

The English Lake District World Heritage Site Interpretation Strategy

for Lake District National Park Partnership

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Contents

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---|-----------|---|------------|
| Executive summary | 3 | Appendix 1 Creating this Strategy | 24 | Appendix 3 Interpretation audit | 45 |
| Interpretation Strategy | 4 | What is Interpretation | 26 | Existing Interpretation | 46 |
| Interpretation Strategy Vision | 5 | What is an Interpretation Strategy | 27 | ELDWHS and communities | 47 |
| Interpretive aims | 6 | Strategic Context | 28 | ELDWHS and Stakeholders | 49 |
| Priority audiences | 7 | Interpretation and UNESCO | 29 | ELDWHS and Visitors | 51 |
| Stories for Interpretation | 9 | The UNESCO World Heritage Site | 29 | Five stages of the visitor journey | 51 |
| How to tell a story | 11 | Interpretation and World Heritage Sites | 30 | Decision media | 51 |
| What are the stories? An overview | 11 | Interpretation and the Lake District National Park Partnership | 31 | Entry media | 52 |
| What are we interpreting | 12 | Interpretation and the LDNPP Management Plan 2020-2025 | 32 | Connection media | 53 |
| OUV for the ELDWHS | 12 | Interpretation and the Lake District National Park | 33 | Exit Media | 55 |
| Attributes | 13 | LDNPA and the statutory obligations | 33 | Commitment Media | 56 |
| Property-wide central theme | 14 | The State of the Park 2023 | 34 | Appendix 4 Audiences for Interpretation | 57 |
| Property Wide Sub Themes | 15 | The Lake District National Park Special Qualities and OUV | 35 | Why audiences? | 58 |
| Delivery approach | 17 | Interpretation and other plans | 36 | Who are the audiences? An overview | 58 |
| Delivery approach - Property wide | 18 | Appendix 2 What are the Stories? | 38 | Local communities | 59 |
| Delivery approach - The 13 valleys | 20 | English Lake District World Heritage Site | 39 | Stakeholders | 60 |
| Make it happen | 21 | Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the ELDWHS | 40 | Visitors | 6 1 |
| Next Steps | 23 | Attributes | 40 | Appendix 5 Interpretation Challenges and Opportunities | 62 |
| | | Consultation and heritage values | 44 | Appendix 6: Outstanding Universal Value | 6 5 |
| | | | | Glossary | 69 |
| | | | | References | 70 |
| | | | | Consultees | 71 |

Commission

This document has been prepared by Minerva Heritage Ltd to support delivery of interpretation for The English Lake District World Heritage Site (ELDWHS). The strategy draws on research and extensive consultation with partners and stakeholders between August and November 2023.

Executive summary

This Interpretation Strategy is a high level interpretation tool which provides a framework for delivery of interpretation. It is intended for use by the Lake District National Park Partnership, and for parties working with them on the interpretation of the ELDWHS to better communicate the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Site, and to ensure that interpretation becomes a key management tool.

During the COVID pandemic, progress on raising awareness of and engaging people with World Heritage was effectively paused.

Now interpretation is being brought more formally into the management of the property.

This strategy sets interpretation into the wider context and the particular conditions that apply to this World Heritage Site property. It presents an outline audit of interpretive services, describes the audiences who should be involved, especially less engaged and new audiences and the intended messaging that interpretation should deliver. The proposed vision and framework enable management at a property-wide level and by the 13 individual valleys, supported by an Action Plan.

The contents indicate what this strategy covers with appendices providing background information, challenges and opportunities.

This Interpretation Strategy will support the Partnership to engage those communities who are strongly associated with OUV. Ongoing engagement with each valley community will see the Partnership building on its existing work with those farming communities, as well as developing stronger relationships with other stakeholders - organisations like the Brantwood Trust, Field Studies Council and Wordsworth Trust for example - whose roles include promoting understanding and first-hand

experience of many of the key ideas associated with the OUV of this property.

Interpretation is regarded as a key management tool by UNESCO, and dedicating appropriate levels of resources to delivering the action plan is essential. While the current funding environment is challenging, this interpretation strategy - supported by the programmes of action described and underpinned by an appropriate level of resources - presents opportunities to improve communication, to support communities associated with the OUV, and to build capacity across the Partnership in the longer-term. Fortunately, there are many instances across the Partnership of existing programmes and actions that can simply be continued, harnessed or adapted - such as established relationships and communication channels with key actors, or collaborative frameworks and projects that explore and promote OUV. There is a separate document for the Action Plan. This is a live document where the actions will be regularly reviewed to ensure progress. It includes short term (1-2 years) and medium term (3-5 years) actions.

Interpretation Strategy



Case Study: Bowder Stone, Borrowdale

This project was the first to directly address the idea of historic tourist infrastructure referencing World Heritage Site themes. An example of the National Trust using attributes of Outstanding Universal Value in interpretation is at the Bowder Stone, a 2000-ton stone which has attracted people to it as a place of interest. - The National Trust, as part of maintenance to the Boulder stone access ladder, staged a media exhibition that framed the installations of a new ladder on the Stone. This was very much based on the OUV of the structure and was an early manifestation of the National Trust working more clearly with the idea of historic tourist infrastructure, as well as the relationship between tourism and the early discovery of the lakes. A gallery exhibition at Wordsworth House, comprising of most of the major paintings associated with the stone, including the famous Atkinson Grimshaw painting loaned from the Tate, and loans from several other major institutions was put on when. Two films were commissioned, one displayed in a restored stone hut on the site of the stone, and another in the gallery. This was very much a project that explored WHS and a good example of multi partner/output social programme that has real applications for the Lakes in terms of community, heritage and thinking outside the fixed interpretation box.

Interpretation Strategy Vision

Sustainably developed interpretation will raise awareness of what the ELDWHS is, and why it is afforded WHS designation. Interpretation will engage people with ELDWHS special qualities through partner and stakeholder led storytelling and experiences.



Above - 2018 work on the new access ladder.

Below- Victorian tourists on one of the Lakes' oldest pieces of historic tourism infrastructure, c1860.



Interpretive aims

Interpretation will:

1. Raise awareness

- Promote understanding of the meaning of OUV itself and World Heritage (UNESCO)
- Promote understanding of the English Lake District OUV
- Communicate benefits of World Heritage Site status
- Promote responsible visitor behaviour
- Demonstrate value of conservation designation and effort
- Be consistent with property-wide brand and messaging
- Look at how the Strategy will contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to promote learning opportunities (SDG 4)

2. Engage Audiences

- Facilitate personal meaning-making through relevant storytelling
- Enable people-led stories and live interactions to engage people with OUV
- Deploy audience-appropriate media to facilitate direct experience of OUV
- Ensure inclusivity and accessibility
- Engage with valley communities
- Promote responsible behaviours

3. Strengthen Partnerships

- Involve relevant partners in the Partnership in interpretation development and delivery
- Involve and empower local communities (OUV-associated and local residents) through co-creation, collaboration and delivery
- Support capacity-building, i.e., skills, tools and processes, training in heritage interpretation

4. Be sustainable

- Promote and support sustainable development
- Socially sustainable – support individual and community wellbeing
- Financially sustainable – ongoing delivery, management and maintenance
- Environmentally sustainable – materials, suppliers
- Monitor and evaluate for effectiveness
- Support responsible visiting
- Promote sustainable travel

Priority audiences

Based on analysis of the current situation, the greatest opportunity to create the desired impact through interpretation will be with these audiences:

Communities

40,000 residents living in the World Heritage Site

Site: engaging this group is essential to understanding how local values relate to OUV. The local communities should be in a position to share any benefits that arise from World Heritage inscriptions (to contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals - SDG 11)

Farming communities: engaging this group is essential to the long-term stewardship of the World Heritage Site and OUV, and it is essential to understanding how local values relate to OUV. The farming community should be in a position to share any benefits that arise from World Heritage inscriptions. Existing routes into this group comprise the Partnership farming officers and attendance at the regular events.

Schools

Schools in Cumbria/Lake District catchment:

Schools are keen to learn about WHS status. World Heritage Site status and the OUV present many curriculum-linked learning opportunities on their doorstep. Existing routes into this group comprise partners' education teams.

Visiting Education Groups: World Heritage is a strong offer for this group. This audience can be reached via the existing network of experience providers in and around the property and support inclusive and equitable quality education and promote learning opportunities (to contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals - SDG4).

Stakeholders

Businesses associated with OUV : This large group is one of the principal interfaces with visitors and are significant contributors to the visitor experience. As employers they are also an effective route into communicating with local residents. Many are already engaged via the brand and some are keen to work with the designation further.

Stakeholder organisations outside partnership (e.g, Armitt Museum, Blackwell, Wordsworth Trust): there are organisations who are strongly associated with OUV and who promote understanding of OUV as part of their remit (the current Early Tourism exhibition and events programme at Dove Cottage, for example). Some of these are also very committed to community engagement and so represent effective routes into reaching local residents as well as visiting audiences. There is an opportunity for the stakeholder community to share and learn from each other and from best practice in interpretation approaches.

Visitors

The following two sub-groups of the domestic visitor type are easier to reach because the destinations described tend to possess the type of infrastructure that can support interpretive media and experiences. Cost-per-head engagement at these types of venue is also lower.

‘Lakeside Amblers’ segment: these entry-level visitors tend to focus on destinations in the property that facilitate an easy walk, such as visitor centres or other properties geared towards visitors.

‘Shoppers and Attraction Seekers’ segment: as part of their trip these visitors are likely to attend visitor centres or other properties geared towards visitors.

Stories for interpretation



Case Study: Hideyuki Sobue mural, Allan Bank

National Trust, Allan Bank

Hideyuki Sobue

A letter to the Earth from Beatrix 2022 -4

A two-year residency funded by Arts Council UK with Japanese artist Hideyuki Sobue, looking at Beatrix Potter's legacy in the Lake District and modern ideas of conservation. A two-storey temporary mural on the fire damaged walls of Allan Bank, Wordsworth's home between 1808 and 1811 and later National Trust founder Hardwicke Rawnsley.



How to tell a story

Interpretation starts and ends with a single idea - we call this a **central theme**. The central theme is a guiding principle and it is what we want people remember.

A central theme is supported by **sub-themes** that support and reinforce the central theme and help to organise stories.

'... storylines are the details of interpretive content... storylines act as road signs for the researcher to help focus efforts'¹

Identifying stories for interpretation requires an understanding of:

- Management requirements - What do we need to interpret?
- Assets - What are the tangible and intangible things we can interpret?
- Audience interests - What is relevant? What will hook people in?

What are the stories? An overview

When identifying stories to interpret we have to consider:

- Promoting the value of WHS to a wider audience as one of the means to satisfy the requirements of UNESCO designation.
- What is important for the Partnership to communicate about the management of the ELDWHS.
- What are the OUV attributes and their significance - on which the ELDWHS was nominated and subsequently awarded WHS status.
- What the partners, stakeholders and communities think is significant about OUV and what stories they want to share.
- What the motivations of the visiting audiences are and how interpretation can tie in with those.

