

The Lake District's Partnership Plan 2026-2031

A Joint Management Plan for the Lake District National Park and English
Lake District World Heritage Site

Version 1.8

From the Chair of the Partnership

If you are reading this, it is quite likely that you already think that the Lake District is one of the most exceptional of places. It is. Staggeringly beautiful, an amazing combination of geology, geography, history, culture, people and nature. Every valley, mountain and lake, every town, village and hamlet special. Home for some, work for many, and for all a place of refreshment and rest, excitement and challenge. And in recognition of its precious nature and universal value both a national park, and world heritage site.

There are organisations and people who have responsibilities, of many different kinds, for caring for this marvellous place. They want the Lake District to thrive, benefiting nature, adapting to our changing climate, supporting the people and communities within it, and those who work and visit here. Many of these organisations form the Lake District National Park Partnership. This Partnership develops, every five years, a management plan for the Lake District that sets out our vision and ambitions for the Park, and how we will deliver to this.

The starting point is our shared vision for the Lake District in 2051, when it will have been a national park for a century.

That the Lake District is deeply valued by the nation, as a thriving, working landscape, which is nature and heritage rich, climate resilient and socially and economically vibrant.

This vision is supported by some big, challenging ambitions. To deliver these will take us all, not just the Partnership, but you, the reader, businesses and communities in the Lake District, Cumbria and nationally, charities, government local and national, as well as international bodies. The Lake District deserves our care, our engagement. The Partnership plan, here presented for public consultation, is one element of this.

Welcome to the public consultation on the Lake District National Park Partnership Plan.

Dr Celia Caulcott



Photo credit: Milton Haworth

Consultation Draft

1. This is a draft Partnership Management Plan (hereafter the 'Partnership Plan' or 'the Plan') for the Lake District (2026-2031) for public consultation.
2. When we refer to the 'Lake District' throughout this document we are referencing both the Lake District as a national park and as a World Heritage Site (known as the English Lake District World Heritage Site).
3. The Partnership Plan sets out the overarching five-year strategy for the management of the National Park and World Heritage Site. It is a plan designed to shape the future of your Lake District.
4. Views on the draft Plan are invited by **xxxxxxx** and can be given via our online survey.
5. Views are invited on a new vision and long-term ambitions for the Lake District (to 2051) and on our five-year objectives and targets in the draft Plan (2026-2031).
6. For further information, the survey link and alternative ways to respond please visit our scan the QR code or visit our webpage at:
<https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/caringfor/lake-district-national-park-partnership/have-your-say-on-lake-district-national-parks-partnership-management-plan>
[insert QR code]
7. If you require this draft Plan in an alternative format, would like to request a printed copy of the survey, or have any queries on the consultation, please contact PartnershipPlan@lakedistrict.gov.uk

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Executive Summary

This document is the consultation draft for the Partnership Plan for the Lake District, a joint management plan for both the Lake District National Park and English Lake District World Heritage Site for 2026-2031. The Plan has been drafted by the Lake District National Park Partnership which is committed to looking after and enhancing this very special place.

The Partnership's Vision for the Lake District in 2051 - when the national park will be 100 years old and the world heritage site will be 34 - as well as our nine long-term ambitions can be found at paragraphs 74 to 77 (on pages 25 and 26). What we intend to deliver over the next five years can be found at paragraphs 78 to 82 (pages 26 to 35).

Whether you live here, work here or visit we would like to hear from you on our draft plan. Please respond to the consultation and have your say.

What is the Lake District?

1. The Lake District is England's largest national park and largest World Heritage Site, a distinctive and special place on both a national and global stage. Located at the heart of Cumbria, in the north-west of England, it covers 912 square miles of stunning landscape. Renowned for its varied and beautiful mountains, fells, valleys, lakes and coastline, it has been shaped by generations of people over many thousands of years and continues to be a thriving living-working landscape. This landscape has, in turn, shaped the distinctive culture and traditions of the Lake District.

Human occupation of the Lake District

The earliest known archaeological site in the Lake District is a cave site near Lindale (in the south of the national park) dating to the late Upper Palaeolithic period (Old Stone Age) when the ice sheets retreated after 12,000 BC. Flint finds from the cave, including a blade, complement other evidence of human occupation in the Morecambe Bay area. Humans have been occupying and shaping the Lake District landscape ever since.

Why is the Lake District special?

