



Lake District National Park

Authority: 17 September 2025
Draft Minutes Subject to Committee Approval

Agenda Item: 2

Lake District National Park Authority

MINUTES of a meeting of the Lake District National Park Authority held at the National Park Office, Murley Moss, Kendal at 10.00 am on 25 June 2025.

Present

Ms J Boak
Mr M F Carter
Mr W Clark
Ms J A Drake
Ms T Hunt MBE
Mr J Jackson
Mr M Kidd
Ms S Lansbury

Ms S Mosner
Mr R Outhwaite
Mr D F Rathbone
Mr C Southward
Mr P Walter
2 vacancies

Apologies

Mr M P Brereton
Mrs S Stolberg

Mr R G Minshaw

No Apologies Received

Mr P Dixon

Mr A Pratt

19/25 Appointment of Chair

In line with the Authority's election process adopted on 24 October 2018, the Chief Executive advised that a sole valid nomination had been received to re-appoint Ms Hunt as Chair, proposed by Mr Jackson and seconded by Mr Carter. The Chief Executive declared Ms Hunt duly elected as Chair of the Authority.

The Chair thanked everyone and expressed appreciation for Member support throughout the last year. She highlighted that following this coming year (her fourth in post), the role of Chair would be available at the Authority AGM in June 2026. She offered to talk with any Member requiring insight into the role of Chair.

Decided: That Ms T Hunt MBE be re-appointed Chair of the Authority for the coming year.

20/25 Appointment of Deputy Chair

In line with the Authority's election process adopted on 24 October 2018, the Chair advised that a sole valid nomination had been received to appoint Mr Jackson as Deputy Chairman, proposed by Mr Kidd and seconded by Mr Walter. The Chair declared Mr Jackson duly elected as Deputy Chair of the Authority.

Decided: That Mr J Jackson be appointed Deputy Chairman of the Authority for the coming year.

21/25 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr G Minshaw, Mr M Brereton, and Ms S Stolberg

The Member Services Coordinator read a message from Ms L Jones-Bulman expressing her thanks to everyone for being so helpful. She highlighted that she had thoroughly enjoyed her time working with Members of the LDNPA and wished them all continued success in the wonderful work they are doing.

The Chair asked for the Authority's thanks to be recorded for Linda and welcomed the two new Members: Mr C Southward from Cumberland Council and Ms J Boak from Westmorland and Furness Council.

22/25 Minutes

Decided: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

23/25 Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced to Members and members of the public that the meeting was being livestreamed and that a digital recording of the meeting would be made.

The Chair then outlined, for new Members, the format of an Authority meeting.

Seeing is Believing Days were highlighted as valuable training opportunities for Members where Lake District National Park projects could be observed firsthand while building relationships with fellow Members and staff and enhancing mutual understanding of roles within the Authority.

The Chair highlighted the success of the Seeing is Believing event in May and drew Members' attention to an upcoming event on 16 July at Orrest Head and Brockhole. Members were also encouraged to join in with the walking events for engagement purposes.

Finally, the Chair explained that there would be two additional items on the Away Hour agenda: an update on the Transport Working Group and an explanation of the Conservation Governance Board.

24/25 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of a registrable interest or disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any of the business of the Committee.

25/25 **Questions**

There were no questions relating to the business of the Authority.

26/25 **Public Participation**

There were no questions, petitions, or depositions of a general nature relating to the business of the Authority.

27/25 **Appointment of Members**

a) **Local Authority Appointees**

Members noted the appointment of Mr Christopher Southward as Cumberland Council representative and the appointment of Ms Jenny Boak as Westmorland and Furness Council representative.

b) **Secretary of State Appointees**

Members noted the update on the appointment of Ms Jacqueline Lancaster, a member of Duddon Parish Council, as the Parish Council representative to fill the vacant South Distinctive Area position. It was explained that ratification was expected by the summer recess.

Members noted the update on the appointment of the two new Secretary of State (National) members. The Chair reported that 54 applications had been received for the two Secretary of State posts that had been advertised, and that, after three days of interviews, the details of several appointable candidates had been forwarded to the Secretary of State for a final decision.

28/25 **Chief Executive's Update**

The CEO provided a verbal update supplementing the written report, focusing on recent developments:

Comprehensive Spending Review & Defra Settlement: The Comprehensive Spending Review has concluded, with Defra receiving a challenging settlement.

The National Park grant remains undefined; efforts are underway to accelerate Defra's business planning to provide earlier clarity for budget setting.

Ministerial Letter from Mary Creagh: A letter from the Minister for Nature highlighted the strategic importance of protected landscapes in achieving

environmental, health, and economic goals. The letter outlined government priorities including nature recovery, climate resilience, and community engagement.

Members noted the absence of references to planning and community functions, interpreting the letter as a directive on strategic priorities.

Upland Farming Pilot Proposal: Work is progressing with Hilary Cottam on a proposed pilot for upland farming reform. The pilot aims to devolve funding and decision-making to local levels, promoting co-produced agri-environment schemes that support nature, cultural heritage, and local traditions.

The Lake District is a potential pilot location, with strong local stakeholder and MP support. The pilot is in early stages, with no fixed timeline. If selected, extensive stakeholder engagement and design work will be required before implementation.

Members expressed optimism about the pilot's potential but acknowledged the complexity and time required for development.

The CEO emphasised the importance of collaborative, bottom-up design to ensure effectiveness and local relevance. The CEO will continue to keep Members informed of progress on the pilot and Defra's planning process.

Decided: Members noted the update on key topics since the last meeting.

29/25 National Parks England

The Chair of the Authority presented the minutes of the Board meeting held on 29 January 2025.