¹ Brochu 2007, Interpretive Planning: The 5M Model for Successful Planning Projects

What are we interpreting

English Lake District World Heritage Site

UNESCO describe the ELDWHS as:

Located in northwest England, the English Lake District is a mountainous area, whose valleys have been modelled by glaciers in the Ice Age and subsequently shaped by an agro-pastoral land-use system characterized by fields enclosed by walls.

The combined work of nature and human activity has produced a harmonious landscape in which the mountains are mirrored in the lakes. Grand houses, gardens and parks have been purposely created to enhance the landscape's beauty.

This landscape was greatly appreciated from the 18th century onwards by the Picturesque and later Romantic movements, which celebrated it in paintings, drawings and words. It also inspired an awareness of the importance of beautiful landscapes and triggered early efforts to preserve them.¹

The ELDWHS is roughly circular in plan. The property is divided into 13 principal valleys separated by hills and mountains.

High ground radiates outwards from the centre like 'spokes of a wheel,' and each glacier-scoured valley 'has an individual character which is determined by geology, natural vegetation and a particular history of land use.'

¹ From <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/422/>, < Reproduced under license CC-BY-SA IGO 3.0 >

² UNESCO 2023 Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention < <https://whc.unesco.org/document/203807> >

OUV for the ELDWHS

'Outstanding Universal Value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole.'²

If we could summarise this, we might take the key phrases to be:

- 'highest importance to the international community'
- 'for present and future generations of all humanity.'

The OUV themes for the ELDWHS are:

1. A landscape of exceptional beauty, shaped by persistent and distinctive agro-pastoral traditions which give it special character.
2. A landscape which has inspired artistic and literary movements and generated ideas about landscapes that have had global influence and left their physical mark.
3. A landscape which has been the catalyst or key developments in national and international protection of landscapes.

Attributes

“Attributes can be physical qualities or fabric, but can also include processes, associated with a property, that impact on physical qualities, such as natural or agricultural processes, social arrangements or cultural practices that have shaped distinctive landscapes.”¹

World Heritage properties demonstrate their OUV through ‘Attributes’ that enable understanding of it. OUV can be abstract.

Attributes can be built features, species or intangible traditions, for example that contain or represent the OUV in ways that are intelligible or can be experienced directly.

Without attributes the OUV themes can be a difficult to understand, so attributes help people to make sense of OUV.



<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/422/#>

See also Appendix 2 for Attributes of OUV of the WHS

¹ UNESCO 2023 Format for the Nomination of Properties for Inscription on the World Heritage List < <https://whc.unesco.org/document/191594> >

Property-wide central theme

Central theme

The English Lake District World Heritage Site is a **lesson in landscape evolution**. By understanding the relationship between people and landscape we can **appreciate what we see and experience**. How we interact with the landscape, the decisions we make and **the actions we take affect lives** in the future.

This central theme reinforces the ideas of:

- ‘Cultural landscapes’ as a product of a symbiotic relationship.
- Seeing the landscape stories.
- How the landscape has evolved over time - it is not fixed.
- Human impact on the landscape.
- Nature’s reliance on people, the interdependence of people and nature.
- The English Lake District as a case study in landscape conservation.
- Distinctive landscape character.



Property Wide Sub Themes

Sub-theme 1 - the Global

The ELDWHS is a **globally significant and inspirational example** of how people create, value, and manage protected landscapes.

This theme incorporates elements of OUV Themes 2 and 3. Examples of stories¹ that can be included under this sub-theme are:

- This is what a World Heritage Site is.
- This is what UNESCO is, including their mission of international peace and cooperation.
- The benefits of WHS – supporting global citizenship education, sustainable tourism, peace and collaboration.
- The English Lake District is globally significant.
- The conservation movement in the English Lake District inspired and influenced other conservation movements around the world.
- The work of the National Trust and other protective trusts.
- The benefits and value of protecting landscapes.
- The issues and challenges of protecting landscapes.

Sub-theme 2 - the Local

Local communities, their lives, work, and traditions are central to this landscape and formed the landscape through their activities.

This theme incorporates elements of OUV Theme 1. Examples of stories that can be included under this sub-theme are:

- Community lives and work evolve in this landscape.
- Cultural traditions, like language, shepherd's meets, and traditional sports, have survived over centuries.
- Communities are under pressure and working hard to manage and conserve the landscape today.
- Communities sustain the settlements that give character to the ELDWHS.
- Farmers use traditional breeds to manage the landscape.
- Local communities retain certain rights over the landscape for common fell-grazing – common land.
- Communities are sustained as part of the WHS designation.

¹ Stories are not the copy or the approach. The content of these bullets will not appear on panels or in text in this form. Instead, they reflect the fundamental ideas you aim to get across. The stories selected as examples for each sub-theme are drawn from the OUV attributes.

Sub-theme 3 - the Management

Landscape conservation needs a **bespoke approach** that reflects the landscape, the people, and their relationship over time.

This theme incorporates elements of all OUV themes. Examples of stories that can be included under this sub-theme are:

- Landscape conservation is valuable to and benefits people and landscape.
- Landscape conservation methods are appropriate to complex and individual circumstances - not one size fits all.
- Landscape management approaches have evolved over time according to need and opportunity - farming, buildings, mining/ quarrying, field systems, tourism.
- Social, economic, and environmental, influence landscape management.
- WHS designation is intended to promote and support sustainable behaviour and development that conserves the landscape.
- Alleviating visitor management pressures through active visitor management as set out in the Destination Management Plan.

Sub-theme 4 - the Inspiration

Being in this landscape inspires us and benefits body and mind.

This theme incorporates elements of OUV Themes 2 and 3. Examples of stories that can be included under this sub-theme are:

- Landscape is restorative for the human spirit.
- Landscape is inspiration for creativity and ideas.
- Physical and mental activity benefitting people's wellbeing.
- The scenic landscapes spark an emotional response.
- The Picturesque and the Romantic aspects.
- The right to enjoy and access the landscape is everyone's.
- People have augmented the landscape to their taste - picturesque viewing stations / filters.
- People have created villas, gardens and designed landscapes in response.

Delivery approach

Interpretation will be delivered through two simultaneous routes, both overseen, supported and guided by the Partnership. A ‘top-down’ approach delivers actions across the whole property.

A ‘bottom-up’ approach will allow development of interpretation and community engagement that is tailored to each valley community.

1. A property-wide approach

A property-wide Partnership-driven approach is needed to meet the conservation and sustainability priorities of the property designation.

This top-down approach is applied across the property. The approach principally uses and enhances existing tools, resources, and approaches. These will be adapted so that the World Heritage Site, UNESCO, and people’s relationship to the OUV is more prominent.

2. The 13-valley approach

A 13-valley community-driven approach is needed to ensure grass-roots engagement and collaboration with the ELDWHS, and the development of sustainable partnerships. The approach supports audience engagement, including local communities and visitors, with OUV.

This ‘bottom-up’ approach will reflect the diversity of the 13 valleys. It also allows for flexibility. Delivering interpretation projects with high some of the proposed actions, especially with regard training and capacity-building.

These interpretation projects would be rolled out in collaboration with each community, with funding for specific projects sought externally.

Delivery approach - Property wide

1. A property-wide approach

Relevant actions under this approach¹ are:

- **Promote interpretation toolkit:** An extension to the current business toolkit that supports partners and stakeholders to present, interpret and communicate ELDWHS special qualities and OUV.
Indicative target: Refer to Action Plan
- **Develop cultural events programme:** A programme of community- and business led workshops, guided tours and activities, which tie in with existing programmes, will be developed according to the interpretive themes and provide opportunities for visitors and residents to experience OUV.
Indicative target: Refer to Action Plan
- **Audience research:** Build on previous work with partners, stakeholders and businesses, to bring together intelligence about visitor characteristics and behaviour.
Indicative target: long term action not part of this short to medium term Action Plan
- **Develop physical interventions at existing visitor infrastructure:** Communicate interpretive themes as part of tactical visitor management - at key audience touchpoints, for example car parks and sustainable transport entry points, during specific events/ activities, and at food / drink / accommodation / retail venues.
Indicative target: See Action Plan
- **Develop relationships with local educators:** A co-created programme with local schools that engages children and young people with learning opportunities associated with the interpretive themes, OUV and the attributes, and with Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development education.
Indicative target: See Action Plan

¹ Please refer to Appendices for full descriptions

- **World Heritage Site interpretation training:** a training programme for the Partnership and wider stakeholder group (including businesses) to support understanding of interpretation best practice and communicate the Interpretation Strategy and interpretation toolkit.
Indicative target: See Action Plan
- **Interpretation training for audience-facing roles:** a training programme for audience-facing staff/roles.
Indicative target: undertake audit of existing knowledge. Timescales -short to medium term
- **Multimedia Story telling:** enhance visitor messaging in advance of arrival, reviewing existing websites that present essential Lake District and World Heritage Site visitor information to ensure that the structures reflect the intentions of the Interpretation Strategy and interpretive themes.
Indicative target: promote web-based interpretation.
Timescales - short term.

Delivery approach - The 13 valleys

2. The 13-valley approach

Relevant actions under this approach are:

- **Interpretation action planning and training with valley communities:** To facilitate crucial relationships with valley communities, identify the key community stakeholders (schools, businesses, and community gatekeepers), what their role is, and relationship to ELDWHS and OUV. Workshops and awareness raising events with communities should result in the production of an interpretation action plan for each valley community.
- **Community-led interpretation projects:** Working with each of the valley communities to co-create a World Heritage Site-related project that supports delivery of the Interpretation Strategy and of the individual valley interpretation action plans. Each valley community and relevant stakeholders should be closely involved in identifying opportunities.



