all year round. We want to promote a year round offer to a wide range of audiences whilst always protecting the value of the Lake District. There are different markets for different seasons; what can be responsibly and proactively offered to visitors at different times of the year varies, recognising the increased sensitivity of the landscape and environment to some recreational activity at certain times of year. The Cumbria and Lake District Access and Recreation Strategy (2014 – 2019) provides a strategic framework for the management and improvement of countryside and recreation in Cumbria but with the caveat that the actions are yet to be finalised and will be subject the Habitats Regulations Assessment.

### **PE 4 – A Year Round Visitor Industry**

Our strategy is to promote the Lake District as a year-round destination to a range of audiences at different times of year, with a particular focus on the experiences offered by:

- i. Landscape and environment
- ii. Culture and heritage
- iii. Adventure
- iv. Hospitality, food and drink

We will identify who and where the audiences are for each of these four visitor experiences and market accordingly (also see strategies VE1, VE2 and VE6 in the World Class Visitor Experience Section).

### 3.2.4 HELPING THE ECONOMY TO PROSPER

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In order for businesses to thrive and compete nationally and internationally they require the necessary infrastructure and support necessary to trade in the twenty-first century. Superfast broadband and mobile telephone network coverage are essential to most businesses. With this connectivity it will remove the competitive disadvantage faced by businesses seeking to locate in the Lake District. Extending connectivity into every one of the Lake District valleys will open up a wide range of previously unrealised opportunities for businesses to establish themselves in the Lake District. Providing this connectivity everywhere is an ongoing challenge but will also result in significant benefits for our communities too.

#### **PE 5 – Provision of infrastructure – Digital infrastructure**

Our strategy is to have superfast broadband, mobile telephone and mobile internet coverage in every valley. This will connect customers to businesses and provide the widest choice of location for businesses. We will achieve this by securing the funding and commitment of others, including communities, and assisting with the provision of digital infrastructure needed to make improvements. These will need to be sensitive to the Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake District.

The Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has a key role to play in removing barriers and developing economic growth in the whole of Cumbria including the Lake District, and it has identified four priority themes in its Strategic Economic Plan. These priorities are 'advanced manufacturing'; 'nuclear and energy excellence'; 'vibrant rural and visitor economy'; and 'strategic connectivity of the M6 corridor'. Clearly, it is the vibrant rural and visitor economy which is of greatest relevance to the Lake District, but the Cumbrian economy as a whole has a crucial role to play in providing a diverse economic base for the Lake District. Many communities rely on major employers outside of the Lake District's boundaries (for example, the nuclear industry at Sellafield, BAE Systems at Barrow in Furness, and Glaxo Smith-Kline, the multinational pharmaceutical company with a major base in Ulverston). This is an important dynamic that we want to support.

Some large, new developments are proposed associated with nuclear, energy and manufacturing industries outside the Lake District's boundaries. These include a new nuclear power station, offshore wind farms, and a new biopharmaceutical manufacturing facility. Being part of the supply chain to support these nuclear, energy, or manufacturing industries offers potentially small scale but high value business growth opportunities within the Lake District. These industries, in particular nuclear and energy industries may also have proposals for associated infrastructure within or close to the boundaries of the Lake District including, for example, electricity transmission lines or facilities for the storage of nuclear waste. We recognise the need to protect and conserve the Lake District and its setting, and Government has an established presumption against

major developments in National Parks reflected in National Planning Policy Framework, national planning practice guidance and the adopted Lake District Local Plan. Furthermore any such development proposals would require Habitat Regulation Assessments.

#### **PE 6 – Major industries and provision of infrastructure outside the Lake District**

Our strategy is to recognise the importance of nuclear and energy industries in West Cumbria and other major economic investments in Cumbria. Where they do not prejudice the Lake District, its setting, Special Qualities, attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, or visitor economy we will assist with the development of proposals for associated infrastructure.

All businesses need to consider the cost of running their operation. Energy and fuel costs can be a significant burden to economic growth for any business no matter where they are located, so supporting businesses with energy efficiency measures will help them reduce costs. The Lake District provides a range of opportunities for generating renewable energy locally which in turn can allow businesses to save money and in some cases even supply energy to the National Grid and contribute to reducing carbon emissions. However, the scale of such schemes is critical to their acceptability. The Lake District Local Plan emphasises that there is a presumption against large scale wind energy developments in the National Park. Again, for relevant development proposals they would require Habitat Regulation Assessments.

#### **PE 7 – Reducing energy costs for businesses**

Our strategy is to develop and support initiatives and projects, guided by planning policies, which reduce the overall cost of fuel and energy. This will be achieved through a combination of energy efficiency measures and local scale energy generation which make effective and sensitive use of the environment, and contribute to reducing the Lake District's Carbon Budget (e.g. small scale hydro schemes).

Employment studies in the Lake District have previously identified a shortage of suitable available employment land. This was a potential barrier to economic growth, addressed by the allocation of almost nine hectares of land in the Local Plan. Land has been allocated for a variety of employment uses across the Lake District providing growth opportunities for new and existing businesses.

Every site allocated for development in the Local Plan was subject to a rigorous process of objective impact assessment, having full regard to the possible impacts upon the Special Qualities of the Lake District. The methodology and the findings of this process were independently scrutinised by an appointed Planning Inspector before the sites were able to be formally allocated.

### PE 8 – Availability of land and buildings

Our strategy is to maintain the supply of suitable available employment land and buildings in Rural Service Centres throughout the Lake District. We will secure their development through marketing, promotion, and seeking to address any barriers to delivery. Elsewhere we will support the creation of new employment land and buildings in accordance with the Local Plan.

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#### What are Rural Service Centres?

There are 13 Rural Service Centres identified in the Lake District's Local Plan. Within the Lake District these centres offer the greatest range of important local services and facilities, as well as housing, employment and transport opportunities.

As well as maintaining land available for business, having easy access to a working age population is also essential. We therefore must support communities to have a working age population for businesses in towns and villages.

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#### What is a working age population?

Working age population is defined as age 16 to State Pension Age. The State Pension Age currently ranges from 61 to 68 depending on sex and date of birth.

The University of Cumbria and other education establishments provide many opportunities to address skills gaps. The Lake District is home to the largest School of Outdoor Studies in Europe and the National School of Forestry. The redeveloped campus in Ambleside provides a real opportunity to develop research capacity to a greater extent. The University's Outdoor Studies department has a range of working relations with partners, including student volunteering and student placements, co-teaching on courses, small research projects, and sitting on project boards. Similarly the National School of Forestry has a range of similar relations with key players.

### PE 9 – Addressing workforce and skills gaps

Our strategy is to:

- a. Help communities to maintain a working age population which can provide a workforce for existing and new businesses. We will do this by supporting new housing guided by the Local Plan (also see strategies VC4 – Availability and supply of a full range of housing types, sizes and tenures and VC5 High proportion of houses in permanent occupation).
- b. Identify and address skills gaps in the local workforce by bringing together training and education providers with prospective and existing employers or industries.

Some businesses do not consider locating in the Lake District because of a perception that the designation of the landscape means development would be unwelcome, and planning permission difficult to obtain. The reality is that many businesses would be entirely compatible and desirable for the Lake District, and the benefits the Lake District can offer to business and workforce alike are unique. Promoting the Lake District as a desirable place for businesses which are compatible with National Park and World Heritage Site purposes, working together to simplify regulation where possible, and ensuring businesses have access to investment opportunities, support and advice will help to address some of these perceptions.

#### PE 10 – Supporting businesses with advice and access to investment opportunities

Our strategy is to:

- a. Ensure businesses have easy access to a wide range of support and advice. We will do this through appropriate bodies, such as the Cumbria Business Growth Hub.
- b. Work with others, such as the Local Enterprise Partnership, to develop programmes of investment opportunities to encourage further appropriate economic development in the Lake District.

The rural character and mountainous nature of the Lake District is integral to its appeal, but it also presents practical difficulties in terms of access and mobility. Key towns and villages in the Lake District link functionally to areas outside its boundaries through the main travel routes, to areas of employment, other services, and the strategic rail and road networks. Where businesses need good access to these, we can help them to identify locations in the Lake District that most effectively bring access, services, premises, infrastructure and workforce together. This is a key focus of the Lake District Local Plan, and in particular the Core Strategy, which guides development decisions strategically and spatially.

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#### What are travel routes?

Travel routes are the main routes used by residents and commuters to travel to services, places of work etc. They include road, rail, and ferry routes.

FIGURE 32 Main and secondary travel routes and flows across the Lake District



The Lake District is also a thoroughfare, providing strategic links between West Cumbria and the rest of the country. We want to support the whole of the county's prosperity, whilst recognising that the infrastructure passing through such a special area requires careful planning and sensitive management.

#### **PE 11 – Provision of infrastructure using roads, rail and boats**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Encourage businesses that require good access to transport links to be located in Rural Service Centres identified in the Lake District Local Plan, where these requirements are most readily met.
- b. Recognise the importance of trunk roads, the Cumbria Coast and Furness rail lines providing access to and from West Cumbria, the Windermere rail branch line and Windermere ferry, and support improvements where they do not prejudice the Lake District's Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.
- c. Seek to ensure that maintenance and development of transport infrastructure allows for the delivery of enhanced transport services to and within the Lake District.

The 'Lake District' is a well-recognised brand nationally and has international awareness too, particularly within the visitor economy. It offers opportunities for attracting and promoting other industries and businesses with appropriate marketing, research, and campaigns which in turn can develop a more sustainable economy and support landscape protection.

#### **PE 12 – Market awareness and promotion**

Our strategy is to promote the Lake District as a desirable place to locate businesses on the basis of digital infrastructure, workforce, quality of life and high quality environment, using the Local Plan to guide investment decisions.