2. The Lake District is a truly special place. A dramatic landscape of narrow valleys, steep mountains and fells and beautiful lakes. Humans have lived and worked here for millennia, shaping this landscape and being shaped by it in return. It is place which has long been farmed and where its natural resources have been exploited through mining and quarrying. Local stone, slate and timber have made its buildings and settlements, creating distinctive places to live, work and visit. Long a place of inspiration for artists, poets and writers and visited for centuries, it continues to inspire people today whether enjoying its splendour on land or on water.
3. The Lake District is home to Scafell Pike, England's highest mountain, Wastwater, England's deepest lake and Windermere, England's longest lake. It is the birthplace of the world's conservation movement and the National Trust, and is renowned for its wildlife and habitats, hill farming, and local traditions. All of these factors, and many, many more, make the Lake District a stunning and unforgettable landscape:

[Insert infographic from designer: key Lake District facts]

4. In recognition of its exceptional character, the Lake District is protected as both a national park and a world heritage site, signifying its importance to the nation and the global community. We care about this very special place and want to look after it for its own sake and for the benefit of future generations.

A World Heritage Site

World Heritage facts

- The UNESCO's 1972 [World Heritage Convention](#) identifies, preserves and promotes cultural and natural sites of global significance and protects them for future generations.
- The UK Government ratified the Convention in 1984 and joined an international community committed to protecting and preserving the world's natural and cultural heritage.
- The Convention resulted in the World Heritage List, inscription on which is an acknowledgment of significance at the very highest level. This significance is known as Outstanding Universal Value.
- There are 1,248 World Heritage Sites; 35 in the UK and its territories (as of September 2025).

5. In 2017 the English Lake District was recognised by UNESCO for its international significance and became a cultural world heritage site, identified as a cultural landscape for the combined works of nature and humankind.
6. Articles 4 and 5 of the [World Heritage Convention](#) set out the UK Government's key obligations under the Convention:
 - Article 4:** '...ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage...'
 - Article 5:** To ensure that effective and active measures are taken for the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage...'
7. The UNESCO [World Heritage Committee](#) (the main body in charge of the implementation of the Convention), has produced [Operational Guidelines](#) setting out procedures for the protection and conservation of world heritage properties, as well as the process for the designation of sites, international assistance and

national and international support. [The Operational Guidelines](#) set out how UNESCO considers the Convention should be implemented in practice.

8. The [Statement of Outstanding Universal Value](#) adopted by UNESCO explains why it is so significant globally.
9. The Operational Guidelines refer to the 'attributes' of a world heritage site, which express the Outstanding Universal Value. The Partnership has identified nine attributes, and has summarised these as: extraordinary beauty and harmony; the agro-pastoral system; local industries; towns and settlements; early tourism; villas, gardens and formal landscapes; sites and collections associated with the Picturesque¹ and Romanticism²; landscape conservation, and the ability of people to experience the spirit and feeling of the Lake District (see also [Appendix 4](#)). The attributes explain why the site is so significant globally and what makes it so special.

Insert infographic

10. From the Statement of Outstanding Universal three intertwining and interdependent themes have also been identified which summarise and encompass all of the World Heritage Site's attributes:

- **Theme 1:** A landscape of exceptional beauty, shaped by persistent and distinctive agro-pastoral traditions and local industry which gives it special character.
- **Theme 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.
- **Theme 3:** A landscape which has been the catalyst for key developments in the national and international protection of landscapes.

Insert infographic

11. The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value can be read in full in [Appendix 4](#).

¹ The term 'Picturesque' emerged in the late eighteenth century to describe a type of landscape that has artistic appeal given both its beauty and wildness, as seen for instance in landscape painting, literature and fashionable landscape gardening.

² Romanticism was an artistic and intellectual movement that took place in the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries. Emotional sensitivity, imagination and responses to nature are key components of Romanticism which are embodied in the works of, for instance, the Romantic poets Wordsworth, Shelley and Byron, and artists Turner and Constable.

A National Park

National Park facts:

- The poet Wordsworth is considered to be one of the first supporters of national parks, when he wrote in the early nineteenth century that the Lake District was a 'sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy'.
- A movement to allow a greater right-to-roam followed in the 1930s but it was in the early years after the Second World War that the concept of national parks became particularly important as the country recovered from the impact of war and began building a better future for the nation as part of its post-war reconstruction.
- This led to the passing of a 1949 Act of Parliament to establish national parks to conserve and enhance their natural beauty and provide recreational opportunities for the public.
- The Lake District was the second to be designated, after the Peak District National Park.
- There are 15 national parks in the UK, 10 in England.