Make it happen

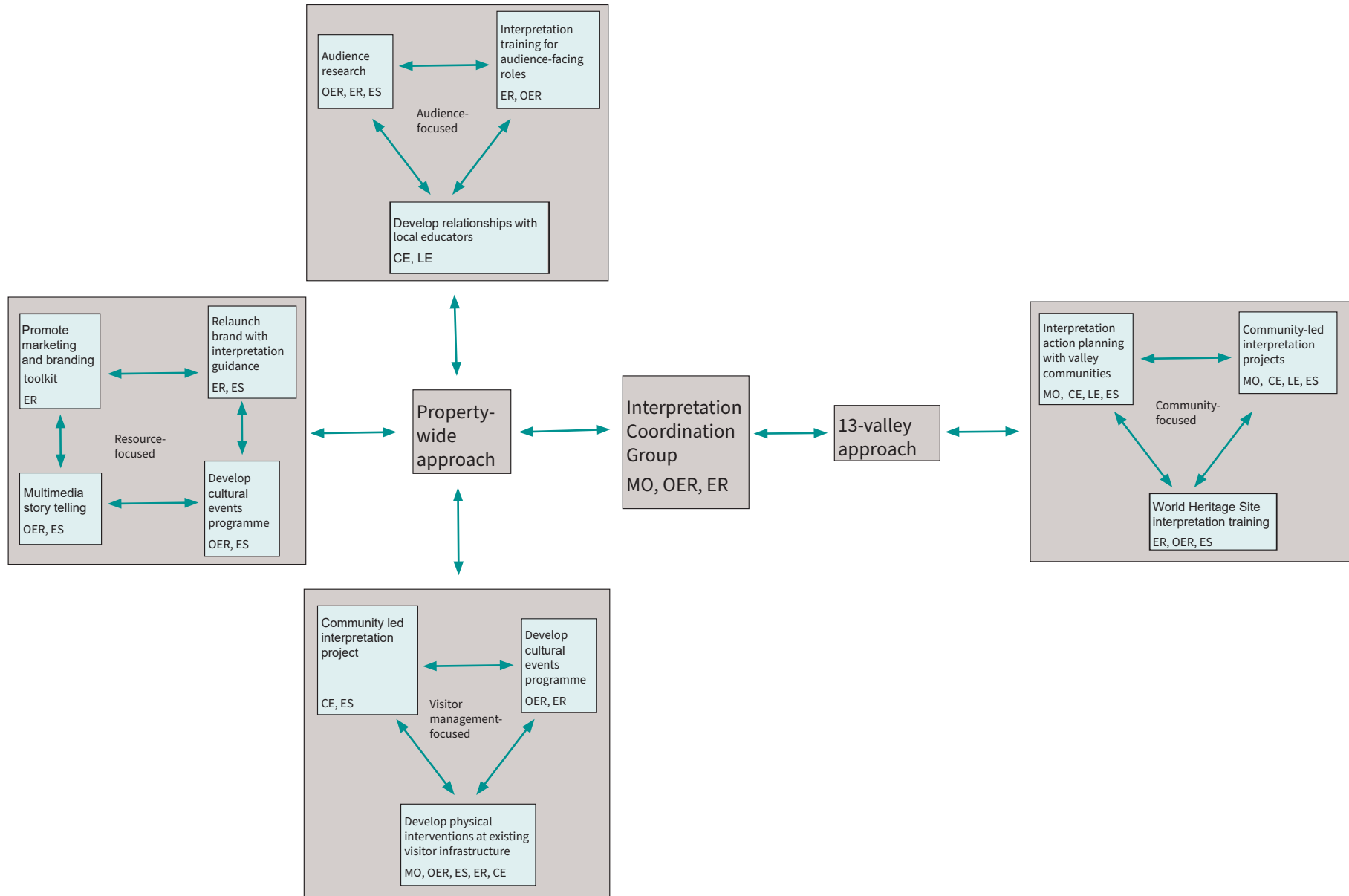
This Interpretation Strategy as described will require:

- management oversight, responsible for monitoring, evaluation and reporting; (MO)
- support from stakeholders outside the Partnership; (OER)
- external specialists (ES) (limited to priority workstreams) exploitation of existing resources in and around the Partnership and the property. (ER)
- Community engagement (CE)
- Local Education Providers (LE)

There are existing resources within the Partnership and property (ER) including existing knowledge, skills and experience. It includes:

- Audience insight
- Community contacts
- Partnership dedicated teams (communications and marketing, education and interpretation)
- Specialist support

Existing resources are limited however and there will be a need to draw on additional capacity and funding, for example, to make things happen.



Next Steps

The Action Plan, which is a separate document, provides an action plan for the delivery of the interpretation strategy setting out the first five years. This will be a live document with actions being revised and reviewed to check progress on delivery and appropriate actions based on feedback. It also sets out the status of the strategy and indication of timescales for delivery.

This will be based on organisations' expertise and interests given the wide range of interpretation expertise within the Partnership and other organisations delivering services, running tourist attractions, and museums.

Appendix 1: Developing this Strategy

What is interpretation?





West Windermere Way

Rocky hills and hidden gems

Fancy a small diversion? Step off the West Windermere Way to explore High Dam's deep woods and still waters.

The bank around High Dam and West Windermere is a special place to picnic, relax and enjoy. If you want a longer walk, you can follow the route to the foot of Busset and Southdown.

Save the planet
Walk Green and Save Water. Lower your water usage at all the opportunities along the route. You can save water by taking a shower for less than 5 minutes or less, or less than 10 litres.

10 = 200
WALKER MILES = 200 CO2 SAVED

West Windermere Way
A circular route around the lake, following the West Windermere Way, the route is 10 miles long and takes about 2 hours to complete.

Route Information

10 Miles
The route is 10 miles long and takes about 2 hours to complete.

200 CO2 Saved
By walking this route, you can save 200 CO2.

10 = 200
WALKER MILES = 200 CO2 SAVED

10 Miles
The route is 10 miles long and takes about 2 hours to complete.

200 CO2 Saved
By walking this route, you can save 200 CO2.

10 = 200
WALKER MILES = 200 CO2 SAVED



A National Park and a World Heritage Site

Within the UK there are 15 National Parks. Of the ten in England, The Lake District National Park is the largest, covering 2362km².

The Lake District National Park Authority, working with many partners, aims to ensure that the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area is conserved and enhanced, and that everyone has access and can understand and enjoy this special place.

The outstanding heritage and the landscape of the area are the Special Qualities that were acknowledged by UNESCO, when, in 2001, the Lake District was given World Heritage status as a unique and globally significant cultural landscape.

The distinctive communal farming system you see here, including common land, felling, the field systems and diverse cattle breeds has evolved in the landscape over at least one thousand years.

The underpasses along the route are to allow sheep and farmers to continue about their everyday business and for the heritage to continue uninterrupted.

10 Did you know? The Lake District National Park was founded on 18 August 1951.

THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT
1951-2021 70 YEARS

Lake District National Park

You can read about The English Lake District's World Heritage story at lakesworldheritage.co.uk

What is Interpretation

A definition

*‘Interpretation is primarily a **communication process** that helps people **make sense of, and understand more** about, your site, collection or event’¹*

*‘Contemporary heritage interpretation helps us to **understand a site**. It can also support people in **finding meaning** for themselves.’²*

*‘Interpretation is ‘a **purposeful approach to communication** that facilitates **meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences** that **deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire engagement** with the world around us.’³*

‘the active encouragement given to participants to interpret their experience themselves in searching for their own meaningful context behind the facts’⁴

The interpretive triangle

Interpret Europe note that the quality of heritage can be assessed according to the four elements of the ‘interpretive triangle.’⁵



Interpretation should:

- Offer paths to deeper meanings.
- Turn phenomena into experiences.
- Provoke resonance and participation
- Foster stewardship for all heritage.

¹ Association of Heritage Interpretation, www.ahi.org.uk

² UNESCO 2019, The role of Visitor Centres in UNESCO Designated Sites

³ National Association of Interpretation, www.interpnet.com

⁴ Interpret Europe (2017) Engaging citizens with Europe's cultural heritage

⁵ Interpret Europe (2017) Engaging citizens with Europe's cultural heritage

What is an Interpretation Strategy

An interpretation strategy

This umbrella term can cover a range of management plans, interpretive plans or guidelines for an organisation to approach interpretation.

This particular interpretation strategy is a high-level interpretation management planning tool which provides a framework for the delivery of interpretation.

An interpretation strategy helps users to:

- See how interpretation fits in the wider strategic environment.
- Understand the importance of the audiences who will support and benefit from the interpretation.
- Provide an overarching theme and sub-themes that support purposeful storytelling by the Partnership, stakeholders and communities.
- Understand the actions that need to be taken to deliver quality interpretation

Interpretation planning typically includes four stages:

- Reviewing the heritage and its broader context.
- Reviewing the interpretive services that already exist.
- Developing and improving the interpretive services.
- Developing resilience and sustainability.¹

Benefits of an interpretation strategy

An interpretation strategy:

- Is flexible and adaptable.
- Can respond to funding opportunities and local political, societal, and economic circumstances.
- Supports visitor experience, access, and management planning.
- Involves partners and stakeholders.
- Accommodate new research.
- Is an advocacy document.
- Supports local communities to express what is special about their place.

¹ UNESCO 2022, Interpretive Planning at World Heritage Properties in Europe - Report on the Pilot WH-Interp Training Course in 2021

Strategic Context



Introduction

This document is an Interpretation Strategy to communicate stories and ideas about heritage to different audiences. It is not a land management tool, nor a policy tool nor a visitor management tool, that is the responsibility of the other documents mentioned in this document such as the Destination Management Plan. There are other documents such as the Local Plan, and National Planning Policy Framework which determine land use, and development. The Partnership Management Plan indicates some outcomes relevant to the delivery of Interpretation such as improve visitor understanding of how we care for the Lake District. The Interpretation Strategy can however indicate which activities/ places can be used to promote the OUV of the WHS by providing examples of how these sites demonstrate OUV.

This World Heritage Site (the property) has a complex stakeholder environment. This stems from its size, and its cultural and administrative history. The management of this property involves multiple stakeholders, each with their own remits and resources.

In this section we:

- review some salient information regarding UNESCO, World Heritage, ‘values,’ the role of community and the role of interpretation.
- review the management context for the property.

Interpretation and UNESCO

Interpretation is regarded by UNESCO as an essential component *‘of heritage conservation efforts and as a means of enhancing public appreciation and understanding of cultural heritage sites.’*¹

‘Interpretation and outreach should be regarded as part of the management system of a heritage site.’

The UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Lake District National Park Authority(LDNPA) and the Lake District National Park Partnership were instrumental in preparing the Nomination for inscription of the English Lake District as a World Heritage Site. UNESCO accepted the Nomination in 2017, and State Party is a signatory to the UNESCO 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 3.

The Convention outlines States Parties’ role in identifying, protecting, conserving, presenting and transmitting this heritage to future generations (Article 4) along with ensuring that effective and active measures are taken for its protection, conservation and presentation (Article 5). Interpretation therefore directly supports the State Party’s obligations under the World Heritage Convention given its role in supporting the presentation of OUV.

Unusually, the English lake District is both a National Park and a World Heritage Site, and there is considerable crossover – and some tension – between these two designations.

¹ ICOMOS – 16e AG / 16th GA – Québec 2008 – Interpretation and presentation of cultural Heritage Sites

² UNESCO 2019, The role of Visitor Centres in UNESCO Designated Sites

³ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>

Interpretation and World Heritage Sites

Values of a World Heritage property

Interpretation should support the communication of the wider, multi-layered values of a property including:

- Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).
- Local heritage values that are not limited to the OUV, including natural and cultural assets (tangible and intangible).
- Broader values relevant to the site/property, such as economic, environmental and social.
- Broader values underpinning UNESCO's mission, such as building peace and fostering sustainability.¹

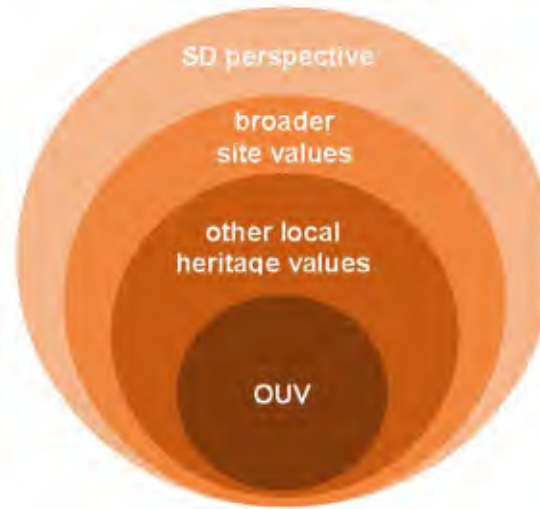


Diagram reproduced from UNESCO 2022, Interpretive Planning at World Heritage Properties in Europe - Report on the Pilot WH-Interp Training Course in 2021 [NB 'SD perspective' refers to Sustainable Development]

Involvement of people

UNESCO recognises interpretation as key to achieving Sustainable Development², and this is reflected in who they consider important in the interpretation development process:

'Ensuring that local stakeholders, visitors, decisionmakers and the wider public are aware of heritage sites, their purpose and values, and how they are governed and managed'.³

ICOMOS International further note that interpretation and presentation *'must be the result of meaningful collaboration between heritage professional, host and associated communities, and other stakeholders'.⁴*

¹ ICOMOS – 16e AG / 16th GA – Québec 2008 – Interpretation and presentation of cultural Heritage Sites

² <https://en.unesco.org/sustainabledevelopmentgoals>

³ UNESCO 2021, Competence framework for cultural heritage management: a guide to the essential skills and knowledge for heritage practitioners

⁴ ICOMOS – 16e AG / 16th GA – Québec 2008 – Interpretation and presentation of cultural Heritage Sites

Interpretation and the Lake District National Park Partnership

Park Partnership

The Lake District National Park Partnership was established in 2006, bringing together a range of organisations (the ‘Partners’) from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors with a shared goal of working in the best interests of the national park, and now also the ELDWHS. The National Park is managed by the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA), whereas the World Heritage Site is managed by the Partnership (LDNPP).