Cut grass being prepared for making hay in Borrowdale





# **SECTION 3.3**

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A World Class Visitor Experience

## 3.3 A WORLD CLASS VISITOR EXPERIENCE

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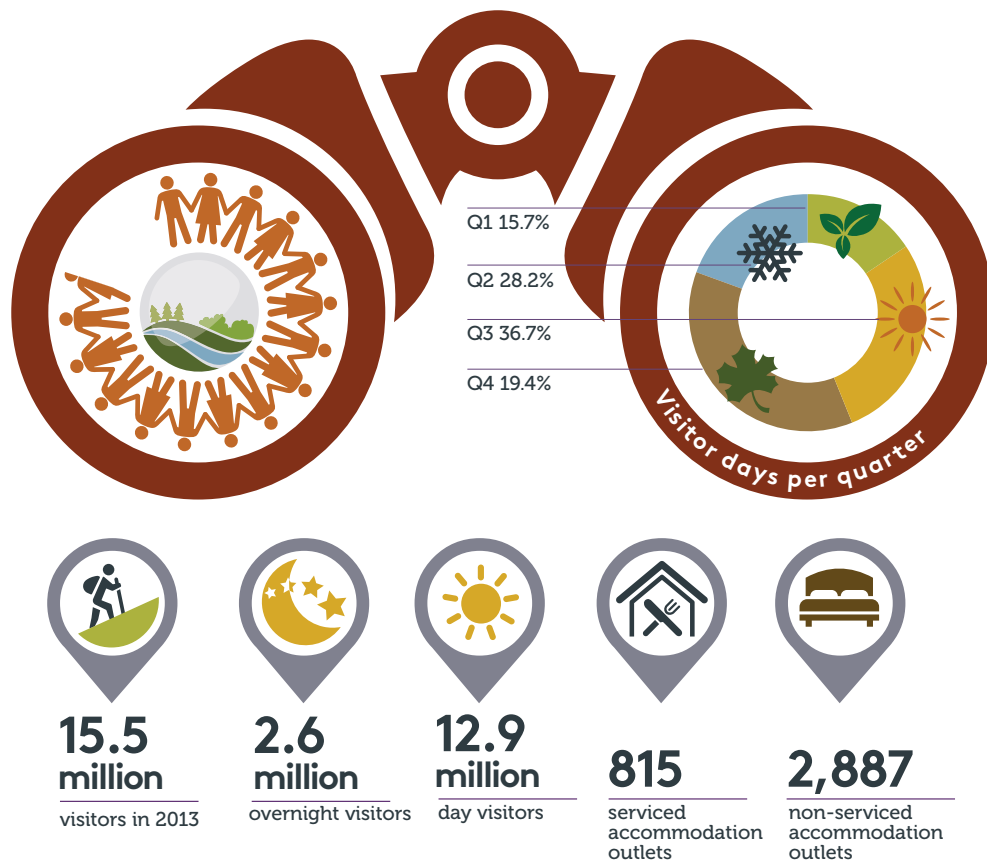


### 3.3.1 AN OVERVIEW

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The Lake District's popularity attracts in the region of 15.5 million visitors every year. One of the Lake District's Special Qualities is its long tradition of tourism and outdoor activities, and it is our intention to ensure we attract new visitors, and make sure every visitor returns. We also want visitors to increase their understanding and appreciation of the Lake District through their experiences of this special place. Every individual visitor – domestic or international – is as important and as valued as the next person. We want to make them feel special and provide them with a world class visitor experience here and in the whole of Cumbria.

FIGURE 33 Facts about tourism in the Lake District



As an inspiration for many famous poets, writers and artists (such as William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Southey, John Ruskin, Thomas de Quincey, Beatrix Potter, Arthur Ransome, Alfred Wainwright, Norman Nicholson, Thomas Gainsborough, JMW Turner, John Constable), the Lake District's uniqueness and how it has been shaped and interpreted by culture is what makes it special. Yet we cannot assume visitors will continue to choose to visit the Lake District just because they have done before. Visitor expectations continuously change and grow. It is essential to remain competitive and attractive to audiences nationally and internationally.

The Lake District is a place where visitors can benefit from relaxation, inspiration and adventure, with activities and attractions to suit everyone. This is evident from the opening of the first Country House Hotel, the Sharrow Bay, on Ullswater in 1949, and today the Lake District is becoming a globally acknowledged and genuinely inclusive destination for outdoor recreation, personal development, and spiritual refreshment. This is enabled by offering open access to the 'great outdoors' for a whole range of adventure opportunities and experiences. We acknowledge that recreational use of the Lake District does pose risks to aspects of the environment such as upland habitats and footpath erosion. Our management responses seek to ensure this long tradition of tourism and outdoor activity do not harm the Lake District's Special Qualities and Outstanding Universal Value, by considering the seasonality of different activities and by focusing on our approach to sustainable visitor management more widely. The Lake District has also obtained designation as a 'Fairtrade Zone' to support the area's promotion of ethically and locally sourced food, drink and other products within the visitor economy.

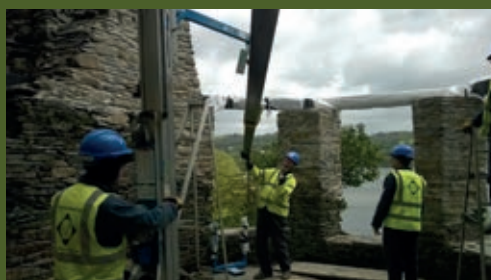
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**Case study example: Claife Station at Claife Heights, Windermere**

Claife Station is on the western shore of Lake Windermere. This grade II listed building was until recently in ruins but the National Trust have restored this viewing station which was once a popular destination for a wide range of visitors in the past.

The windows of the drawing room were the Station's most celebrated feature; each had a different aspect, viewed through different coloured glass to enhance variations in weather and seasons to offer distinctive views of the lake and landscape. The tinted glass in these windows was intended to recreate lighting effects in the landscape. Yellow represented summer, orange was for autumn, light green for spring, and light blue for winter. There was also a dark blue for moonlight and a lilac tint to give the impression of a thunderstorm.

At viewing stations, visitors would turn their backs to the landscape, hold up a mirror known as a Claude Glass and look at the framed and transformed view. The mirror would make the scene easier to draw and record. A 'Claude Glass' was named after the paintings of Claude Lorraine, where he used a golden tint, similar to that viewed in the mirror.



We know that the Lake District has what it takes to compete with the very best destinations internationally, and World Heritage Site status will ensure protection of this global asset, in parallel to signifying the international significance of the Lake District as a cultural landscape.

### 3.3.2 BEING CLEAR ABOUT THE EXPERIENCES ON OFFER IN A UNIQUE LANDSCAPE

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Special Qualities are why the Lake District is able to offer a range of world class visitor experiences. Visitors have a particular appreciation of the spectacular landscape that surrounds them wherever they are in the Lake District, and opportunities for quiet enjoyment. There are many opportunities to increase understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of a broader range of Special Qualities and the Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake District to a wider audience.

The Lake District welcome's everyone, and we want every visitor to have the best experience it can offer. Many visitors come to enjoy and experience the landscape and to have adventures in this first class environment. This provides wider health benefits to visitors of the Lake District, with the opportunities on offer promoting active, healthy lifestyles and nurturing mental wellbeing.

Whilst the cultural landscape has been heavily shaped by human influence, it certainly has not been tamed. It is therefore important to promote the need for personal responsibility – whether this means providing information and advice about safety on the fells, or encouraging visitors, from individuals to large scale groups undertaking organised events, to interact with the place in a way that will not damage it.

Research by Cumbria Tourism (the Destination Management Organisation for the area and a member of the Partnership) has identified four main visitor markets that we cater for and which we should develop further. Our Strategy sets out how we will do this.

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#### What is a Destination Management Organisation?

Destination Management Organisations are those with responsibilities for tourism locally. Essentially they take a lead role for the development of tourism in a destination.

#### VE 1 – Opportunity for experiences in a unique landscape

Our strategy is to:

- a. Ensure that every visitor has the best experience that we can offer.
- b. Offer a breadth of experiences for visitors that benefit their health and wellbeing, and enhance understanding and appreciation of the Special Qualities and Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake District. We will use the inspiration of the cultural landscape and focus on the experiences offered by:

- **Landscape and environment**

- i. Promote and sustain the Lake District as a place to experience a unique landscape and environment in a variety of ways, offering opportunities for experiencing, tranquillity, peacefulness, dark skies, and wildlife.
- ii. Re-establish existing viewing stations and explore the potential for new locations from where the spectacular landscape and environment can be fully appreciated.
- iii. Implement the Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy to make it easier to experience the spectacular landscape on land and water.



- **Culture and heritage**

- Use the Cultural Tourism Strategy to showcase the Lake District's culture and credentials as a prospective World Heritage Site.
- Secure World Heritage Site status to recognise the Lake District's internationally unique cultural landscape, and use this designation as a means of increasing awareness and appeal of the Lake District to a wider audience.



- **Adventure**

- Promote and create new and existing opportunities for outdoor adventure on foot, bicycles, ropes, in and on water, and through events – all sensitive to the unique landscape. We will do this by delivering the AdCap Strategy and Action Plan, and Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy (also see strategy VE2 – Responsible visiting).
- We will support organisers to ensure their events are sensitively managed by encouraging them to undertake community engagement and consultation, and develop event management plans.



- **Hospitality, food and drink**

- Achieve a consistently high standard of hospitality through providing appropriate incentives and support for businesses in the visitor industry to continuously improve.
- Showcase and market local produce available in the Lake District to raise the profile, and celebrate the provenance and quality of Cumbria's food and drink. This will include establishing and organising with others a programme of events to promote the use of local produce within the Lake District visitor and hospitality industries.



