

## **INTERPRETATION STRATEGY AND ACTIONS FOR THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT WORLD HERITAGE SITE**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 In September 2023 UNESCO's World Heritage Committee set out a number of recommendations to the UK Government regarding the English Lake District World Heritage Site. These included the need to prepare an Interpretation Strategy, which is now attached for the committee to note.

<b>Recommendation that a PSV Committee:</b>	<b>a Note the content of the Interpretation Strategy and the Action Plan</b>
	<b>b Agrees to support the delivery of the Action Plan</b>

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 UNESCO's 45<sup>th</sup> World Heritage Committee (September 2023) has requested that the State Party (the UK Government) should prepare an Interpretation Strategy for the English Lake District World Heritage Site and submit it for review by UNESCO advisory bodies.
- 2.2 Heritage Consultants, Minerva Heritage, were engaged and produced a draft document. An Interpretation Strategy project board was created to refine the content which included interpretation experts from some Partnership organisations. This document has been developed with their input and that of the WHS Steering Group.
- 2.3 The Interpretation Strategy is a strategic document which provides a framework for delivery of interpretation. It is intended for use by the Partnership, including the LDNPA, and its delivery partners to explain what makes this World Heritage Site special (its Outstanding Universal Value).
- 2.4 The Strategy explains the wider context for the World Heritage Site interpretation and provides an outline audit of what is already happening in the Lake District, identifies target audiences and sets out the high-level messages that any interpretation should deliver.
- 2.5 A draft was sent to Historic England and forwarded to UNESCO in May 2024 for comment; both organisations are supportive of our approach. There has been targeted consultation with Partners, and other stakeholders, including the Business Task Force and select Parish Councils. The draft Strategy (annex 1) has been amended to incorporate feedback from these parties.

- 2.6 Supporting the Strategy is an Action Plan (annex 2). This is a live document which will be regularly reviewed, setting out proposed actions under a number of themes for short term (1-2 years) and medium term (3-5 years) activity. The Action Plan has been prepared based on current resources and the LDNPA and the Partnership's capacity to deliver.
- 2.7 There is a separate aspirational action plan of activity that we would like to undertake if resources became available, providing a project pipeline for future grant funding and a long-term view.

### **3 POLICY CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The LDNPA has committed, through its Partnership Plan, to develop and deliver a World Heritage Site Interpretation Strategy and Action Plan: WHS action 1 states that we will '*Prepare an interpretation strategy for the English Lake District World Heritage Site in 2024 and commence delivery of the associated action plan.*'
- 3.2 Members will recall that Chair of the World Heritage Site Steering Group provided briefings on progress in developing the Strategy at PSV meetings in 2024.
- 3.3 Input from the Partnership to the Strategy and Action Plan is critical in ensuring that our response to UNESCO celebrates the interpretation we have already undertaken and demonstrates our collective commitment to do more.
- 3.4 The Strategy and Action Plan were agreed by the Partnership at its meeting on 1 April 2025.
- 3.5 The Strategy therefore now represents the Partnership's approach to future interpretation activity with the Action Plan setting out how we will deliver it.

### **4 OPTIONS**

- 4.1 The Partnership, including the LDNPA representatives, agreed the Strategy at its 1 April 2025 Partnership meeting. Members are encouraged to note and support delivery from an LDNPA perspective.
- 4.2 a) Note the content of the Interpretation Strategy and the Action Plan  
b) Agrees to support the delivery of the Action Plan

### **5 PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 The attached Interpretation Strategy and Action Plan is being brought to PSV Committee for awareness and agreement to ensure support for the proposed delivery in response to UNESCO's ask and our Partnership Plan commitment.
- 5.2 Option a), and b) are recommended.
- 5.3 The Interpretation Strategy and Action Plan will next be submitted to UNESCO for review. It is important that we do so before the deadline for papers for the World Heritage Committee in July.

- 5.4 Partners are aware that we have already submitted to UNESCO our State of Conservation report, which includes commentary on the progress of our Interpretation Strategy. This will be considered at the World Heritage Committee in July and the Committee will inform us of its draft recommendations in June. It is possible we may receive feedback on the Interpretation Strategy before that.
- 5.5 UNESCO will review the State of Conservation report at the 47<sup>th</sup> World Heritage Committee in 2025 and will inform us of its draft recommendations in June 2025. It is possible we may have feedback on the Interpretation Strategy before that.
- 5.6 The Interpretation Strategy will be delivered in line with the Action Plan and will require the collaboration of the Partnership members to take forward some of the actions.
- 5.7 We will update the Action Plan as appropriate, so that it remains a live document to respond to available resources and opportunities for additional funding.

**6 DEMONSTRATING BEST VALUE**

- 6.1 a) Challenged – we are challenging ourselves and the Partnership to undertake Interpretation for the World Heritage Site and to ensure the Interpretation Strategy Action Plan is effective and is kept up to date.
- b) Compared – we have compared our approach to other World Heritage Sites.
- c) Consulted – we have consulted multiple Partners and stakeholders. The Interpretation Strategy has been updated based on the feedback from the consultation and costs available for assessing resource requirements. These have been identified by the WHS Steering Group and other external partners.
- d) Compete – not relevant.

**7 FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 We anticipate much of the LDNPA’s contribution to delivery will be in the form of staff time (WHS Coordinator and Communications team), there is the possibility that some future capital contributions may be necessary.

**8 RISKS**

- 8.1 The following risks have been identified:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Controls required</b>
There is a risk that UNESCO may not accept the Strategy and Action Plan as an adequate response to its recommendation	The document may require a further review which will require unplanned resource commitments to address	UNESCO has commented positively on a draft of the Strategy. However, if risk does occur, we will review existing commitments in the Service and Business Plan to allow the review to be

		prioritised.
There is a risk that the Partnership will not have the resources to deliver the actions in the Action Plan	The Action Plan will not be delivered.	We have engaged with the Partners on the development of the Action Plan, including asking them to confirm they can commit to identified actions. If resource availability changes, we will look for alternative methods of delivery or may seek to review the Action Plan in consultation with the State Party.
We do not keep the Action Plan up to date	The Interpretation Actions would not be delivered within the timescales indicated. We may miss external funding opportunities.	Review progress at regular intervals.

**9 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 None identified.

**10 HUMAN RESOURCES**

10.1 The recommendations will have an impact on staff resources within Comms team and World Heritage Site Coordinator.

10.2 Some Partners have agreed to lead on some actions.

**11 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no diversity implications other than that the Interpretation Strategy will help a wider audience of people understand why the English Lake District is a World Heritage Site, and when the actions are delivered, they will need to ensure they further equality, diversity and inclusion when communicating the meaning and importance of the English Lake District.

**11 SUSTAINABILITY**

11.1 The Interpretation Strategy has set out what we are doing for the World Heritage Site to communicate why the English Lake District is special and by doing so promote greater understanding of the property and more responsible/sustainable tourism and opportunities for donations to help deliver this work.

Background Papers	Interpretation Strategy and Action Plan
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