12. The Lake District was designated as a national park in 1951, given its significance as a landscape of exceptional beauty to the nation.

13. National parks have two purposes set out in law. Public bodies have a duty to further the statutory purposes of being a protected landscape to keep the Lake District special:

- **Purpose 1:** to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- **Purpose 2:** to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Special Qualities of the National Park by the public.

14. The Government also places a corresponding social and economic duty upon national park authorities themselves, to be considered when delivering the two purposes. This arrangement is designed to ensure a high degree of mutual cooperation, avoiding the risk either that the needs of national park residents and businesses will be ignored, or that others will ignore its designation when undertaking activities:

The Lake District National Park Authority's Duty: To seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park in pursuit of our purposes.

15. Each national park has a series of Special Qualities which set out what makes it special as a national park; the distinctive characteristics which distinguish it from other national parks and areas of the country. The Lake District has 13 of these, summarising a range of features which include: its geology; a wealth of habitats and wildlife creating a special natural environment; the distinctive character of its buildings and settlements that create a sense of place; rich archaeology; characteristic farming systems and a long history of tourism, among others (see also [Appendix 2](#)). All of these Special Qualities combine to create a landscape of remarkable beauty and individual character that is valued by the nation.

[insert Special Qualities infographic]

Dual designation

16. These dual landscape designations make the Lake District unique, celebrated on both a national and global stage for its stunning landscapes and natural and cultural heritage, with the park's lakes and mountains being central to its identity.
17. Vital opportunities for outdoor recreation are provided, contributing to the health and wellbeing of both residents and visitors, and supporting local communities and businesses who are critical to ensuring the future of this living-working landscape.
18. By maintaining and enhancing the National Park and World Heritage Site the natural beauty and heritage of the Lake District will continue to be a thriving living-working landscape that offers huge benefits for present and future generations.

[insert SQs and attributes infographic]

Boundaries and Ownership

19. The boundaries of the National Park and World Heritage Site are different. The World Heritage Site boundary is the same as that for the National Park as it was originally designated in 1951, covering 885 square miles (2,292 km²). This close correlation helps the management of one designation support the designation of the other.

20. In 2016 the National Park was extended to the east by a further 167 square miles (433 km²). This included two additional areas: all of the Borrowdale Valley near Shap, as well as land to the south-west of Kendal, including Brigsteer and Sizergh Castle. This gives a total size for the National Park of 912 square miles (2,362 km²).

21. A number of public, private and charitable organisations own significant landholdings in the Lake District. Examples include: the National Trust (at approximately 20% of the National Park); United Utilities (8%); Forestry England, as the guardian of the nation's forests (5%), the Lake District National Park Authority (3.2%) and Cumbria Wildlife Trust (1%). All of these organisations are Partners in the Lake District National Park Partnership. However, most of the land is in private ownership (approximately 63%).

What is the Lake District National Park Partnership?

22. We established the Lake District National Park Partnership in 2006. With an independent Chair. It is now a collaboration of 24 Partners from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors with the shared goal to look after and enhance the Lake District.

Our Partner organisations are:



[We are awaiting the logo from our newest Partner – Enterprising Cumbria – which will be added before consultation]

What does the Partnership do?

23. The Partnership works together to look after and improve the Lake District across a wide range of topics which impact or could impact the future of the area.
24. One of the main ways that we do this is through collectively writing, and then delivering, a Partnership Plan for the Lake District, setting out how we will respond to the challenges and opportunities that the area faces over a five-year period, while also looking ahead to the future and setting a vision and ambitions for how we would like the future Lake District to be. For this Plan we are looking ahead to 2051 when the National Park will be 100 years old and the World Heritage Site will be 34 years old.
25. Our collaborative approach ensures that much more can be achieved in looking after this very special place together, sharing expertise across organisations and sectors to co-deliver projects, collaboratively fund-raising and advocating for the Lake District at a local, regional, national and international level. Our combined resources allow us to look for opportunities at scale while together tackling some of the more challenging issues facing the Lake District.
26. We have delivered some great successes over the past five years with the latest examples set out in our Annual Report for 2023-24: [Partnership Annual Report : Lake District National Park](#). (The Annual Report for 2024-25 is in production.) Partnership Annual Reports are published [online](#) and outline progress toward the goals set in the 2020-25 Partnership Plan. The 2024-25 report will provide a summary of achievements and developments made over the entire five-year period, informing the development of this Partnership Plan.
27. Many of these successes have been achieved in partnership with the farmers and land managers of the Lake District as well as numerous other key delivery partners.
28. We recognise that we need to work collaboratively to co-design projects and solutions on the ground that provides multiple benefits and are rooted in local knowledge and communities.