**i**

**What is the AdCap Strategy?**

The AdCap Strategy is a plan which outlines how the Lake District – Cumbria will develop, promote and sell sustainable world class outdoor experiences by working in partnership with others to secure economic benefits for the region.

**i****What is the Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy (CCAS)?**

The CCAS is a jointly prepared strategy and action plan which seeks to improve public access to the countryside of Cumbria through access and recreation management.

**i****What are dark skies?**

Dark skies are places where people can experience truly dark skies enabling them to see billions of stars at night.

**i****What is a viewing station?**

From the eighteenth century onwards the Lake District landscape attracted increasing numbers of visitors, as the development of the Picturesque movement grew. Thomas West published the first Lake District guidebook in 1778 in which he described the scenery from 'stations' or viewpoints.

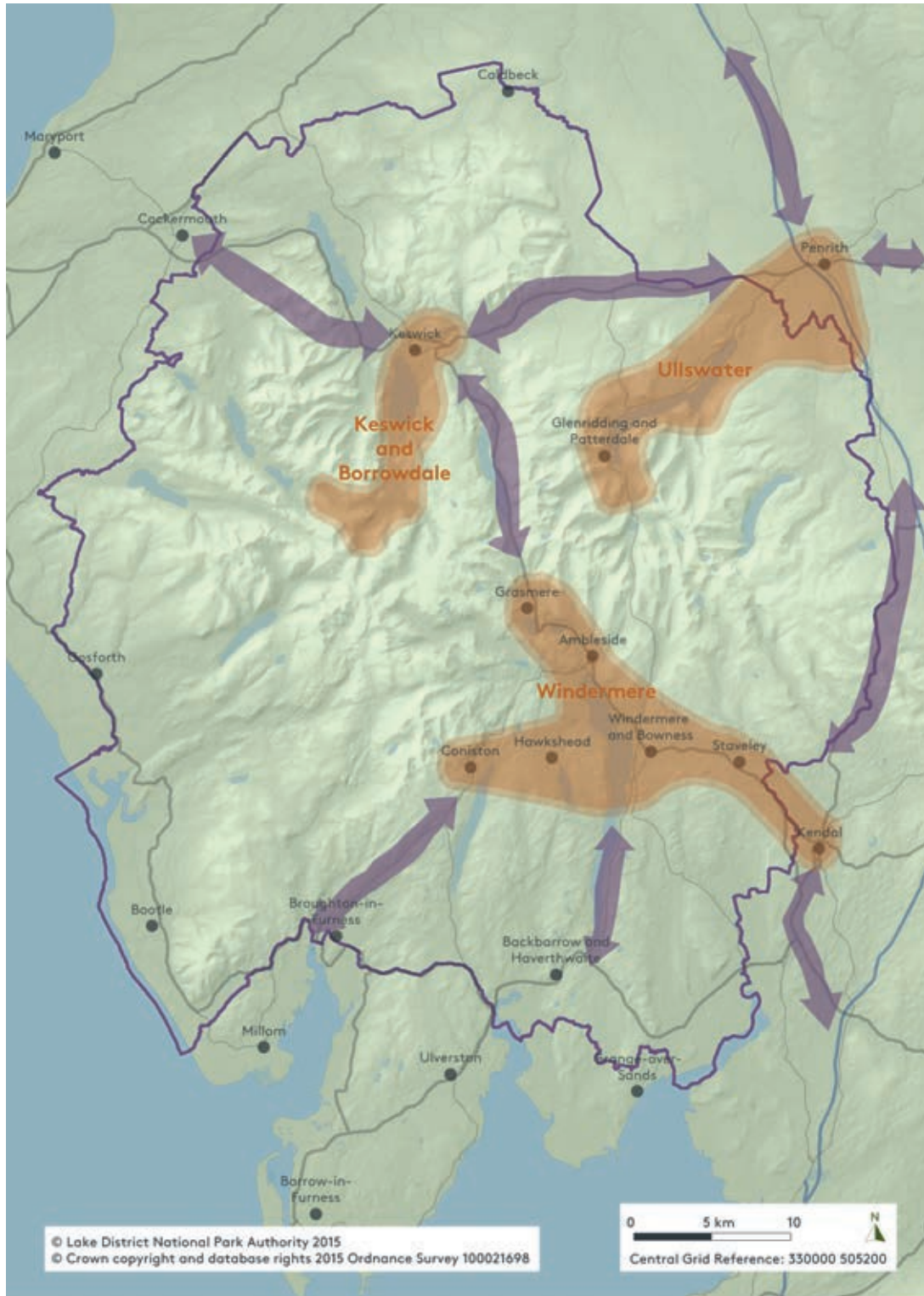
The Picturesque movement suggested that people should only view the landscape from certain points, at their most pictorial. These viewpoints became the fashionable places for tourists and artists to visit, one such example is Claife Station.

The Lake District offers a rich variety of experiences from the landscape, culture, adventure and hospitality, available across the full extent of the Lake District in different ways. Because of the sheer size and diversity of the area, we have needed to give careful consideration to how the Lake District is able to showcase itself to visitors, and encourage them to return to explore more.

The strategies in this section of the Plan are therefore underpinned by our intention to give particular attention to three specific areas of the Lake District, which we are calling Showcase Areas. These areas of Keswick and Borrowdale, Ullswater and Windermere epitomise the Lake District's credentials as a National Park and World Heritage Site. Together these three areas offer visitors an opportunity to experience and engage with a broad range of what makes the Lake District special, illustrating the Lake District's character and cultural significance, as well as offering a whole range of experiences of adventure and hospitality within them.

In selecting these three Showcase Areas, we have had particular regard to the implications of the high visitor numbers which the Lake District benefits from annually. These three areas offer particular opportunities not only to see and experience the Special Qualities of the Lake District, but they also offer the greatest opportunities to make it easy and attractive for visitors to move through these areas without being reliant upon having their own car.

FIGURE 34 Map of showcase areas



□ Nominated Property boundary

■ Showcase Areas

➔ Key linkages

These 'Showcase Areas' also offer a range of accommodation types – key to our strategy of increasing the average length of visitor stays. Whilst the three areas are also amongst the easiest areas of the Lake District to access from elsewhere in the UK, including its international airports, we are confident that in addition to enhancing movement within these areas, travel to, from and between them is capable of significant improvements. Together, by focusing on these areas in this way we are providing a cohesive and holistic approach to managing visitor demands, expectations and pressures in ways that will sustain and enhance the Special Qualities of the Lake District.

For all areas of the Lake District and visitor markets, we must continue to manage these interactions in a way that does not compromise the very thing that underpins their success – the Special Qualities. It's important to remember that visitors have also shaped the cultural landscape over time, and we need to renew their commitment to stewardship of this important landscape. 'Responsible visiting' can achieve this. It is widely recognised that operators and businesses must work within environmental and social limits of the present to ensure ongoing economic benefits now and in the future.

Visitors themselves increasingly expect to see their presence isn't causing harm to the environment or to the local community – whether they are travelling independently, part of a tour, or taking part in an organised event such as the Three Peaks Challenge or the Great North Swim. If visitors themselves are seeing the impacts of tourism such as footpath erosion or littering, this can detract from their overall experience and they are less likely to return.

This shift in attitudes creates the opportunity to ask visitors to help us with managing the Lake District, enabling them to have a positive impact. With Visitor Giving visitors can contribute to managing and maintaining the landscape such as through footpath repairs. These are typically very small financial contributions but, thanks to the high numbers of visitors, there is the potential to generate significant income. This money is then reinvested into looking after the Lake District. Other forms of giving is also critically important to the Lake District, for example there are thousands of volunteer days completed every year in the Lake District which helps to restore, protect, and maintain the Special Qualities. Telling the story and making sure those visitors can see the difference their contributions are making is very important. This also provides another way in which visitors can engage with and understand the Special Qualities.

A small white lowercase letter 'i' inside a dark green circle, serving as an information icon.

#### **What is Visitor Giving?**

Visitor Giving is a way of inviting voluntary donations (for example time or money) from visitors who feel inspired to put something back into looking after the places they love, for example, Fix the Fells project which repairs footpaths.

## **VE 2 – Responsible visiting**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Ensure a range of opportunities are provided to embed understanding and appreciation of the Special Qualities and Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake District, tailored to the needs of different audiences. This will be done using visitor information sources, events and other more formal learning methods to identify and communicate how and where these Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value can be seen, appreciated and experienced. We will work with others to maintain and implement an up-to-date learning strategy.
- b. Provide opportunities for people to give – to significantly increase the amount of voluntary contributions made by visitors. These will be used to sustain, maintain and improve the Lake District's environment and the landscape. We will do this by identifying and implementing appropriate opportunities to secure contributions.
- c. Bring together relevant organisations, including voluntary groups and charities, to identify where help is needed, and to develop and implement appropriate ways of coordinating these contributions accordingly.

A world class visitor experience cannot be provided by a single attraction or accommodation provider; it has to be embedded in every interaction that the visitor has with the Lake District, even before they arrive. This will be online, on their journey or during their stay.

Quality of experience runs deep. We are not talking about quality 'if you can afford it'. Quality should be regardless of cost – it's quality for all, whether you are camping or staying in a 4\* hotel, having a stroll around a village, taking in a view or visiting a much-anticipated attraction, on a lake cruise or open water swimming. For visitors to come back to the Lake District again and again, we always need to make sure that every experience lives up to expectations.

Every part of the experience should be a high quality one. But there are four aspects of visitors' experience we are targeting:

- Accommodation
- Public realm and amenities
- Available and accessible information for visitors
- Visitor movement

### 3.3.3 ACCOMMODATION

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For staying visitors, the experience of their accommodation can define their perception of the Lake District. Quality relates to all aspects of a stay, from the condition and cleanliness of rooms, buildings and facilities, to the welcome received on arrival.