Ms Mosner shared a positive experience with the North York Moors National Park Partnership with a commercial application that provides vetted walking routes and downloadable OS-equivalent maps, offering user-friendly access to safe, quality-assured walks.

Ms Mosner suggested exploring a unified approach across all national parks to enhance visitor experience and consistency.

The CEO confirmed ongoing discussions with Ordnance Survey (OS) regarding a similar initiative, particularly focusing on "Miles Without Stiles" routes. He agreed to follow up with North York Moors to assess the benefits of working with alternative providers.

The importance of a consistent national system was emphasised to avoid user confusion and improve accessibility.

It was proposed that the CEO raise the topic at the next National Parks England (NPE) Chief Executives meeting to explore collective action.

National Parks England (NPE) was briefly introduced for new members as the coordinating body for all 10 English National Parks. It was explained that NPE plays a key role in representing National Parks collectively, especially in dealings with Defra and that the Authority contributes a small annual subscription to NPE.

Decided: Members noted the minutes of the National Parks England meeting held on 29 January 2025.

30/25 Lake District National Park Partnership

Mr Carter presented the minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2025.

Decided: Members noted the minutes of the Lake District National Park Partnership meeting held on 1 April 2025.

31/25 Minutes of Committees

The Minutes of the meetings of the following Committees were laid separately before the meeting and in respect of each Committee it was agreed that the Minutes should be approved and recommendations relating to the functions not delegated to a Committee should be confirmed.

a) Resources Committee

Mr Jackson presented the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2025;

The Resources Committee Chair noted the very positive paper on engagement. He drew Members' attention to the excellent report from the Head of People and Organisational Development on volunteering and noted that volunteering had moved forward significantly over the last 12 months under the guidance of that team. In this respect Members were encouraged to join the Seeing is Believing event on 16 July 2025.

b) Park Strategy and Vision Committee

Mr Carter presented the minutes of the meetings held on 4 February 2025 and 23 April 2025;

c) Governance Committee

Ms Drake presented the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2025;

d) Development Control Committee

Mr Kidd presented the minutes of the meetings held on 5 March 2025, 2 April 2025, and 7 May 2025.

There had been a range of applications, and the Chair of the Development Control Committee thanked Committee Members for their involvement,

e) Rights of Way Committee

Ms Mosner presented the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2024.

The Chair of the Authority expressed her appreciation to Members for all of their work in Committees and the support given to the Authority through their work.

32/25 Members Representation on Outside Bodies and Partnerships

There were no verbal updates from Members on meetings attended as the Authority's representative.

33/25 Appointment of Members to Serve on Committees

The Chair presented the report inviting Members to appoint Members to serve on its Committees from 1 July 2025 until 30 June 2026. It was noted that this would need further consideration at the September Authority meeting in the light of new Secretary of State appointments.

Decided: Members agreed to the appointment to Standing Committees, serving from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

34/25 Appointments to Outside Bodies and Partnerships and to the Authority's Commercial Strategy Board

The Chair presented the report requesting the appointment of Members to represent the Authority at meetings of various other organisations (Outside Bodies and Partnerships), and to the internal Commercial Strategy Board.

Clarification was provided for new Members regarding the roles and responsibilities of each group.

Mr Carter was removed as a member of the Volunteer Leadership Team and Mr Walter was appointed in his place. It was noted that he would bring valuable experience as a practising volunteer.

Regarding representation on the Partnership Board, Ms Mosner proposed that the Chair of the Park Strategy and Vision (PS&V) Committee be added due to their role in developing the next Partnership Plan. It was clarified that the PS&V Chair already holds a seat via their role as Chair of the Plan Coordination Group. Members agreed that current representation is sufficient and aligns with partnership expectations.

The Authority Solicitor proposed the creation of a Conservation Covenants Board to oversee decision-making related to Conservation Covenant agreements under biodiversity net gain legislation. The Authority is one of 30 designated Responsible Bodies. The Board would handle high-risk decisions, including enforcement actions, with lower-risk matters delegated to Officers.

Proposed membership included the Chairs or Deputy Chairs of the following committees: Development Control, Resources, Park Strategy & Vision, and Governance. The Board would be added to the Appendix 2 (Authority Representation to Outside Bodies and Partnerships), with formal terms of reference to be developed.

Concerns were raised by Members regarding time commitments and potential overlap with existing Committees. The CEO clarified that the Board would be set up as a Task Finish working group under the constitution and thus be able to meet online. It would have decision-making powers, unlike the Commercial Strategy Board, but would report all decisions made to Authority on a quarterly basis.

Due to time sensitivity, the CEO was granted urgency powers to make decisions on Conservation Covenants before September, with consultation from the Chairs of the four relevant Committees. The Authority Solicitor will work with Committee Chairs over the summer to draft terms of reference and governance arrangements for the proposed Board. The full proposal will be brought to Members for discussion at the next Authority meeting in September as part of the proposed revised Scheme of Delegation.

Members proposed a formal review of the Board's effectiveness after six months or six meetings.

Decided:

- a. Members agreed the composition of appointments to Outside Bodies and Partnerships as set out in Annex 1 of the covering report;
- b. Members agreed the appointment of representatives of the Authority to the Outside Bodies and Partnerships and the Commercial Strategy Board as set out in Annexes 1 and 2; and
- c. Members agreed attendance at meetings of the Outside Bodies and Partnerships and the Commercial Strategy Board be an approved duty for the purpose of the payment of travelling and subsistence allowances.
- d. Members agreed to delegate use of urgency powers to the CEO regarding the Authority's work as Responsible Body for any Conservation Covenants arising before September's Authority meeting, subject to consultation with

the Chairs of DCC, PS&V, Resources, Governance and the Authority
Solicitor.

(The meeting concluded at 11:12)