What is the Partnership Plan for?

29. This Plan is for everyone who has an interest in or cares about the Lake District. It provides the framework for how the Lake District, as both a national park and world heritage site, will be managed. It sets out how we will together look after this very special place, now and for the future.

30. Effective management will take into account the needs of this exceptional landscape, its residents and visitors.

About the Plan

31. This ambitious Partnership Plan sets out how Partners will collectively work together to tackle the most important challenges and opportunities in the area over the five-year life of the Plan (2026-2031).

32. All world heritage sites must have robust protection and a management framework to support the conservation of the site and safeguard its future. The Partnership Plan guides day-to-day management and decision making for the English Lake District World Heritage Site, explaining how we will address recommendations from UNESCO and providing a longer-term strategic framework.

33. National Park authorities are also required to develop and monitor delivery of a management plan for the landscape that they oversee. The Partnership Plan does this for the Lake District National Park and is the most important strategic document for the management of the park.

34. In the Lake District we have combined - since 2015 - both plans into a single Partnership Plan, providing a statutory plan for both the National Park and World Heritage Site.

35. The 2015-2020 Plan explained the rationale for this, which was a conscious decision by the Lake District National Park Authority and the Lake District National Park Partnership, combining responsibilities for the management of both the National Park and the World Heritage Site into one strategic plan. (See the rationale for this in full here: [5.0-Protection-and-Management-of-the-Property.pdf](#)).

36. A 'one-plan' approach is easier for residents, businesses and other stakeholders to understand and engage with. It allows the Partnership to work with others to manage the Lake District as a coherent entity, rather than through two separate management plans.

37. The joint plan ensures that the Lake District is managed holistically and strategically for both the National Park and World Heritage Site designations. It ensures that the National Park's Special Qualities and World Heritage Site Attributes of Outstanding Universal Value – with many commonalities between the two - are conserved and enhanced together.

38. This Plan:

- Sets out the Vision and overarching strategy for managing the Lake District to 2051;
- Delivers holistic management for both national park and world heritage site designations;
- Delivers the requirements of the World Heritage Committee, and the State Party, that every world heritage site should have a management plan to protect its Outstanding Universal Value;
- Guides the work of all public bodies and other partners to deliver the purposes of the National Park; and obligations under the [World Heritage Convention](#) (1972);
- Delivers requirements under the [European Landscape Convention - Council of Europe Landscape Convention](#) (2000);
- Supports the Council of Europe's [Environment Strategy](#) (2025)
- Supports the delivery of other national strategies, policies and plans including, but not limited to, the [Government's Plan for Change](#) that includes a mission to [Kickstart Economic Growth](#), Environmental Improvement Plan and 30 x 30 targets for nature recovery set out in the [Lake District National Park Nature Recovery Plan](#);
- At a county level, helps to deliver the [Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#), the Lake District National Park Partnership's [Climate Change Risk Adaptation Report](#), the Cumbria [Going for Growth Economic Strategy](#) and the Cumbria [Destination Management Plan](#);
- Provides the strategic context for the [Local Development Plan](#) (planning policies);
- Drives and monitors delivery of the Government's [Protected Landscape Targets and Outcomes Framework](#) against the targets set for delivery in the Lake District;
- Supports the UK Government in addressing the World Heritage Committee's recommendations;
- Helps to deliver Partners' statutory obligations and provides a strategic direction for organisational business plans.

39. As a partnership, we seek to look after and continually improve and evolve the Lake District through positive management. We recognise that there will always be new projects, programmes or proposals that will emerge that we need to respond to. This Plan therefore does not seek to provide all the answers to deliver our long-term ambitions or our objectives for the next five years, but it does identify key priorities that move the Lake District in the direction of achieving our new Vision. Our two-year Action Plan sets us on this path and provides us with the agility to respond to unforeseen changes in circumstances, as well as to opportunities.
40. The new Vision for the Lake District includes the ambition that it will be deeply valued by the nation. This intention is to ensure the Lake District benefits all sectors of society and that it plays a key role in contributing to the nation's priorities and ambitions.