All visitors have different preferences and budgets, and it is important that we cater for all. This includes through modernising and updating the type and quality of accommodation, where required to meet visitor expectations. We see it as particularly important that, in the three areas we have identified as providing the 'snapshot' of the Lake District, a full range of quality accommodation is available. This is where the greatest demand potential exists.

#### **VE 3 – Diversity and availability of high standard accommodation for all budgets**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Enable all types of visitor accommodation to evolve, to meet continuously changing domestic and international visitor expectations guided by appropriately supportive planning policies.
- b. Encourage accommodation providers to improve the quality of what they offer by providing incentives for them to make improvements.
- c. Improve the quality of hospitality by developing these skills through dedicated training opportunities (also see strategy PE9 - Availability of suitably skilled workforce).

### 3.3.4 PUBLIC REALM AND AMENITIES

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The Lake District, to a large degree, trades on the quality of its landscape, and the character and charm of its towns and villages. Many of these towns and villages in particular have become popular locations. The overall experience offered in these places directly affects visitors' perceptions of the Lake District.

In many of these towns and villages, and indeed elsewhere, there are examples of where the quality of the public realm and the provision of public amenities falls short of what should be on offer in a National Park and prospective World Heritage Site. The same is true of some privately owned land and buildings, but if we can create high quality public realm it will encourage businesses to improve the appearance of their premises as there are clear commercial benefits to do this.

**i****What is public realm?**

Public realm is defined as any publicly owned streets, pathways, right of ways, parks, publicly accessible open spaces and any public and civic building and facilities.

We are being proactive in finding ways to make improvements to public areas, to make sure that they offer world class quality. For example, our commitment to recognising Bowness Bay and the Glebe as being in need of regeneration in the Local Plan has secured millions of pounds of funding and investment for improvements. We are committed to finding ways to deliver more of the same throughout the Lake District, enhancing the unique settlement character and quality.

**VE 4 – Distinctive settlement character, quality public realm and amenities**

Our strategy is to have high quality public realm and amenities, prioritising improvements in locations where these are deficient. We will do this by developing, supporting and encouraging initiatives to enable funding or commitment to undertake improvements in a coordinated and consistent way (also see strategies VC6 – Pride in and sense of ownership of the local environment, and SL2 – Sustained distinctive and well maintained built and historic environment).

### 3.3.5 AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION FOR VISITORS

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Visitors expect to have easy access to information about getting to the Lake District, getting around when they are here, where to stay, where to eat and drink and where to visit. It is also important for visitors to understand why the Lake District is of global importance, as this can enhance the experience and enable people to get the most from their visit.

The meaning of 'easy access' is rapidly changing. The demand for easy to use online information available via the internet and on smartphones is high. It is increasingly essential for destinations at every scale – from the 'Lake District' to individual attractions and accommodation providers – to have an attractive, clear and interactive online presence. This creates opportunities to influence visitor's decisions before they even arrive to the Lake District.

The ability to make online bookings for accommodation and tickets are now the norm in most popular visitor locations nationally and internationally. People expect to be able to use mobile devices at their destination to make bookings on the go, and to provide them with the information they need to have an informed and therefore more enjoyable visit.

Many visitors still want to ask for information and help, and information centres offer an important service. But information centres also need to be commercially viable to exist. How quality information and face to face assistance is provided must offer benefits to local businesses or be cross-subsidised by other commercial activity. Businesses also have an important role to play in providing information to visitors whether this is information packs in guest's rooms, information stands, or digital access to information.

Whether talking face to face, or using a computer or phone to access information, it is critical that visitors can get information in their language. This applies as equally to domestic visitors as it does to those from overseas. To be truly world class and to offer the best experience, most visitors should be able to expect to be able to access information that they understand.

#### **VE 5 – Available and accessible information for visitors**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Ensure visitors are able to easily access relevant information in a variety of ways and languages, with particular focus on further developing the official visitor website and mobile application, and through visitor information centres and businesses providing information.
- b. Ensure visitors have access to superfast broadband, mobile telephone and mobile internet coverage in every valley through identification, implementation and support for appropriate proposals, such as open WiFi networks and mast sharing (also see strategy PE5 – Digital infrastructure).

*i*

#### **What is a mobile application or “app”?**

A mobile application is most commonly referred to as an “app”. It is a type of software designed to run on a mobile device such as a smartphone, or tablet. Mobile applications frequently serve to provide users with similar services to those accessed on PCs enabling them to access information.

*i*

#### **What is a WiFi network?**

A WiFi network allows electronic devices such as PCs, mobile phones, and tablets to connect to the internet without the need for a wire or cable. Individual WiFi points can be joined together to provide networks or “hotspots” where wireless internet coverage is provided to a local area such as a town centre.



A man in a blue hoodie and khaki pants is shown from the side, standing in a lush green forest. He is wearing a watch on his left wrist. The text "Nature's masterpiece, enhanced by man." is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

**Nature's  
masterpiece,  
enhanced  
by man.**

— Gordon Lightburn, resident

### 3.3.6 VISITOR MOVEMENT

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The size and diversity of the Lake District means visitors need to travel. The challenge is to make it possible – attractive even – to visit and move around the Lake District without using a private car, by providing visitors with choice.

We recognise that cars will always continue to be the most practical option for some journeys; it is extremely difficult to imagine the Lake District functioning without people using cars. But the car certainly does not need to dominate the experience of the visitor. Nor should it need to be relied upon to experience what is so special about the Lake District. The Lake District benefits from West Coast Mainline railway stations at Oxenholme and Penrith. There are both direct and connecting services from the mainline to Windermere via Oxenholme. The Cumbrian Coast and Furness lines run along the western and southern edges of the Lake District. There are regular public transport services, a ferry which crosses Windermere and various steamers on lakes which transport visitors between attractions as well as being attractions in their own right.

There is a mass of potential in the Lake District to offer attractive means of moving around and travelling between different attractions and destinations. Some of this potential has already been realised, but there is a vast amount still untapped.

The GoLakes Travel programme has given us an exciting glimpse of how the Lake District could be for visitors – integrated, high quality cycle routes, a network of jetties for lake services to make frequent stops at, buses and boats that carry bikes, improved railway station facilities, electric cars for hire by the hour, and charging points to keep them on the move. It is now time for us to apply what we have learnt from this pilot programme elsewhere in the Lake District.

#### *i*

##### **What is the GoLakes Travel programme?**

The GoLakes Travel programme was a £6.9million initiative which aims to generate a step-change in how visitors travel to and around the Central and Southern Lake District, enabling them to make greater use of sustainable modes of travel, such as train, boat, cycle, and bus.

We need to make the journey itself into an attraction in its own right (for example, cycling on car-free cycle tracks interconnected by bus and boat services, all surrounded by the spectacular landscape) and turn the main travel routes in every Distinctive Area (Figure 24) into a network of options for visitors to move from place to place. We have illustrated our intentions for how visitor movement will function in the future using a series of Visitor Movement Maps (Figures 35-38). As these new travel options are provided we will see the choices visitors make over how they move around the Lake District be influenced and change. We have seen this begin to happen through the GoLakes Travel programme already so now it is time to build the momentum.

Of course, it is far easier to influence how people choose to travel when they arrive without a car in the first place. International visitors tend not to drive cars in the Lake District. To appeal to a wider overseas audience we need to make it easy and attractive to travel to the Lake District from elsewhere in the UK, and then to be able to get around easily once here. Much of the Lake District is well connected to regional and national transport links, so we also want to give greater attention to making the most of this.

#### **VE 6 – Easy access to and within the Lake District, clear and easy orientation and choice of attractive travel options**

Our strategy is to transform visitor movement to, from and in the Lake District, focussing on changing the travel choices visitors make by:

- a. Influencing operators of train, coach and bus services to provide frequent and direct services between Britain's major towns and cities, international airports and the Lake District's entrance Gateways.
- b. Improving entrance Gateways and the information available at these locations, making visitor travel easier. We will do this by developing delivery projects and programmes and securing their funding.
- c. Improving visitor travel between Lake District attractions and destinations by enhancing their integration with services and infrastructure (for example cycle routes and car parking), both existing and proposed with a particular focus on the main travel routes identified in the Visitor Movement Maps (figures 35-38). We will strive to make sure that the travel experience on these main travel routes is of the highest quality by developing delivery programmes and projects, and securing their funding. This will build upon the success of the GoLakes Travel programme.

#### **i**

##### **What are entrance Gateways?**

Gateways provide orientation and information, and a variety of options for onward travel and sometimes associated facilities such as booking, hire, baggage forwarding, cafés and shops. They should also provide a sense of entrance. Gateways are identified in Figures 35-38.

It is well understood when people are on holiday they are more likely to try new or different experiences, and this includes their choice of transport. If we can give visitors a positive experience on holiday this could encourage them to change their routine and behaviours when they return home. With approximately 15.5 million annual visitors there are significant opportunities. The environmental benefits of a lower carbon footprint would then be of a value that stretches far beyond the boundaries of the Lake District.

### 3.3.7 VISITOR MOVEMENT MAPS

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The visitor movement maps outline how we think people will move around using attractive sustainable travel options, out of choice, that minimise the environmental impacts of transport and which maximise the local economic benefit. The architecture of the movement landscape comprises five main components, namely approaches, gateways, corridors, hubs and traffic managed areas.

*i*

#### What are **Approaches**?

There will be more opportunities for people to travel to the beacon area by non-car modes in the future. This may involve direct rail services and coach services from urban areas, and “catching” car journeys at a hierarchy of gateways on approach, with the onward journey being made by coach, rail or car sharing.

*i*

#### What are **Corridors**?

Corridors will be developed to deliver a shift to lower impact ways of providing primary access. Three types of corridor will exist: principal, distributor and local. The nature of how travel is influenced along the three types will reflect their different functions.