Partnership ‘Observers’ attend meetings and receive Partnership communications. They often help deliver actions in the Partnership Plan and sometimes deliver interpretation as part of their work.

Who’s not in the Partnership

There are also organisations not currently on the Partnership who:

- Employ interpretation strategies or similar.
- Are concerned with raising awareness and understanding of aspects of OUV.
- Are actively engaging their local communities through events and volunteering.
- Extend the reach of Partnership communication to their users, both visitors and local communities.

Those organisations may include:

- Brantwood Trust
- Community interest companies (e.g. Ullswater, West Lakeland)
- Farming networks
- Head Teachers’ networks
- Heritage Groups
- Museums (Armitt Museum and Library, Ruskin Institute, Keswick Museum)
- Wordsworth Trust
- Cumbria GeoConservation Group

Interpretation and the LDNPP Management Plan 2020-2025

The current Joint Management Plan includes some outcomes relevant to delivery of interpretation:

- To celebrate traditional Lake District farming systems including livestock, food, and land management practices.
- Improve visitors' understanding of how to care for the Lake District and its communities.

There is no dedicated interpretation team within the Partnership, although some partners are large, national organisations with dedicated interpretation resource operating in the WHS, others are small without a dedicated interpretation resource. This Interpretation Strategy is intended to integrate interpretation into the onward management of the ELDWHS by the Partnership.

It is the intention for the next iteration of the Joint Management Plan (for 2026-2031) to incorporate and build on this interpretation strategy.



Interpretation and the Lake District National Park

LDNPA and the statutory obligations

Despite the variations across the 13 Valleys described in the Nomination Document, the area is very much a single unit. The WHS and National Park boundaries are now different due to an extension to the National Park just prior to Inscription. It was one of the first areas in the UK to have National Park status, and it is still England's largest.

The concept of a national park is often traced back to William Wordsworth, and to an idea he wrote about of 'a sort of national property.'¹

The LDNPA statutory purposes are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Lake District National Park.
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

It also has a duty in pursuing those purposes:

- To seek to foster the economic and social well being of local communities within the National Park by working closely with the agencies and local authorities responsible for these matters, but without incurring significant expenditure.²

Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 makes it clear that if National Park purposes are in conflict then conservation must have priority. This is the "Sandford Principle" stems from a 1974 report recommendation that enjoyment of the National Parks:

'In exercising or performing any functions in relation to or so as to affect, land in a National Park, any relevant authority shall have regard to the purposes specified in subsection (1) of section five of this Act and, if it appears that there is a conflict between those purposes, shall attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area comprised in the National Park'³

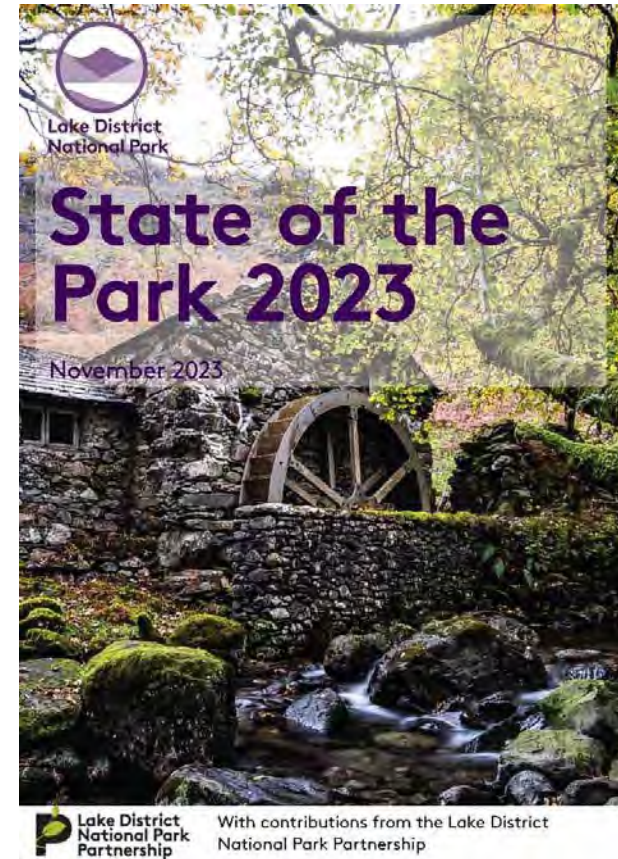
¹ Wordsworth 1835, Guide to the Lakes

² Environment Act 1995

³ Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995

The State of the Park 2023

The most recent report shows that the special qualities of the National Park are in good condition, and that participation is increasing. Events like local shows and shepherds' meets reflect ongoing local community engagement, and the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme has delivered investment to those communities. People are engaging in cultural activities as reflected by the Special Qualities of the National Park and OUV of the WHS by visits to cultural sites.



The Lake District National Park Special Qualities and OUV

| Special Quality | OUV Theme | Attribute |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| 1 A world class cultural landscape | <i>Theme 1</i> | Extraordinary beauty and harmony... Agro-pastoral system |
| 2 Complex geology and geomorphology | <i>Theme 1</i> | Local industries ie quarrying |
| 3 Rich archaeology and historic Landscape | <i>Theme 1</i> | Extraordinary beauty and harmony... Agro-pastoral system Local industries Towns and settlements |
| 4 Unique farming heritage and concentration of common land | <i>Theme 1</i> | Agro-pastoral system |
| 5 The High Fells | <i>Theme 1</i> | Extraordinary beauty and harmony... Landscape conservation The ability of people to experience the spirit and felling of the lake District |
| 6 Wealth of habitats and wildlife | <i>Theme 1</i> | Agro-pastoral system (Semi-natural habitats created and sustained as a result of a continuing agro-pastoral systems, for example hay meadows, pollards, wood pasture, and coppiced woodland. The mosaic of semi natural habitats above the fell wall within an actively grazed landscape.) Does not cover wildlife and this is the only reference to nature. |
| 7 Mosaic of lakes, tarns, rivers and Coast | <i>Theme 1</i> | Extraordinary beauty and harmony... Agro-pastoral system |
| 8 Extensive semi-natural woodlands | <i>Theme 1</i> | Local industries |
| 9 Distinctive buildings and settlement character | <i>Theme 1</i> <i>Theme 2</i> | Towns and settlements Early tourism Villas, gardens and formal landscapes |
| 10 A source of artistic inspiration | <i>Theme 2</i> | Early tourism Sites and collections associated with the Picturesque and Romanticism Villas, gardens and formal landscapes |
| 11 A model for protecting cultural Landscapes | <i>Theme 3</i> | Landscape conservation The ability of people to experience the spirit and feeling of the Lake District |
| 12 A long tradition of tourism and outdoor activities | <i>Theme 3</i> | Landscape conservation The ability of people to experience the spirit and feeling of the Lake District Early tourism Sites and collections associated with the Picturesque and Romanticism (Key associations with the origins of the outdoor movement, The Romantic emphasis on outdoor activity and experience – principally walking) |
| 13 Opportunities for quiet enjoyment | <i>Theme 3</i> | The ability of people to experience the spirit and feeling of the Lake District (The perception and enjoyment of an open landscape) |

Interpretation and other plans

The Lake District Historic Environment Strategy (HES)

This LDNPA policy document refers specifically to interpretation, and to relevant actions and policies that include to:

- Promote understanding of OUV and conservation management.
- Utilise interpretive media to manage visitor pressure on the historic environment.
- Develop a comprehensive outreach programme for historic environment.
- Deploy a communications plan dedicated to the historic environment.

The actions and policies in the HES related to OUV and interpretation are reflected in the development of this strategy.

Destination Management Plan for Cumbria 2024

The Destination Management Plan (DMP) for Cumbria aims to support ‘a successful visitor economy for the whole of the county, supporting economic growth, the natural environment and delivering benefits for our host communities.’



This interpretation strategy can support relevant DMP objectives, to:

- 2.1: Enable more visitors to arrive in Cumbria via public transport
- 2.2: Market and promote visitor travel to Cumbria by public transport
- 2.4: Develop an integrated end-to-end transport system for visitors with proactive approach to parking provision, traffic management supporting modal shift

- 2.6: Ensure planning to reduce traffic issues to minimise visitor disruption at peak periods
- 2.7: Further expand and develop the network of cycling routes across the county
- 2.9: Responsible tourism education strategy for visitors
- 2.14: Active destination management in key locations
- 3.1: Better provision of consistent and comprehensive information on accessibility for visitors
- 3.2: Awareness raising and practical advice about accessibility market and needs
- 3.3: Improve accessibility facilities across the visitor economy infrastructure
- 3.6: Support “warm welcome” programmes to make all visitors welcome
- 4.4: Support skills development within the sector
- 4.12: Roll out high-quality digital infrastructure to support mobile and fixed location connectivity for all visitors

For example, the ‘Working with communities and stakeholders on Visitor Management’ action proposed in this Interpretation Strategy supports most of these objectives either directly or indirectly.

Appendix 2: What are the Stories?



What are the stories?

English Lake District World Heritage Site

UNESCO describe the ELDWHS as:

Located in northwest England, the English Lake District is a mountainous area, whose valleys have been modelled by glaciers in the Ice Age and subsequently shaped by an agro-pastoral land-use system characterized by fields enclosed by walls.

The combined work of nature and human activity has produced a harmonious landscape in which the mountains are mirrored in the lakes. Grand houses, gardens and parks have been purposely created to enhance the landscape's beauty.

This landscape was greatly appreciated from the 18th century onwards by the Picturesque and later Romantic movements, which celebrated it in paintings, drawings and words. It also inspired an awareness of the importance of beautiful landscapes and triggered early efforts to preserve them.¹

The ELDWHS is roughly circular in plan. The property is divided into 13 principal valleys separated by hills and mountains.