*i*

#### What are **Traffic Managed Areas**?

These areas will be managed and presented as areas where the road network is primarily for walking and cycling, and car use is primarily for essential access. The road network should feel safe and attractive for families to use without a car.

**i****What are Hubs?**

Hubs are locations where people pause to think about how they intend to travel and/or have opportunities for interchange. Hubs define the structure of the network through which people move. The hubs network is the most stable and enduring part of the transport system.

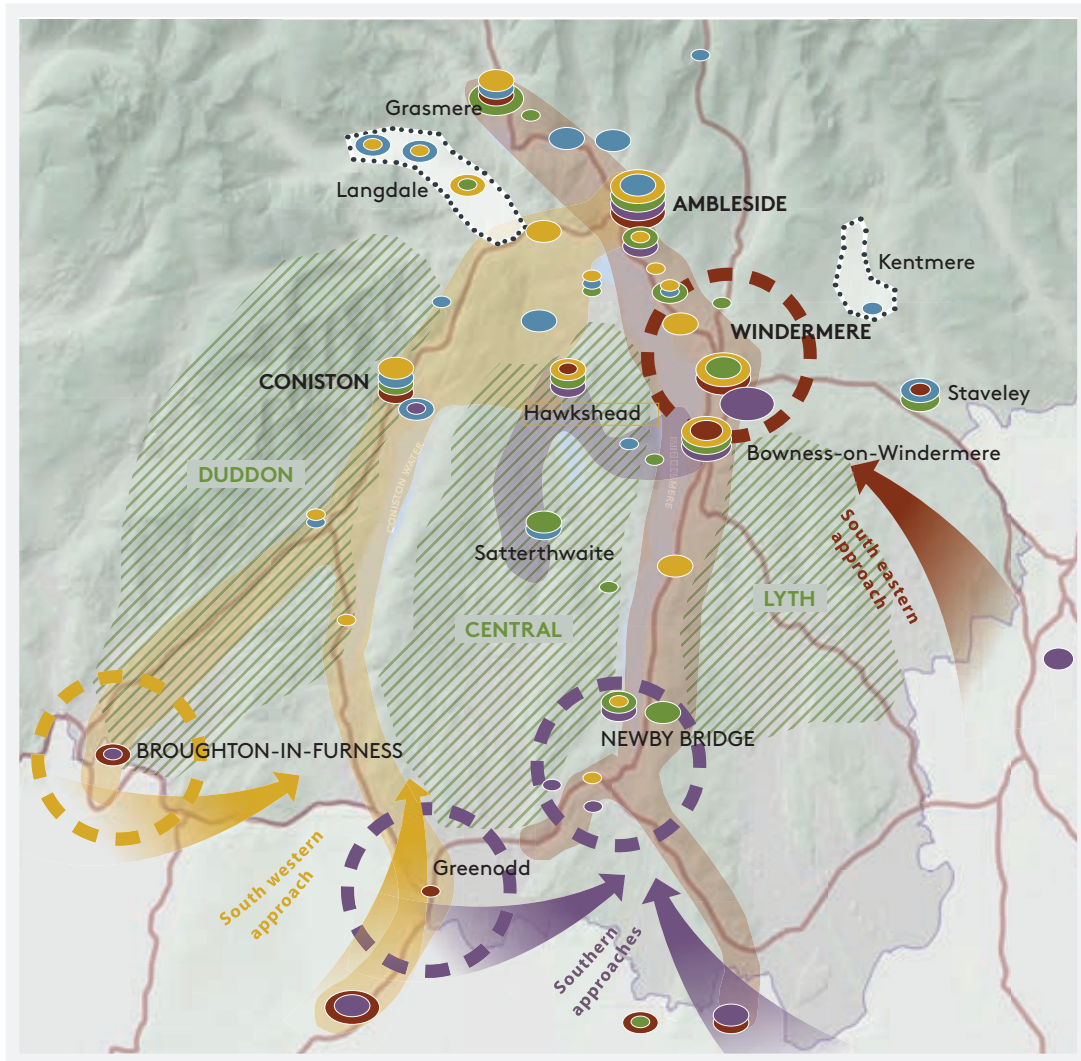
Commercial transport services – whether these are public transport services such as buses or boats or private car transport – are the next most stable part. The most unstable parts of the system are subsidised transport services.

Creating a network of hubs that is strategically designed to promote sustainable travel will provide a more enduring structure for the development of viable transport services.

At each type and size of hub, we have developed guidance for what would be appropriate:

- **Infrastructure** – such as shelters or bike racks
- **Facilities and services** – such as bike hire or cafes
- **Information** – about transport options as well as the local area
- **Multi-purpose hubs** – places with multiple uses, shops, places to find information, accommodation and a choice of transport options. They also have stable resident population, and are either Rural Service Centres or Villages as defined by the Local Plan. It may be difficult to identify one specific location within each settlement that functions as the ‘hub’, however in most cases it is within the main retail core at a point at which the various transport modes meet.
- **Transport interchanges** – places with clear options for interchange between services or modes.
- **Tourism hubs** – where the main attraction is one or more tourist attractions, but which can also promote and provide sustainable travel options.
- **Recreation hubs** – where the main attraction is some form of activity such as walking or cycling (Staveley, Langdale). Such places may be the start point for walking or cycling routes and may be a natural location for cycle hire, cafes and small outdoor shops.
- **Accommodation hubs** – where there are opportunities to provide services for – and influence the travel decision at origin of – staying visitors. Most of these would be places largely separate from multi-purpose hubs.

FIGURE 35 South and Central and South East Distinctive Area Visitor Movement Map






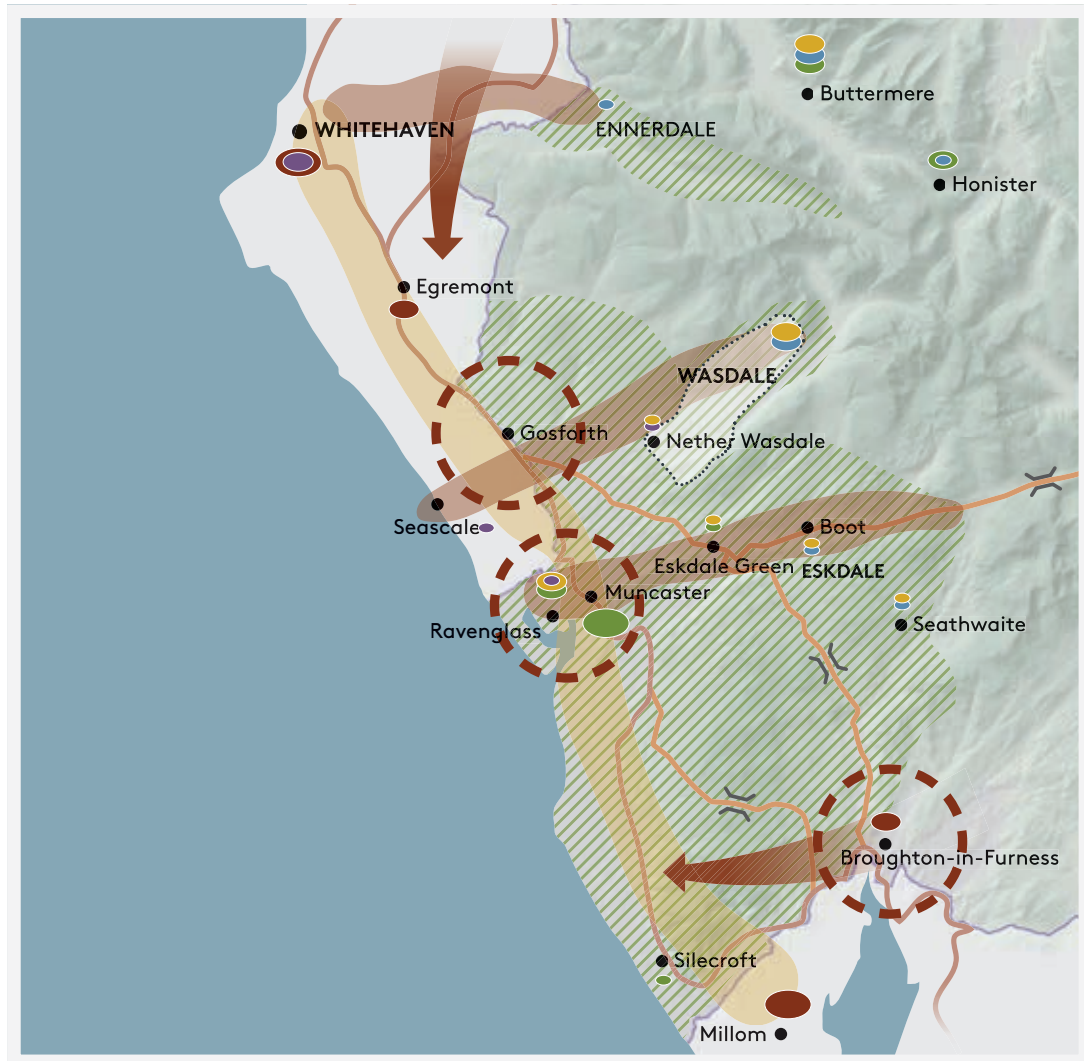
- |   |                       |   |                               |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|  | Multi-purpose Hub     |  | High Road Pass                |
|  | Transport Interchange |  | Approaches                    |
|  | Tourism Hub           |  | Corridors                     |
|  | Recreation Hub        |  | Local                         |
|  | Accommodation Hub     |  | Valley Access Management Area |
|  | Gateways              |  | Traffic Managed Area          |