High ground radiates outwards from the centre like 'spokes of a wheel,' and each glacier-scoured valley 'has an individual character which is determined by geology, natural vegetation and a particular history of land use.'

¹ From <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/422/> < Reproduced under license CC-BY-SA IGO 3.0 >

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the ELDWHS

If we could summarise this, we might take the key phrases to be:

- ‘highest importance to the international community’
- ‘for present and future generations of all humanity.’

The OUV themes for the ELDWHS are:

1. A landscape of exceptional beauty, shaped by persistent and distinctive agro-pastoral traditions which give it special character.
2. A landscape which has inspired artistic and literary movements and generated ideas about landscapes that have had global influence and left their physical mark.
3. A landscape which has been the catalyst for key developments in the national and international protection of landscapes.

The ‘OUV Themes’ have been identified, along with the Attributes, by the Partnership from the Statement of OUV and are set out in the Joint Management Plan.

Attributes

“Attributes can be physical qualities or fabric, but can also include processes, associated with a property, that impact on physical qualities, such as natural or agricultural processes, social arrangements or cultural practices that have shaped distinctive landscapes.”¹


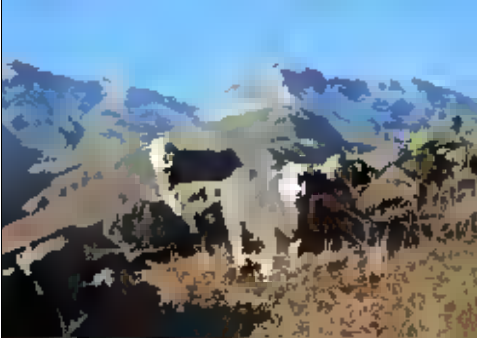
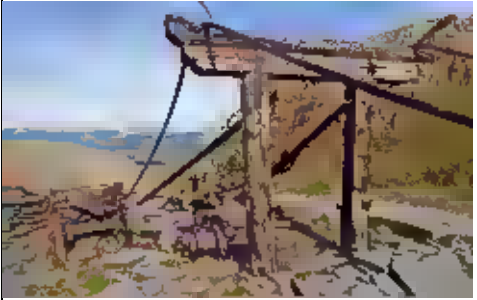

World Heritage properties demonstrate their OUV through ‘Attributes’ that enable understanding of it. OUV can be abstract.




Attributes can be built features, species or intangible traditions, for example that contain or represent the OUV in ways that are intelligible or can be experienced directly.

Without attributes the OUV themes can be a difficult to understand, so attributes help people to make sense of OUV.

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/422/#>

¹ UNESCO 2023 Format for the Nomination of Properties for Inscription on the World Heritage List < <https://whc.unesco.org/document/191594> >

| Theme | Attribute | | Components of Attributes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Theme 1: A landscape of exceptional beauty, shaped by persistent and distinctive agro pastoral and local industry which gives it special character | Extraordinary beauty and harmony |  Wastwater | <p>The physical natural landscape of mountains, rivers, lakes, and valleys.(tangible)</p> <p>The physical cultural landscape in the main the product of agro-pastoralism, settlements and local industry, including woodlands. (tangible)</p> <p>The variety and combination of differing landscape characters and physical attributes of each of the 13 valleys.</p> |
| | Agro-pastoral system |  Herdwick sheep | <p>Evidence, intactness, and legibility of settlements and the agro pastoral character and function of the field systems and their waterways.</p> <p>Farmsteads and Farmhouses (tangible)</p> <p>Shepherds meets/shows and traditional sports (tangible)</p> <p>The unique practices of the agro-pastoral farming system</p> <p>The surviving physical and social elements of hill farming e.g. shepherding and common gathering,</p> <p>Local techniques of landscape maintenance (stonewalling, hedging, pollarding) (tangible)</p> <p>Local management and governance of Lake District farming systems, e.g. activities of breeders associations and commons committees.</p> <p>Common land and the long standing and continuing traditions of Common land management Physical areas of Common (tangible) The long-standing and continuing local traditions of Common Land management (Intangible);</p> <p>Semi-natural habitats created and sustained as a result of a continuing agro-pastoral systems, for example hay meadows, pollards, wood pasture, and coppiced woodland. The mosaic of semi natural habitats above the fell wall within an actively grazed landscape.</p> |
| | Local industries |  Coniston | <p>Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands (tangible)</p> <p>Traditional local woodland industries, people and skills both (intangible)</p> <p>The physical remains of past woodland industries, buildings, structures (i.e. Bark Barns, Charcoal Sheds (tangible)</p> <p>The physical remains of historic mines and quarries which have shaped the landscape (tangible) local traditions (intangible)</p> |
| | Towns and Settlements |  keswick | <p>The English Lake District's settlement pattern of individual farms, small hamlets, large villages and market towns, historically derived and functionally. (tangible)</p> <p>Medieval buildings (tangible)</p> <p>Vernacular buildings (tangible)</p> |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Theme 2: A landscape which has inspired artistic and literary movement s and generated ideas about landscape s that have had global influence and left their physical mark | Early tourism |  <p>Claife viewing station</p> | <p>Places and collections associated with early tourism. (tangible)</p> <p>Early tourist infrastructure. (tangible)</p> <p>The location of viewing stations, including structures in very limited cases.</p> <p>Other key views that form the image of the Lake District.</p> <p>The values, aesthetic ideals and perceptions which led to the creation of early tourism.</p> |
| | Villas, gardens and formal landscapes |  <p>Brockhole</p> | <p>Villa Landscapes – their buildings, gardens and surrounding designed landscapes.</p> <p>The values, aesthetic ideals and perceptions which led to their creation.</p> <p>Physical designed landscapes.</p> |
| | Sites and collections associated with the Picturesque and Romanticism |  <p>Wordsworth Grasmere</p> | <p>Residences and places associated with significant writers and poets.</p> <p>Key literary and artistic associations with Landscape. Surviving landscape which inspired literature and art.</p> <p>The value and significance of ideas and writings of writers and poets and artists.</p> <p>Perception and enjoyment of sites and collections associated with Picturesque and Romanticism.</p> <p>Key associations with the origins of the outdoor movement.</p> <p>Buildings linked to early outdoor holiday movement.</p> <p>Surviving landscape which inspired early climbing, outdoors recreation and the early outdoor holiday movement.</p> <p>The Romantic emphasis on outdoor activity and experience – principally walking.</p> <p>The open access to the Lake District Fells and lakes for recreation</p> |

**Theme 3
A landscape which has been the catalyst for key developments in the national and international protection of landscapes**

Landscape conservation



National Trust

Areas of the WH property where historic landscape conservation battles were both won and lost.

The idea of landscape conservation inspired by the English Lake District landscape and the universal value of scenic and cultural landscape transcending traditional property rights

The landscape is protected for its scenic and cultural value and is protected for the Nation.

The perception that the landscape is protected for its scenic and cultural value and is protected for the Nation by public and state support.

Properties owned or managed by the National Trust

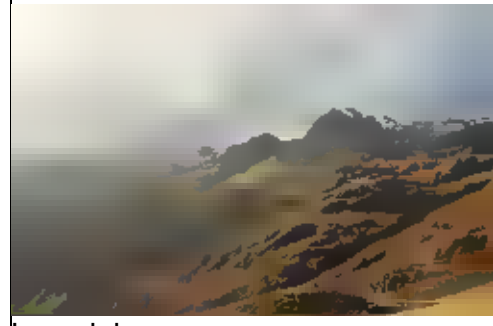
The knowledge and perception that the creation of the National Trust was inspired by the English Lake District

Landscapes owned and sympathetically managed to sustain our OUV by the Partnership and other landscape conservation bodies

Farms and land purchased by individuals and public subscription to protect the landscape and our OUV e.g. traditional farming.

Organisations and public participating in landscape conservation.

The ability of people to experience the spirit and feeling of the Lake District



Langdales

The perception and enjoyment of an open landscape.

The ability to feel the values, ideas and perceptions of harmonious beauty and other significance derived from the Picturesque and Romantic traditions specific to the English Lake District.

The value of landscape for restoring the human spirit and wellbeing

Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment.

Consultation and heritage values

Key partners and stakeholders helped identify which aspects of the ELDWHS they considered important when telling stories. The areas identified by each consultee strongly reflected their own role and organisation's background.

Landscape character

- Cultural landscape
- Living landscape
- Field patterns
- Settlements e.g., Grasmere and Hawkshead
- Narrow, deep valleys carved by glaciers, some filled with lakes.
- Backdrop of geology
- The physical natural landscape

Landscape conservation management

- Management of landscape over time
- Landscape managed by farmers over generations
- Engineering
- Industrialisation- mining, quarrying
- Environment, culture
- Traditional drystone walling
- Traditional hill farming
- Native livestock breeds
- Husbandry of nature

Cultural heritage

- Dialect and language
- Living traditions
- Traditional agricultural and sports shows
- Dove Cottage, Allan Bank and Rydal Mount

Sustainability over time

- Working with the grain of nature
- Conservation
- Industry
- Landscape conservation
- Advocacy of hill farming

Easier access to asset information

Consultation indicated that the Nomination Document is too technical and inaccessible for people to use to interpret the ELDWHS. World

Heritage UK note the need for plain English¹, to 'translate' the OUV into intelligible ideas.

More consultation needed

Whilst the Partnership has agreed a hierarchy of Themes, Attributes and Components, there is currently limited understanding of:

- What other stakeholders and communities think is significant about the OUV themes and what stories they want to share.
- The commitment to collaboration among stakeholders (i.e., formal education providers, museums) and communities.
- How the stories can be developed to suit audience motivations and interests.

¹ World Heritage UK 2019, *Assets for the future*

Appendix 3: Interpretation audit



Existing Interpretation

Introduction

To understand the present set of conditions, we assessed how interpretation of the World Heritage Site is deployed across the visitor journey, who provides what, and how. This included examining how the World Heritage branding toolkit has been employed.

This audit provides the basis on which to recommend changes to existing service provision or provide new services.

There is a lot happening that may not explicitly use the branding but still educates and communicates OUV, e.g. Guided walks (LDNPA), Leaders Landscape training (Friends of the Lake District).

Conclusions

Local communities: can be engaged more in the interpretation of World Heritage Site status and OUV - especially those associated with OUV. They are keen to work more with their heritage locally, and with World Heritage Site status. Existing routes into local communities, and bespoke projects which meet their needs and interests, will provide the most effective means of engagement. Local schools were also keen to learn more about World Heritage Site status.

Stakeholders: can be engaged more in the interpretation of World Heritage Site status and OUV. Many already use the branding toolkit and assets, and some are experienced with interpretation or managing visitor experience.

Some stakeholders have shifted their interpretation services towards the OUV of the World Heritage Site and some interpret the attributes extensively. The opportunity is there to engage further with both stakeholders and their users, and to use the established brand as a platform for further dialogue.

Visitors: can be engaged more with World Heritage Site status and OUV. They currently tend to experience the World Heritage Site on their own terms. The size, complexity and porous nature of the property renders effective management through traditional media challenging. A particular issue is that the existing media used is visually and intellectually inconsistent because it is produced by different people.