FIGURE 36 West Distinctive Area Visitor Movement Map






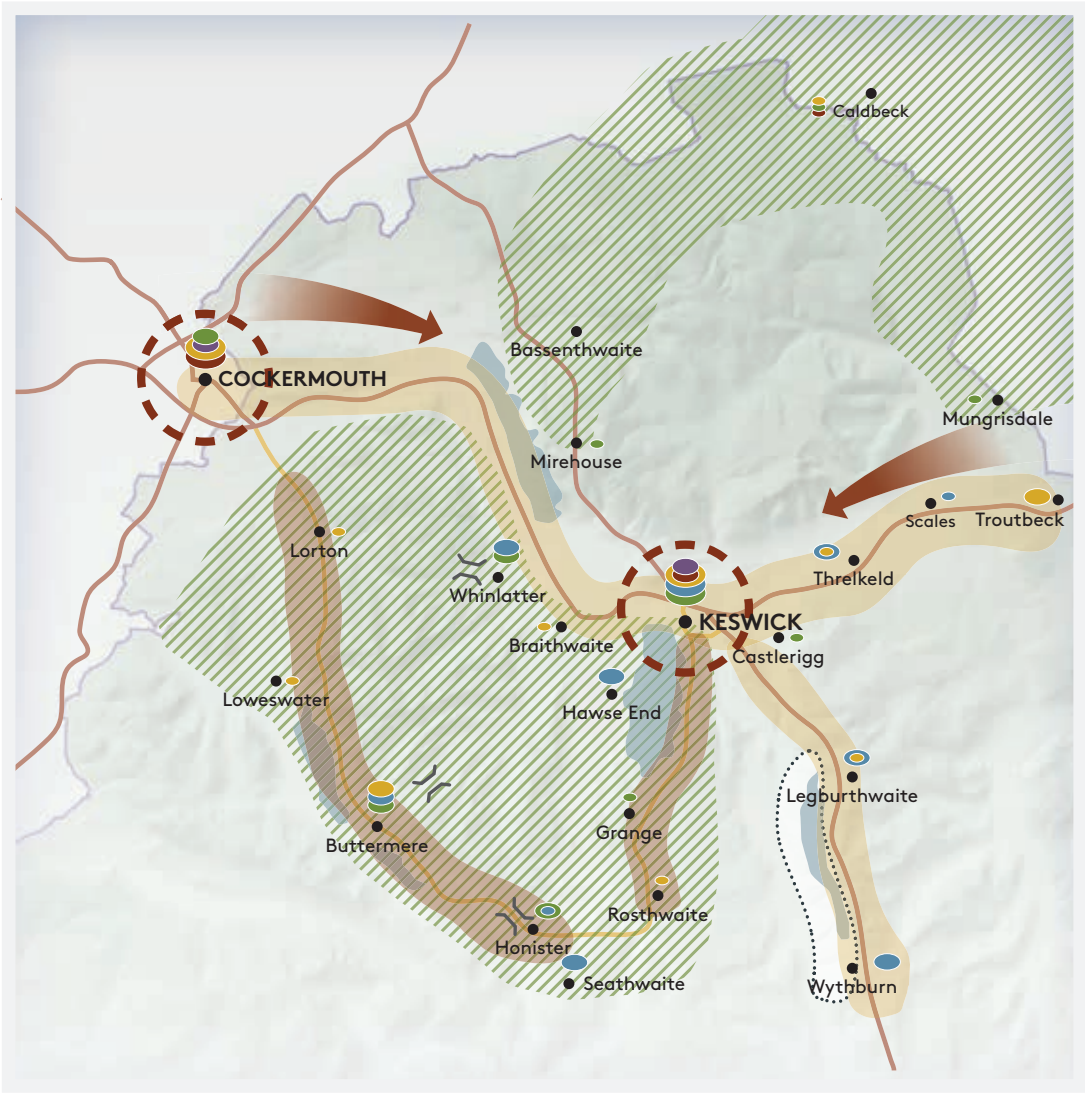
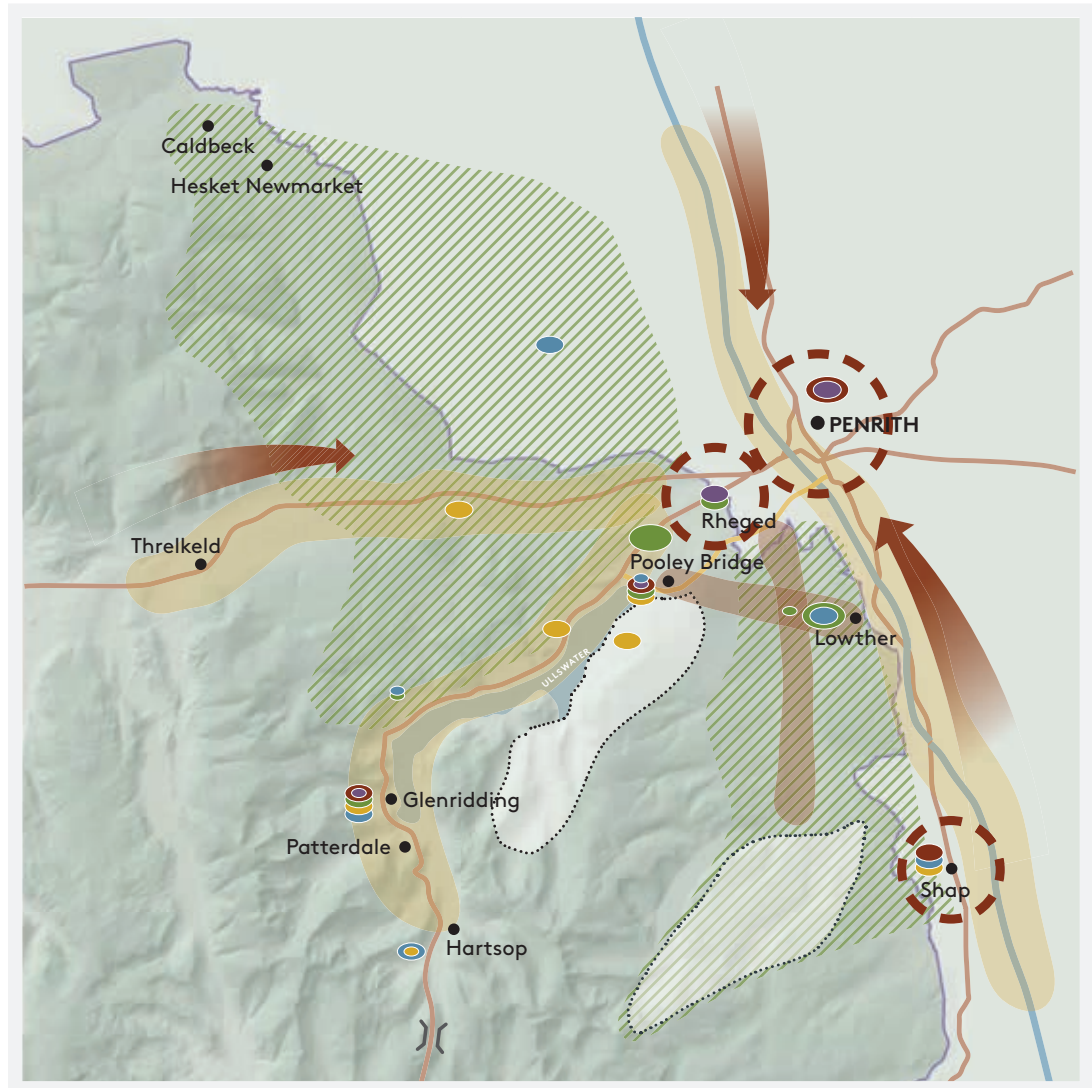
- |   |                       |   |                               |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|  | Multi-purpose Hub     |  | High Road Pass                |
|  | Transport Interchange |  | Approaches                    |
|  | Tourism Hub           |  | Corridors                     |
|  | Recreation Hub        |  | Local                         |
|  | Accommodation Hub     |  | Valley Access Management Area |
|  | Gateways              |  | Traffic Managed Area          |



FIGURE 37 North Distinctive Area Visitor Movement Map



- Multi-purpose Hub
- Transport Interchange
- Tourism Hub
- Recreation Hub
- Accommodation Hub
- Gateways
- High Road Pass
- Approaches
- Corridors
- Local
- Valley Access Management Area
- Traffic Managed Area

FIGURE 38 East Distinctive Area Visitor Movement Map



- |   |                       |   |                               |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|  | Multi-purpose Hub     |  | High Road Pass                |
|  | Transport Interchange |  | Approaches                    |
|  | Tourism Hub           |  | Corridors                     |
|  | Recreation Hub        |  | Local                         |
|  | Accommodation Hub     |  | Valley Access Management Area |
|  | Gateways              |  | Traffic Managed Area          |



# **SECTION 3.4**

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Vibrant Communities

## 3.4 VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

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### 3.4.1 AN OVERVIEW

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The Lake District is a special and unique place to live. Having such a high quality environment literally on the doorstep is valued deeply by residents. Communities have been living and working in the Lake District for centuries; they are proud of being in the Lake District and have a strong local identity. Elements of this local identity are even recognised as attributes of Outstanding Universal Value for the Lake District, such as its distinctiveness. Communities often act as the 'stewards' of the landscape, taking pride in and responsibility for its protection and management – guiding us in our own strategic management approach at a local level. It is only by us working with local communities that we will truly be successful in supporting vibrant communities.

Many Lake District communities benefit from a range of services greater than their rural situation and relatively small populations would typically be capable of sustaining. With approximately 15.5 million annual visitors this has a profound benefit on the level and range of services available to a resident population of just 41,000. That said, being a sparse rural area still inevitably means that for many, there are long distances and travel times between homes and essential day-to-day services and facilities, such as GP surgeries and schools, which are only set up to cater for the small resident population. Likewise, local incomes are below the UK average; accessing higher paid jobs can often involve slow and costly commuting, particularly from those more central areas of the Lake District.

The popularity of the Lake District creates a significantly greater demand for a high proportion of the housing stock. The Lake District has become particularly popular with people moving to the area to retire, and with those wishing to own a second home. This affects the cost of housing, its availability and age range of communities. It can also threaten the continuation of local cultural traditions. Our intention is to focus on providing the key ingredients needed for vibrant, happy and healthy communities to exist and prosper in the Lake District.

### **3.4.2 LOOKING AFTER THE LAKE DISTRICT AND CONSERVING LOCAL CULTURAL TRADITIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

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Lake District communities are already at a distinct advantage with such a high quality environment on their doorstep, which has been nurtured, in part, by local communities for centuries. We are keen to support locally-led management and stewardship of what is special and valued, as this promotes an even stronger sense of local pride and responsibility, and increased understanding locally of World Heritage Site designation and the Special Qualities.

Many of the intangible attributes of the Lake District are associated with local cultural traditions and activities including local dialect and language, shepherds meets, and traditional agricultural shows and distinctive local sports. It is predominantly the people living and working in the Lake District who maintain these traditions and activities, and we can help to support them to ensure their conservation.

#### **VC 1 – Pride in and a sense of ownership of the local environment and its distinctive character**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Promote local understanding and increase responsibility for what makes a place special. We will do this through engaging with and supporting communities.
- b. Celebrate and support the continuation of local cultural traditions and activities.

### 3.4.3 AFFORDABLE QUALITY OF LIFE

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Needing to travel further to access services and jobs has an impact upon the cost of living. The cost of living is also affected by housing and fuel costs. These are disproportionate to average incomes and higher in the Lake District than many areas of the country.

#### **VC 2 – Reasonable fuel and energy costs**

Our strategy is to develop and support initiatives and projects, guided by planning policies, that reduce the cost of and need for fuel and, or energy. This will be achieved through a combination of energy efficiency measures and community-scale energy generation that will contribute to reducing the Lake District's Carbon Budget.

If people cannot afford to live in the Lake District, or find it too difficult to access services they need, they have no choice but to move elsewhere. A vibrant community needs to include people of all ages. Changing demographics create imbalances. Our aim is to make living in the Lake District a quality, affordable experience for everyone, by focusing on the key issues of:

- access to services and employment
- housing
- health and wellbeing

To achieve this, communities will increasingly need to look at how they can help themselves. Even with the collective strength, resources and commitment of the Partnership, there are limits to what we can directly deliver. There are many examples of how communities can help themselves and our strategies reflect the importance of this.

### 3.4.4 ACCESS TO SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT

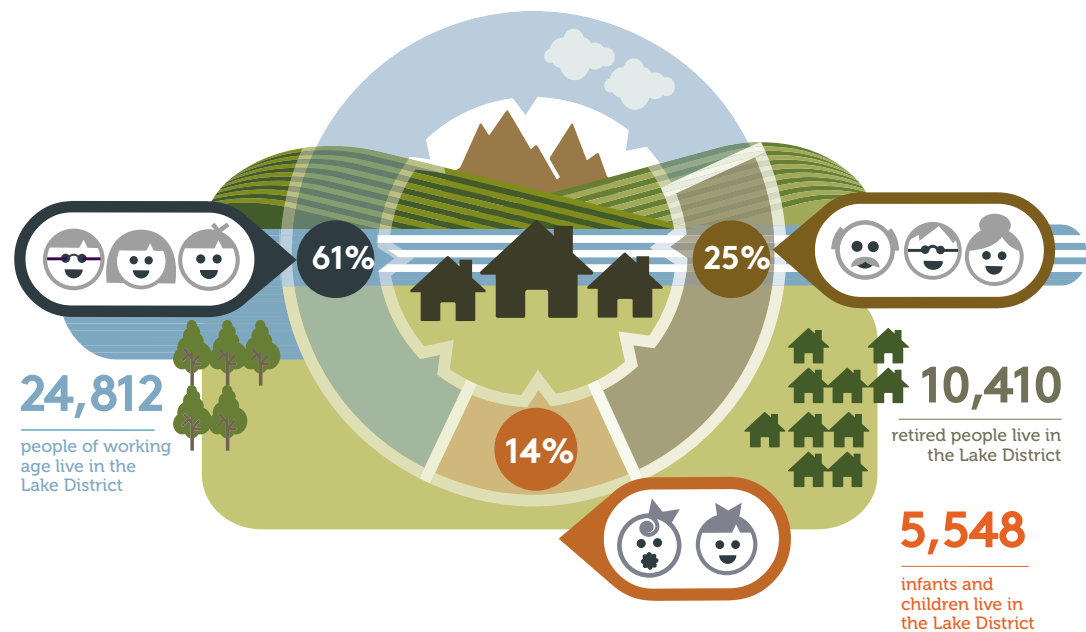
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Visitors help to support certain services and create employment opportunities in many communities. This increases the range and choice of services and jobs in some cases, and in others it makes the difference between whether or not services exist. The services that tend to benefit the most from the visitor industry include shops, pubs and public transport. But visitors have little or no impact in supporting other critical services such as schools, and can even add pressure on healthcare services such as GP surgeries.

We recognise services need to be viable whether they are publicly funded or commercial. In simple terms, this means they need to be used by a large enough number of people on a frequent enough basis. Our strategy reflects this. It would be impossible for all services to be provided within every parish or village. The true test for the adequacy of service provision is how easy it is to access the services needed on a day-to-day basis. The Local Plan defines 13 'Rural Service Centres', which comprise of

towns and larger villages that normally offer the most viable location for these services and employment opportunities to be provided and sustained. This is because they have an immediate resident population and serve communities within a relatively large surrounding area. We also identify Villages which offer fewer core local services but which are still important to how communities function.

FIGURE 39 Age profile of residents



Relationships with areas beyond the Lake District's boundary are also important for service and employment provision. Larger towns such as Kendal, Penrith, Cockermouth and Ulverston offer a much wider range of services, facilities, and employers than most Rural Service Centres. The main travel routes between these towns and the Lake District's Rural Service Centres can provide relatively easy access to a full breadth of these services, even in deep rural communities.

The public transport services that run on many of these main travel routes exist because of visitor demand. The resident population isn't usually large enough to support commercial, unsubsidised public transport, but the visitor population is. Our strategy for visitor travel is directly relevant to residents as its implementation will benefit local communities too.

Mobile services such as door-to-door grocery deliveries are making it easier to live in a rural location without creating difficulties or inconveniences in day-to-day life. Just as for businesses and visitors, high speed internet access is very important for communities whether it is for shopping, banking, education in schools, or health services. Superfast broadband is capable of bringing a range of services directly into the homes of local communities.

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**What are mobile services?**

Mobile services are those services that come to you or your town or village rather than you having to travel to get to them. They will vary between areas depending on the needs and existing provision of the local area. Examples may include mobile grocery shops, butchers, bakers, supermarket delivery services, banking, post office, prescription services, or a mobile library.

**VC 3 – Access to services.**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Sustain local service provision, particularly in Rural Service Centres and Villages, by seeking to achieve a sufficient population of all ages.
- b. Support initiatives throughout the Lake District which provide access to a wider range of services, including mobile services, and the multi-use of community buildings and business premises. We will also support improved access to superfast broadband (also see Strategy PE5 – Digital Infrastructure).
- c. Ensure residents and visitors alike have access to healthcare services and facilities that meet their essential needs. We will do this by influencing national and local decision makers.
- d. Improve visitor transport services in ways that also benefit residents wherever possible (also see Strategy VE6 – Easy Access to and within the Lake District).
- e. Support community led initiatives within communities to improve access to services, housing and transport.

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Examples of the multi-use of community buildings may include, for example, the pub hosting the shop or post office, the village hall may host a café, regular mobile services, and sell local produce, or the church run a credit union.

For communities to be able to prosper, people of a working age need to be able to easily access a suitable employment, including professional and skilled roles. The strategy outlined in the Prosperous Economy section of this Plan explains how we intend to maximise the economic potential of the area by removing the barriers for businesses. For communities we want to make it as easy as possible for communities to access employment, regardless of whether this is within or outside of the Lake District boundary. We recognise the importance of strong connections to locations of large scale employment outside the Lake District, and where possible we will assist with these employers when they are developing proposals. Rural Service Centres offer the easiest access for communities to access employment in the Lake District as these are the locations where the larger populations and business premises are found (See figure 32).

#### **VC 4 – Access to a range of employment opportunities**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Promote Rural Service Centres as locations for business where the travel needs for employees can be most easily be met. We will do this through:
  - i. A supportive planning process.
  - ii. Supporting community led initiatives within communities that improve access to and between Rural Service Centres, main travel routes, and their hinterlands.
- b. Supporting business start-ups by ensuring they have easy access to advice and support.

(Also see strategies PE1 – PE12 in Prosperous Economy and Strategy VE6 – Easy Access to and within the Lake District in Visitor Experience)

### **3.4.5 HOUSING**

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One of the greatest single challenges to sustaining vibrant communities in the Lake District is the availability of housing that a full cross-section of a balanced community should ordinarily be able to afford.

The challenges around the availability and affordability of housing overlap. The popularity of the Lake District means there is high demand for housing. This drives prices up because there is a limited supply. Whilst new houses are being built all the time, demand outstrips supply and the Lake District's environment simply cannot accommodate a level of growth that would be necessary to meet the demand that exists. The Lake District National Park Authority manage this through the planning framework, and in particular housing policies in the Local Plan.