Some interpretation is temporary due to special anniversaries of organisations and seasonal so not a permanent resource.

Some visitors and local people will need minimum guidance, whilst others may want more direction.

Existing Interpretation ELDWHS and communities

Community projects

Two examples of local residents involved in heritage interpretation projects around the time of inscription, funded by NLHF (then HLF), explored aspects of the local heritage that were connected with OUV:

- **Coniston Copper** - this community project engaged schools and local people with industrial archaeology and social history.
- **Eskdale Mill** - this community-led project explored agricultural and landscape heritage in the hamlet of Boot. A learning resource produced during the project connected the local site

Since inscription, COVID has dominated the actions of the resident communities. Some community actions have however related to World Heritage or OUV, for example:

- **Keswick Museum** - a community -led exhibition explored OUV and the meaning of World Heritage Site status for local residents. This did begin to tour around the property briefly prior to COVID.

- **Friends of the Ullswater Way** - a community-led project generated artistic responses to local heritage stories along a trail round Ullswater. Some of the responses were relevant to OUV (Wainwright, Herdwick Stones). Some communities such as Ullswater are engaged in interpretation using local knowledge and indicating what is special about Ullswater. Friends of the Ullswater Way - Heritage Knowledge Bank (ullswaterheritage.org)

Organisations are operating within the property now and exploring what WHS means to local communities, for example:

- **Armitt Museum and Library** - regularly holds family-oriented events, which this gives them routes into local communities.
- **LDNPA** - the education team includes World Heritage in their work with primary schools, and higher levels.

- **Under Northern Skies** - a year-long project organised by the National Trust, comprising community workshops to explore Lake District themes, with exhibition outputs in Carlisle and Wordsworth House.

Individuals from communities associated with OUV have pursued that relationship on their own account:

- **Farming experiences** - offered to visitors by a growing number of local farms. Lakeland Farm Visitor Centre, Miller Farming Farm
- Tours, and the Yew Tree Farm Herdwick Experience, for example, offer group activities led by local residents. There are leaflets and websites which promote farms to a wider audience. [World Heritage and Farming Blogs : Lake District National Park](#)
- **Farmers' stories** - Herdwick shepherd and author James Rebanks has presented the experience of farming life in the Lake District via books, newspaper articles and on television, achieving a phenomenal reach and impact.

Examples of interpretation

13 Valleys Trail



The LDNPA has created interpretation for a 13 Valleys Trail which links existing rights of way to provide a route which visits all 13 Valleys of the World Heritage Site. Each valley has its own distinctive character and

features that contribute to the UNESCO World Heritage Site. Within each valley there are roundels, such as the one pictured here, on public rights of way markers. When you scan the QR code you will be able to learn more about the unique features of that particular valley.

[13 Valleys Trail : Lake District National Park](#)

Whinlatter Forest Trail



A new immersive and engaging trail at Whinlatter Forest opened in 2023. It showcases not only the story of England's only mountain forest but also highlights what makes the Lake District World Heritage site one of the most special places on the planet.

Existing interpretation ELDWHS and Stakeholders

One of the main ways that stakeholders raise awareness of the English Lake District World Heritage Site (ELDWHS) is through the brand. This is supported by the Brand Toolkit and a business toolkit.

- **Users of the brand toolkit tend to present the logo / assets on products**
- **Organisations present messages about OUV in conjunction with the logo and brand assets:** This approach is adopted by Partners who are fully on board with World Heritage Site status and who have experienced staff skilled in interpretation. Connections between the OUV attributes and why they contribute to World Heritage Site status could be more explicit. Good examples include National Trust (e.g. Bowder Stone project, and Hideyuki Sobue's mural at Allan Bank).

- **Organisations communicate World Heritage specific messaging alongside logo and brand assets:** the OUV and technical information about World Heritage Site status is communicated via the dedicated web content, brand and business toolkits. The partnership has published print media leaflets - an introduction to the World Heritage Site, a leaflet covering Farming in the World Heritage Site, and a leaflet engaging farming communities with cultural landscapes concepts as part of the Farming in Protected Landscapes scheme. This was distributed at the visitors' centre, tourist information centres and via farming communities. UNESCO and World Heritage itself were also treated as subject matter for interpretation by a travelling exhibition developed by Keswick Museum - this is also explored in detail at the Lake District National Park Visitor Centre.



Existing Interpretation - ELDWHS and Visitors

Five stages of the visitor journey Decision media

Interpretive messaging is communicated presently by media encountered at each of the five stages of the visitor journey:

1. Decision,
2. Entry,
3. Connection,
4. Exit, and
5. Commitment¹.

This section describes the principal media types encountered during the interpretive audit, and recommendations regarding each phase:

Websites

- Visit Cumbria
- Cumbria Tourism
- Lake District National Park
- National Trust
- RSPB
- TripAdvisor
- Tourism businesses

Print media (i.e., brochure)

- Tourism businesses

Film / TV /Radio

- coach tour operators
- podcasts by Partners
- travel / tourism shows
- documentaries that feature associated communities
- internet 'influencers'

Conclusions

- World Heritage material features prominently on some Partner websites
- World Heritage messaging could be incorporated more widely
- Online references are mixed
- Some tourism businesses based locally refer to WH status but don't combine this with the brand or business toolkits.



¹ Brochu 2007, Interpretive Planning: The 5M Model for Successful Planning Projects

Entry media

Signage/orientation panel

- Car parks at visitor hotspots
- WHS panels at Crow Park, Keswick
- Visitor attractions

People-led support

- Visitor management
- Car park welcomingers

Conclusions

- World Heritage Site status and some aspects of OUV are presented.
- Other WHS- related messaging could be improved
- Opportunity to improve indication of entry and sense of arrival into ELDWHS.
- Issues for entry points include shared responsibility across multiple parties.



Connection media

Person-led experiences

- Blue badge guides
- Guided walks
- Outdoor / farm experiences
- Workshops

Information panels

- Exhibitions
- Partner-owned sites

Print and online media

- Art installations
- Books / Magazines
- Film/AV
- Trail routes

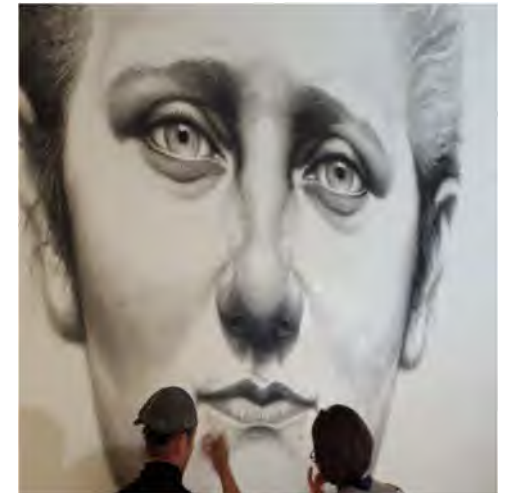
Events

- Agricultural shows
- Lectures
- Sporting events

Conclusions

- Panels proliferate at heritage sites and visitor facing properties
- World Heritage messaging could be improved
- Presentation or interpretation is scarce outside actively managed sites (i.e., historic houses and gardens, Scheduled Monuments), which is unsurprising given the scale of the property.
- OUV is interpreted via exhibitions (e.g. Wordsworth Trust). There are examples where it links to WHS (e.g. *A Letter to the Earth from Beatrix*, 2022).
- Panels are a static means of promoting top down messaging, providing a fall-back when person-led interpretation is not available.
- A recently opened 'Wonders of Whinlatter' trail (Forestry England) will aim to cover World Heritage Site status via trained volunteer guides.
- Person-led experiences (i.e., the talks, guided walks and other events at Wordsworth Trust) deepen engagement and facilitate conversations that meet audience interest. In 2019 the National Trust created a programme of workshops with local miners, schoolchildren, artists and creative

writers to explore their responses to the cultural landscape.

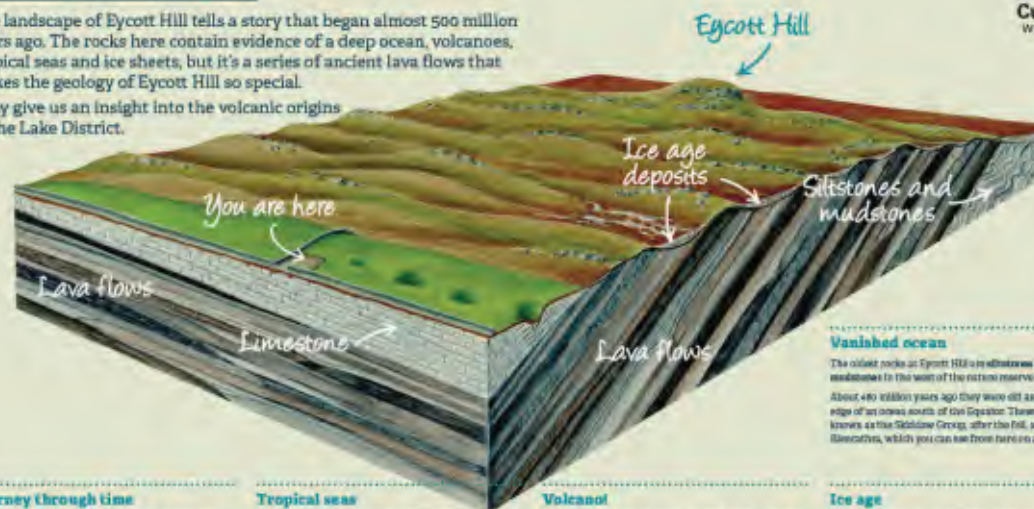


Eycott Hill Nature Reserve

Older than the hills

The landscape of Eycott Hill tells a story that began almost 500 million years ago. The rocks here contain evidence of a deep ocean, volcanoes, tropical seas and ice sheets, but it's a series of ancient lava flows that makes the geology of Eycott Hill so special.

They give us an insight into the volcanic origins of the Lake District.



Journey through time

Through geological time this piece of the Earth's crust has been on a remarkable journey over the surface of the globe. Many different processes, environments and climates have shaped Eycott Hill.

Tropical seas

Under the field in front of you is limestone, a pale grey rock that you can see in the walls here. The hollows in the field are a subtle sign of limestone. Known as sinkholes, they form when limestone dissolves in rainwater. This rock formed from tiny shells in tropical seas 500 million years ago.

Volcanoes

Eycott Hill is special for its ancient lava flows. They were erupted 600 million years ago, at the start of a period of volcanic activity that formed the central Lake District fells. The lava was later tilted and eroded and you can see them today as rocky ridges. Follow the path into the nature reserve to find out more!

Ice age

In 124,000 years ago, 200,000 years ago, ice up to a kilometre thick stretched over this area. Like a giant sheet of dry sandpaper it scraped the landscape and dumped a mixture of clay, sand and boulders. At Eycott Hill the ice grinded out softer rock between the hard rock layers, creating ridges and depressions.

Vanished ocean

The oldest rocks at Eycott Hill are siltstones and mudstones to the west of the nature reserve.

About 480 million years ago they were off and on at the edge of an ocean north of the Equator. These rocks are known as the Skelton Group, after the fell, and also form Ribblesdale, which you can see from here on a clear day.