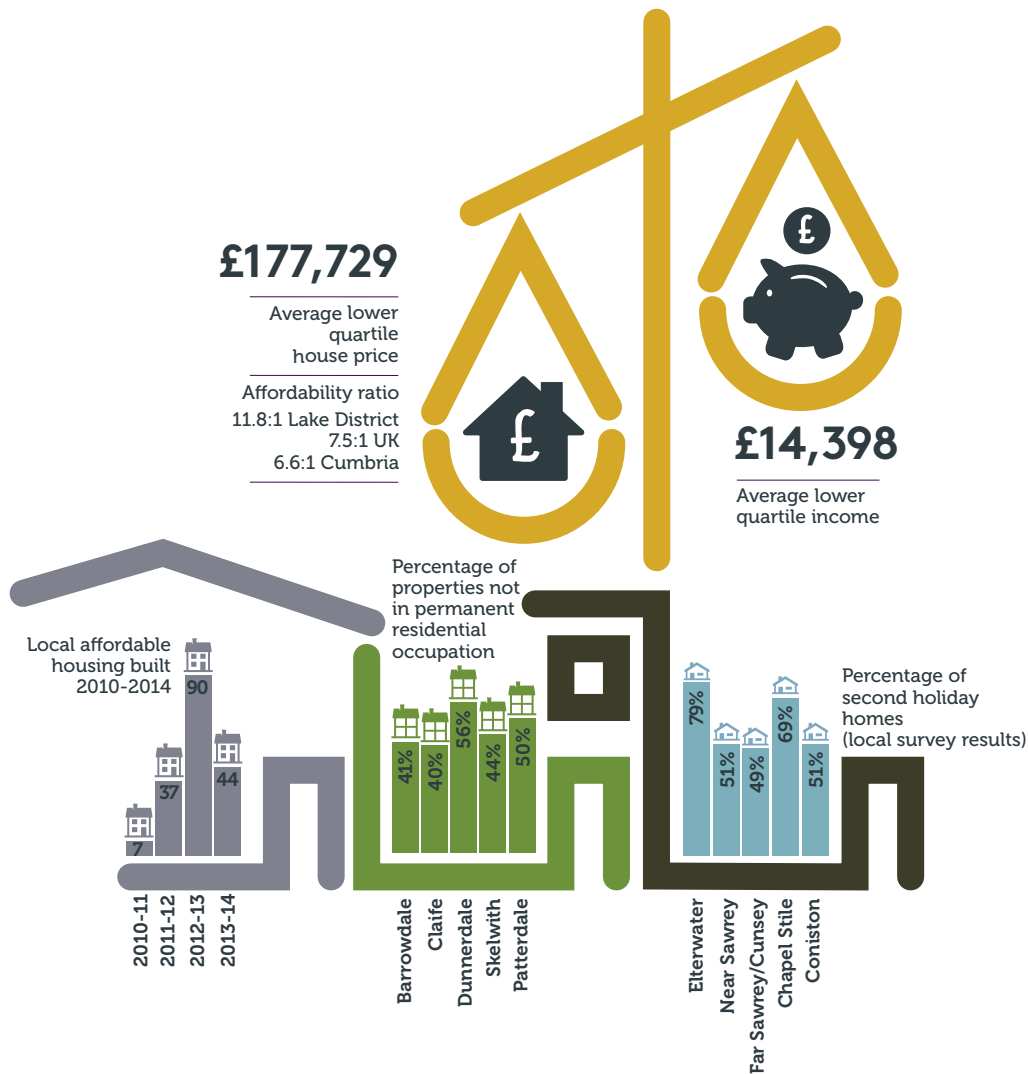
This usually means that individuals and households who need to live in a particular area of the Lake District are unable to find an available and suitable house for them or cannot afford one – and all too often, it is both. The impact has been most profound upon those of working age. Many households simply cannot secure a suitable house that is affordable for them in a location that meets their needs. Incomes from farming, for example, are typically below average earnings. If farm workers cannot afford to live close to their place of work, it risks the continuation of local farming practices and the ability to effectively operate a business is made more difficult.

Many local people are being forced to move to another part of the county or further afield due to the lack of suitable, affordable housing. As a result, some local communities are shrinking or the demographic make-up is changing.

It would be wrong to imply that, for example, an individual who moved to the area to retire would make less of a contribution to the local community than someone younger who had lived there all their lives. The difficulty arises when most of one part of a community cannot afford to live in an area, so are replaced by a majority of just one other sector of a

community. For example, if a high proportion of a community is retired, this can threaten local schools and make it difficult for employers to recruit. In this situation, there is the danger of creating a downward spiral of decline for a formerly vibrant community. Our strategic approach to housing is strongly focused on making meaningful interventions to the housing market, for the good of communities and the economy.

FIGURE 40: Housing and affordability in the Lake District



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**What is housing need?**

Housing need is the objectively assessed quantity of housing required for households who are unable to access suitable housing without financial assistance.

### **VC 5 – Availability and supply of a full range of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet local needs**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Proactively respond to changing housing market conditions and national policies relating to housing, to continue to meet local needs. We will do this by maintaining an effective evidence base, and up-to-date knowledge of housing needs and supply to inform development decisions.
- b. Maintain a supply of suitable available land for housing to meet local needs focussed within Rural Service Centres and Villages. We will promote them to encourage their development and seek to address any barriers to their uptake.
- c. Enable small scale housing schemes, including community led schemes, to meet local needs in appropriate locations, guided by the adopted Local Plan.
- d. Ensure the work of housing authorities, enablers and housing providers is coordinated to maximise the delivery of new affordable housing.

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#### **What is housing to meet local needs?**

Local needs housing is houses that can only be occupied by someone who can demonstrate a local connection. This is secured through the use of occupancy restrictions.

Strategy VC5 principally relates to development of new housing in the Lake District. The Local Plan is therefore key in implementing this strategy. The Local Plan contains specific policies to guide how this strategy is implemented spatially. This is further supported by Part 2 of the Local Plan, which allocates a wide range of sites in Rural Service Centres and Villages across the Lake District.

These allocated sites have been fully and objectively assessed to establish their suitability; all of the allocated sites are capable of being developed without affecting the integrity of any of the Special Qualities and Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake District. Whilst new development is not confined to allocated land, the allocations approach is one means by which we proactively manage the need to accommodate development. The planning policies we use in all decisions ensure that the Lake District's Special Qualities and Outstanding Universal Value is safeguarded, successfully accommodating development and growth within environmental limits.

Another dimension of how the housing market affects community vibrancy is where houses are used as second homes or for holiday letting. Both these examples (and particularly the latter) are capable of offering local economic benefit. However, a high concentration of 'holiday houses' can noticeably reduce the resident population of a local community. This additional demand also increases house prices.

Where a high proportion of houses are not permanently occupied, it makes it harder for services to be sustained, for employers to recruit locally, and for a sense of community to be maintained. So our approach is to make sure that when new houses are built, they will always be lived in, as part of the planning permission.

That said, most existing houses do not have any kind of occupancy restriction. We want to find a way to allow for some control over more housing being used for holiday purposes, so we can find the right balance between the needs of different communities and the economic benefits holiday houses bring.

#### **VC 6 – A high proportion of housing in permanent occupation**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Ensure new homes contribute to community vibrancy by requiring their permanent occupancy, as part of the planning consent.
- b. Develop and secure appropriate ways to tackle excessive numbers of empty and, or ‘holiday houses’ where this occurs. This will ensure a sufficiently high proportion of existing houses are permanently occupied.

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What is a **sufficiently high proportion** of existing housing in permanent occupation?

Evidence suggests that the percentage of empty or ‘holiday houses’ should not be more than 20 per cent as anything in excess of this appears to affect the sustainability of any village (Cumbria Rural Housing Trust Part 1: The effects of affordable Housing on Rural Communities).

### **3.4.6 HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

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A community can only be sustained if its needs for jobs, services and housing can be met. But to become truly vibrant the community needs to be happy and healthy too. The environment that communities value so greatly offers huge health and wellbeing benefits, thanks in part due to the extensive rights of way network (also see strategy VE1 – Opportunity for experiences in a unique landscape). High quality open countryside is easily accessible everywhere in the Lake District, but even in small towns and villages, there is still a demand and need for recreational space, whether ‘formal’ (such as football and cricket pitches) or simply green spaces that people value and enjoy seeing or using. Retaining these spaces is important, as is their quality. Part 2 of the Local Plan not only allocates land for development, but it also designates locally important green spaces to give a clear presumption against their loss.

### **VC 7 – Access to high quality amenity and recreation green spaces, public rights of way, and facilities**

Our strategy is to:

- a. Protect amenity and recreation green spaces and facilities from other forms of development using the Local Plan.
- b. Promote healthy living by supporting projects and initiatives that improve the quality of amenity and recreation green spaces (also see Strategy VE1 – Opportunities for experiences in a unique landscape).
- c. Continue to manage and maintain a high quality public rights of way network (also see Strategy VE1 – Opportunities for experiences in a unique landscape).

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#### **What are amenity and recreation spaces?**

Amenity and recreation spaces are important open spaces that are important for their amenity value or because they provide formal recreation opportunities. For the full definition refer to the Local Plan.

We are fortunate that our rural areas tend to be safe places to live and the fear of crime is generally lower than in urban areas; however some rural communities are affected by the perception of crime levels being higher than they actually are. The Police deliver a range of prevention and intelligence initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch schemes, including Farmwatch and Horsecwatch, which help to reduce crime and enable communities feel safe. We can also help communities feel safe by ensuring design for new development and public spaces meet certain requirements.

### **VC 8 – Safe communities and low crime**

Our strategy is to maintain and increase the feeling of being safe and to minimise crime by supporting Neighbourhood Watch schemes and ensuring Secured by Design principles are incorporated in all public realm schemes and development proposals.

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#### **What is Secured by Design?**

Secured by Design is an initiative developed by the Police which supports the principles of 'designing out crime'. Secured by Design focuses on crime prevention of homes and commercial premises and promotes the use of security standards for a wide range of places.