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Protecting Wildlife for the Future

Exit Media

Food / Drink / Retail

- Partner-owned sites
- 13 valley tweeds
- Retail WHS branding

Accommodation

- Brochures, leaflets
- Online (i.e., blog)

Conclusions

- Post-visit experience dominated by food/drink/retail offer.
- Some food/drink/retail and accommodation providers (including Forestry England and National Trust) promote reflection on the previous (connection) stage.
- This phase is an opportunity to raise awareness and offer routes into wider issues and World Heritage values, to funnel people to appropriate online locations, and to encourage people to share their experiences.
- Accommodation providers use brochures to enhance visitor experience - what to do. These are

frequently combined with decision stage messaging, to encourage repeat visits.

- There is scope to enhance World Heritage messaging, in particular combining decompression messaging for tourist visitors with gentle pestering to commitment in next phase.
- 13 Valley Tweed was a project to create Lake District tweeds representing each of the 13 valleys of the World Heritage Site from locally sourced wool, funded through the Farming in protected landscapes scheme.

The Herdwick Experience at Yew Tree Farm, Coniston



Jo McGrath and Jon Watson farm over 800 pure bred Herdwick sheep at Yew Tree Farm, one of the Lake District's most iconic steadings from the Beatrix Potter legacy, mentioned over twenty times in the Lakes inscription document. For over six years they have been running The Herdwick Experience, a hands-on educational experience available to anyone as scheduled public or bespoke private sessions. 1,800 people attended a Herdwick experience in 2024.



Commitment Media

Banner stand / poster

- Join us.
- Come again.
- Please donate.

Leaflet / Handout / Takeaway

- Visit our other sites.
- Please volunteer / donate.

Websites

- Find out more
- Plan your next visit

Conclusions

- Visitors are presented with opportunities to support conservation/consider behaviour at sites/venues.
- Takeaway print media / QR codes link to relevant online portals (i.e., Lake District Foundation).
- Some information panels also promote sustainable behaviour change (West Windermere Way, Whinlatter Trail).
- Desired behaviour change currently depends on Partner role (membership, volunteering, cash donations, parking).
- Potential World Heritage-related incentive for visitors is 'support our work and this World Heritage Site will be a great place to visit here next time.'
- There are examples of good engagement but connection with WHS OUV could be improved.



Appendix 4: Audiences for interpretation



Why audiences?

“...the only meanings a visitor can attach to a place, thing, or concept are those that he or she makes in his or her own mind”¹

Interpretation is meaningless without an audience. Targeting specific audiences is a key consideration when developing interpretation. Their needs, interests, motivations and barriers to engagement guide us to develop appropriate content and utilise appropriate media.

Who are the audiences? An overview

When developing interpretation, two broad groups of people can be considered:

- Those who are stakeholders and can support the development and delivery of interpretation, i.e., storytellers.
- Those who will be considered the recipient of the intended content, i.e., listeners.

These are not mutually exclusive categories, but they are helpful when considering how interpretation will be developed.

Identification of audiences and their relevant characteristics has been developed through research and consultation. Different organisations use different ways of understanding their audiences, e.g., through using demographics, segmentation models.

For the purposes of this strategy, three broad groups of audience category are presented:

- Local communities
- Stakeholders
- Visitors

Again, these groups overlap, and individual people or groups can assume different or multiple roles depending on circumstances.

It is notable that the COVID pandemic seems to have disrupted the ways in which people visit the property: *the proportion of visitors aged 16-34 has increased by 6%, and visitors from minority ethnic communities increased to 22% in the Lake District and 16% across Cumbria representing a 14% increase. This demonstrates a visitor profile that better reflects today’s national population.²*

A younger, more diverse demographic is corroborated by STEAM data and visitor surveys, but the impact of these changes is not fully understood. This evolving situation seems to justify additional audience research. These are new visitors which we need to engage with and communicate our Special Qualities and OUV and will need to take account of their needs.

Other visitors include those with access needs or require additional facilities which need to be taken into account to make the WHS more inclusive.



¹ Sam Ham 2013, Interpretation - Making a Difference on Purpose

² LDNPP 2023, State of the Park Report

Audiences: Local communities

| Audience | Motivations to engage | Barriers to engagement | Implications for interpretation |
|---|---|--|--|
| 40,000 residents living in the World Heritage Site | Social and cultural activity Volunteering | Understanding - how do we engage Opportunity | Engage via local newspapers, local TV / radio, social media, word of mouth Engage face-to-face at community events Engage through Parish Councils Engage via ground-up, community-led heritage projects Train them as interpreters Potential incentive for residents is 'World Heritage Site status generates support for your community among visitors and politicians.' |
| Residents of Cumbria, including outside Lake District: Families with children | Family time around an activity Social and cultural activity Family-friendly events and activities Family-friendly attractions/venues | Time and scheduling Awareness of offer Cost of engagement | Engage via local newspapers, local TV / radio, social media, word of mouth Engage via cultural events, especially short guided walks Engage via organisations who have existing routes in and existing cultural offers |
| Farming communities | Desire for people to understand their role and its importance to World Heritage Want to engage people with their farming heritage Social gatherings | Time Opportunity | Engage via farming officers, partners, word of mouth Engage at community events Offer training to engage visitors with farming heritage Train them as interpreters Potential incentive for residents is 'World Heritage Site status generates support for your community among visitors and politicians.' |
| Schools in Cumbria/Lake District catchment | Curriculum needs, Activities and programmes for learners | Understanding - how do we engage Travel costs Staff time and support | Engage via schools headteachers' groups, learning officers, partners and stakeholders with existing cultural offer for schools Develop the resources / programme that were planned pre-COVID |

Audiences: Stakeholders

| Audience | Motivations to engage | Barriers to engagement | Implications for interpretation |
|--|---|---|--|
| Partners | Manage and promote understanding of OUV as part of remit Managing the wider remit Community engagement | Resources (time, staff) | Continue to engage via partnership and representatives Identify collaborative training needs and opportunities Identify opportunities to promote awareness of World Heritage site status and value as part of ongoing communication Continue to promote the value of the partnership work in managing OUV and World Heritage status to local community |
| Businesses associated with OUV (i.e. Windermere Lakes Cruises) | Maintain tourism income Improve user offer Improve brand respectability and marketing | Understanding - how do we engage | Engage directly via Business Taskforce, building on the existing branding and business toolkit, which need dedicated staff support Identify collaborative training needs and opportunities Support them to identify where they fit the picture and how they can develop relevant narratives that raise awareness and deepen engagement Train them as interpreters |
| Businesses working in/near the World Heritage Site but not directly associated with OUV (i.e., 13 Valleys Ultra) | Improve tourism / other income Improve user offer Improve brand respectability | Understanding - how do we engage Lack of perceived benefit | Engage directly via Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, which needs dedicated staff support Identify collaborative training needs and opportunities Support them to identify if and where they fit the World Heritage picture and how they can develop relevant narratives that raise awareness and deepen engagement |
| Stakeholder organisations outside partnership (i.e., Armit Museum, Blackwell, Dove Cottage / Wordsworth Trust) | Some are strongly associated with OUV Promote understanding of OUV as part of remit Maintain / improve visitor income Community engagement | Resources (time, staff) Opportunity | Engage directly, which needs dedicated staff support Identify collaborative training needs and opportunities Identify how their role fits into the picture and how collaboration can promote and deepen engagement and raise awareness |
| Outdoor centre staff (YHA, the Brathay Trust, Field Studies Council) and outdoor guides (a broad group that includes swim and paddleboard instructors) | Maintain tourism income Improve user offer | Understanding - how do we engage | Engage directly, which needs dedicated staff support Identify collaborative training needs and opportunities Support them to identify if and where they fit the World Heritage picture and how they can develop relevant narratives that raise awareness and deepen engagement Train them as interpreters |

Audiences: Visitors

| Audience | Motivations to engage | Barriers to engagement | Implications for interpretation |
|---|--|---|---|
| International visitors (Belgium, France, Germany, India, Italy, South Korea and United States) | Coast and countryside to explore Experiences I can't have anywhere else History and heritage to explore Choosing destinations that are truly committed to preserving natural and cultural heritage ¹ | Language Awareness of offer | Ensure international visitors are able to access WHS information online through accessible, inclusive design Promoting messages digitally via wider stakeholders (i.e. Visit Britain) |
| Domestic visitors (including a more diverse nature of visitors and with mobility issues) | Family time, fresh air / escape, weekend recreation, day trippers (see rows below) Principal motivations are to spend time with family/friends, to be outdoors and to experience the atmospheric and physical characteristics of the area Motivation for visits is increasingly outdoor activity | Time and scheduling Awareness of offer They know what Lake District means to them, but not as a World Heritage Site Visitors are mostly repeat visitors, who 'already know about' the Lake District Cater for first time visitors | Continue to present accessible information via digital and traditional media to meet user needs Continue to deploy visitor management / behaviour messaging at all stages Provide information that promotes experience offers and routes into engagement with OUV at principal touchpoints and the entry / exit points specific to the segment Outdoors and experience motivations are the routes in for most sub-groups |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Fells Crowd'² | 'Confident outdoor users; pretty self sufficient, low spenders, found at remote parking places e.g. Fell walkers on Langdale Pikes' | Populate inaccessible locations Limited opportunities outside connection phase | Promoting via specialist or niche routes Low key infiltration via map booklets, specialist fells-users' booklets distributed via outdoors shops. Radio/podcasts, user group websites, |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Foothills Explorers' | 'Peak holiday/weekend visitors; pretty self sufficient but will mix activities; generally avoid peak tourist spots e.g. Half day walk Cat Bells.' | Awareness of offer | Promoting at car parks, cafes / pubs, toilets, visitor centres Low key infiltration via leaflets / trail leaflets, guidebooks |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Lakeside Amblers' | 'Entry level countryside users; could be mixed age group; like to feel catered for; 2 - 3 miles are a good walk e.g. round the tarn walk at Tarn Hows' | Awareness of offer | Promoting at car parks, cafes / pubs, toilets, visitor centres Low key infiltration via guidebooks |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Rovers and Sightseers' | 'Have come for views, visits and photos; don't look prepared for the countryside; wet weather alternative is important; like iconic views e.g. Tour of Lakeland passes, Aira Force' | Awareness of offer | Engage via the tour operators (especially coach companies) Low key infiltration via traditional media at visitor centres |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Shoppers and Attraction Seekers' | 'Aspirational outdoor users; seeking out the crowds. Will be found around Windermere, on Lake cruises, World of Beatrix Potter, visiting some Trust properties such as Wray Castle etc. May feel intimidated by those they view as 'real' outdoors people' | Awareness of offer A 'lot of this group are day visitors' | Traditional media at visitor centres and attractions Engage via businesses who have bought in to the messaging |
| Visiting Education Groups | Learning outside the classroom Getting young people to experience the outdoors | Awareness of offer Time committed in advance to a specific programme | WH is a strong offer for this group Engage via the existing experience providers |

¹ National Trust 2013, *One Lakes Visitor Experience Plan*

² Visit Britain 2022, *Motivations, Influences, Decisions and Sustainability in a Post-Pandemic Era*

Appendix 5: Interpretation Challenges and Opportunities



Challenges

The principal challenges in this operating environment are:

- **Complex Stakeholder Environment** - there are numerous partners and organisations outside the Partnership with differing levels of engagement.
- **Limited resources** - there is presently no dedicated funding or skilled staff for interpretation, and sources of funding are scarce, although Interpretation is being carried out by individual organisations.
- **Low Awareness** - Awareness of UNESCO, World Heritage status, the significance of the World Heritage Sites, or the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is low. The long history of the Lake District as a National Park prior to World Heritage designation may also generate confusion.
- **Complexity of Designations:** variable communication from a wide range of stakeholders leads to confusion about World Heritage status. It is not always clear to visitors and residents that they are in a World Heritage Site or what this should mean.
- **Visitor pressure** - the large numbers of visitors, especially at peak times, can contribute to issues that impact on people's ability to experience the OUV.
- **Difficulty engaging audiences** - many visitors and residents have low engagement with the current interpretation offer. This is mostly because the technical WHS/OUV messages don't connect with audiences without considerable mediation.
- **Diverse audiences** - ideally interpretation will focus on target audiences and behaviour. In a large property like this, the identity of target audiences - especially among the large numbers of visitors - will vary according to the specific situation.
- **Low community engagement** - local communities tend to engage but not consciously or explicitly with WHS status, with OUV and the benefits.
- **Highly competitive conservation needs** - the partners are responsible for a difficult balancing act reconciling tourism, conservation, and community needs in a much wider political environment.



Opportunities

Based on our analysis of the present set of conditions, there are opportunities here to:

- **Work with more stakeholders** - some organisations in the property already deliver interpretation, and they are keen to collaborate.
- **Develop interpretation skills** - stakeholders are keen to deliver interpretation themselves, and a WHS interpretation training programme would support this. Some stakeholders have visitor-facing staff and access to audience information.
- **Participate in current training initiatives** - exploring UNESCO / Interpret Europe schemes that promote best practice and support networks.
- **Use existing resources and frameworks** - to work more closely with local communities who are already engaged through dedicated liaison officers, community liaison organisations, regular events, existing partnerships with Parish Councils and other informal structures comprising local residents.
- **Enhance the value and benefit of WHS status** - communities need to be empowered and gain greater understanding of WHS through co-creation of projects that explore and present their stories.
- **Develop people-led interpretation** - to tie in with existing heritage-related events and experiences, building on the existing visitor facing staff capacity at some key sites, and the audience appetite for experiences facilitated with people rather than information boards.
- **Engage large numbers of people** - deployment of appropriate interpretive media can improve understanding of - and deepen audience engagement with - WHS status, OUV and conservation, and influence behaviour among visitors, stakeholders and local communities.
- **Build on the existing brand** - good progress was made pre-COVID on the existing toolkit/s and the experience of using this to engage stakeholders.
- **Access funding** - New funding streams actively support public understanding of heritage landscapes, capacity- and skill building, and organisational sustainability.
- **Share best practice** - There is a need to share best practice within the partnership.
- **Use appropriate interpretation to support and sustain OUV** - Good interpretation can support conservation and enhancement of OUV.
- **Show how the Strategy will contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in relation to education (SDG 4)**

Appendix 6: Outstanding Universal Value

why the English Lake District?

Learning for a Lake District guide? Ask a cress!
A Herdwick cress learned to wander miles out, it learned its mother's sense to find food, when to cross a stream, when to take water from the rill. They pass this knowledge on from generation to generation. Every flock class one hill to home, so much so that you cannot move the cresses if you did, they would say with each other, it could not. The cresses have witnessed a thousand years of farming, a long tradition developing between cresses and humans. This deep connection shaped the landscape one field at a time, a working landscape in which it is hard to separate nature from nature, and which has shaped rivers and ponds.



Her presence on the World Heritage List. LAKE DISTRICT and sites to carry their "Outstanding Universal Value" (OUV) levels, the importance of the site, its integrity and the need to protect it for the world, a heritage of natural beauty.

In the case of the Lake District, there were substantial changes:

- Integrity** - how people have shaped the landscape through farming, mining, quarrying and forestry.
- Integrity** - how the landscape in turn has shaped people, shaping their communities, traditions, beliefs and ways of life.
- Integrity** - how the landscape became valued as national heritage, with the Lake District becoming the cradle of public knowledge, conservation, including National Parks and the National Trust.





Brief synthesis

The English Lake District is a self-contained mountainous area in North West England of some 2,292 square kilometres. Its narrow, glaciated valleys radiating from the central massif with their steep hillsides and slender lakes exhibit an extraordinary beauty and harmony. This is the result of the Lake District's continuing distinctive agro-pastoral traditions based on local breeds of sheep including the Herdwick, on common fell-grazing and relatively independent farmers. These traditions have evolved under the influence of the physical constraints of its mountain setting. The stone-walled fields and rugged farm buildings in their spectacular natural backdrop, form an harmonious beauty that has attracted visitors from the 18th century onwards. Picturesque and Romantic interest stimulated globally-significant social and cultural forces to appreciate and protect scenic landscapes. Distinguished villas, gardens and formal landscapes were added to augment its picturesque beauty. The Romantic engagement with the English Lake District generated new ideas about the relationship between humanity and its environment, including

the recognition of harmonious landscape beauty and the validity of emotional response by people to their landscapes. A third key development was the idea that landscape has a value, and that everyone has a right to appreciate and enjoy it. These ideas underpin the global movement of protected areas and the development of recreational experience within them. The development in the English Lake District of the idea of the universal value of scenic landscape, both in itself and in its capacity to nurture and uplift imagination, creativity and spirit, along with threats to the area, led directly to the development of a conservation movement and the establishment of the National Trust movement, which spread to many countries, and contributed to the formation of the modern concept of legally-protected landscapes.

Criterion (ii): The harmonious beauty of the English Lake District is rooted in the vital interaction between an agro-pastoral land use system and the spectacular natural landscape of mountains, valleys and lakes of glacial origins. In the 18th century, the quality of the landscape was recognised and celebrated by the Picturesque

Movement, based on ideas related to both Italian and Northern European styles of landscape painting. These ideas were applied to the English Lake District in the form of villas and designed features intended to further augment its beauty. The Picturesque values of landscape appreciation were subsequently transformed by Romantic engagement with the English Lake District into a deeper and more balanced appreciation of the significance of landscape, local society and place. This inspired the development of a number of powerful ideas and values including a new relationship between humans and landscape based on emotional engagement; the value of the landscape for inspiring and restoring the human spirit; and the universal value of scenic and cultural landscapes, which transcends traditional property rights. In the English Lake District these values led directly to practical conservation initiatives to protect its scenic and cultural qualities and to the development of recreational activities to experience the landscape, all of which continue today. These values and initiatives, including the concept of protected areas, have been widely adopted and have had global impact as an important stimulus for landscape

conservation and enjoyment. Landscape architects in North America were similarly influenced, directly or indirectly, by British practice, including Frederick Law Olmsted, one of the most influential American landscape architects of the 19th century.

Criterion (v): Land use in the English Lake District derives from a long history of agro-pastoralism. This landscape is an unrivalled example of a northern European upland agro-pastoral system based on the rearing of cattle and native breeds of sheep, shaped and adapted for over 1,000 years to its spectacular mountain environment. This land use continues today in the face of social, economic and environmental pressures. From the late 18th century and throughout the 19th century, a new land use developed in parts of the Lake District, designed to augment its beauty through the addition of villas and designed landscapes. Conservation land management in the Lake District developed directly from the early conservation initiatives of the 18th and 19th centuries. The primary aims in the Lake District have traditionally been, and continue to be, to maintain the scenic and harmonious beauty of the

cultural landscape; to support and maintain traditional agro-pastoral farming; and to provide access and opportunities for people to enjoy the special qualities of the area, and have developed in recent times to include enhancement and resilience of the natural environment. Together these surviving attributes of land use form a distinctive cultural landscape which is outstanding in its harmonious beauty, quality, integrity and on-going utility and its demonstration of human interaction with the environment. The English Lake District and its current land use and management exemplify the practical application of the powerful ideas about the value of landscape which originated here and which directly stimulated a landscape conservation movement of global importance.

Criterion (vi): A number of ideas of universal significance are directly and tangibly associated with the English Lake District. These are the recognition of harmonious landscape beauty through the Picturesque Movement; a new relationship between people and landscape built around an emotional response to it, derived initially from Romantic engagement; the idea that

landscape has a value and that everyone has a right to appreciate and enjoy it; and the need to protect and manage landscape, which led to the development of the National Trust movement, which spread across many countries with a similar rights system. All these ideas that have derived from the interaction between people and landscape are manifest in the English Lake District today and many of them have left their physical mark, contributing to the harmonious beauty of a natural landscape modified by: a persisting agro-pastoral system (and supported in many cases by conservation initiatives); villas and Picturesque and later landscape improvements; the extent of, and quality of land management within, the National Trust property; the absence of railways and other modern industrial developments as a result of the success of the conservation movement.

Integrity

The English Lake District World Heritage property is a single, discrete, mountainous area. All the radiating valleys of the English Lake District are

contained within it. The property is of sufficient size to contain all the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value needed to demonstrate the processes that make this a unique and globally-significant property. The boundary of the property is the Lake District National Park boundary as designated in 1951 and is established on the basis of both topographic features and local government boundaries. The attributes of Outstanding Universal Value are in generally good condition. Risks affecting the site include the impact of long-term climate change, economic pressures on the system of traditional agro-pastoral farming, changing schemes for subsidies, and development pressures from tourism. These risks are managed through established systems of land management overseen by members of the Lake District National Park Partnership and through a comprehensive system of development management administered by the National Park Authority.

Authenticity

As an evolving cultural landscape, the English Lake District conveys its Outstanding Universal Value not only through individual attributes but also in the pattern of their distribution amongst the 13 constituent valleys and their combination to produce an over-arching pattern and system of land use. The key attributes relate to a unique natural landscape which has been shaped by a distinctive and persistent system of agro-pastoral agriculture and local industries, with the later overlay of distinguished villas, gardens and formal landscapes influenced by the Picturesque Movement; the resulting harmonious beauty of the landscape; the stimulus of the Lake District for artistic creativity and globally influential ideas about landscape; the early origins and ongoing influence of the tourism industry and outdoor movement; and the physical legacy of the conservation movement that developed to protect the Lake District.¹

¹ From <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/422/> < Reproduced under license CC-BY-SA IGO 3.0 >

Glossary

Cultural landscapes - are The “combined works of nature and humankind” are cultural landscapes. These landscapes are sites that “reveal and sustain the great diversity of the interactions between humans and their environment, protect living traditional cultures and preserve the traces of those who have disappeared” (UNESCO 2024)

ELD WHS - English Lake District World Heritage Site

ICOMOS – International Council on Monuments and Sites. ICOMOS advises the WHS Committee on matters of culture and evaluation of properties.

NLHF – National Lottery Heritage Fund.

OUV - Outstanding Universal Value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole. The Committee defines the criteria for the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List.

State Party – countries which have adhered to the World Heritage Convention.

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

UN's Sustainable Development Goals -17 Goals which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

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Consultees

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