Sustainable Development as a catalyst for growth

41. This Plan helps to deliver, through its Vision, Ambitions and Objectives, the United Nations' [Sustainable Development](#) goals, particularly goals 3 (good health and well-being), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequalities), 11 (sustainable cities and communities), 13 (climate action) and 15 (life on land).
42. The Lake District embraces sustainable development as a catalyst for growth and will contribute to Cumbria's '*Going for Growth Economic Strategy*' by:
- Securing natural capital through water supply to the north-west region;
 - Providing public health benefits to the nation, region and county;
 - Delivery of 30 x 30 protection and management of land and sea for nature (30% of the country managed for nature by 2030) and carbon Net Zero ambitions; and
 - Supporting a sustainable economy, regenerative tourism and brand Cumbria through the Lake District's landscape and cultural heritage.

Why this Plan is important and our commitment to how it is delivered

43. This Partnership Plan is the heart of collaboration between Partners ensuring collective action towards the vision, ambition and objectives for the Lake District. The Partnership operates through a collaborative decision-making framework to ensure every Partner has a say in shaping how the Lake District is cared for and that all decisions contribute to the shared outcomes of the Partnership Plan.
44. Delivery of the Partnership Plan is driven through joint projects, shared funding bids and coordinated programmes all aligned to the Vision: the combined knowledge and capacity of the Partnership helps leverage resources and funding to drive delivery of the Plan.
45. Today, more than ever before, we feel that how the Partnership delivers this Plan will be fundamental to its success. In achieving our Vision, the ambitions and objectives, the Partnership is committed to working alongside our communities to address the global, national and local challenges that face us here in the Lake District.
46. Effective management of the Lake District takes account of the National Park purposes and Special Qualities and the conservation of its Outstanding Universal Value as a world heritage site, and therefore delivery must be designed with sensitivity to meet this range of needs.
47. In practice, this means securing multiple benefits (such as for nature recovery and for cultural heritage, or access for all and vibrant communities). The Partnership will take a bottom-up approach, delivering for the nation and co-designing with local communities. It will also seek to collaborate more widely and be open and transparent about what we are trying to achieve.
48. Over the first year of this Plan's lifetime, the Partnership intends to shape this commitment into a set of delivery principles to further mature our Partnership and increase the depth and reach of our delivery.

How has the Partnership Plan been developed?

49. The Partnership Plan has been prepared by the Partners, in consultation with other organisations and the public interested in the Lake District's present and future.
50. The Plan is grounded in and informed by a sound understanding of both the Lake District's Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.
51. The Partnership has taken an evidence-based approach, starting by preparing seven evidence papers (see [Appendix 13](#) or [supporting documents](#)) as well as a review of the conclusions from the National Park's State of the Park Report and the 2023 Periodic Reporting Questionnaire³ and State of Conservation reports for the World Heritage Site. Together these have given Partners a robust understanding of the current key challenges and opportunities across a number of important topics, allowing the drafting of a Plan to respond to these as a Partnership.
52. The Plan is based on engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. We have focused particularly on voices that are less often heard, including young people as the future guardians of this special place.
53. The Plan takes account of international, national and local policy requirements ([Appendix 8](#)), including an assessment against the World Heritage Site attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) (see [Appendix 3](#)) and delivering against the [Protected Landscape Targets and Outcomes Framework](#) (PLTOF) which establishes targets for all national parks and national landscapes.
54. The effect of the Plan on social, environmental and economic objectives has been tested through [a Strategic Environmental Assessment](#), and the effects on internationally designated sites for nature have been considered through a [Habitats Regulation Assessment](#). An [Equality Impact Assessment](#) has also been undertaken.

³ 'Periodic Report' is used throughout the Plan as a shorthand for the World Heritage Site Periodic reporting questionnaire which has to be completed for all world heritage sites approximately every eight years or so. The process is further explained in the [Monitoring section](#) and at [Appendix 5](#)

Challenges and Opportunities

55. Globally, we are facing twin crises of the climate emergency and nature loss.

Both crises are happening now in the Lake District. In fact, many of the impacts are being felt even more deeply and obviously here, so it is not enough to simply do what we have always done if the Lake District is to continue to be a special and distinctive living-working landscape for the nation and globally.

56. The challenges facing this living, ever-changing landscape are significant and many are completely outside of our control. The Partnership is committed to understanding these issues and the impact they are having, or may have, on the Lake District, so that we can respond, adapt and take action to secure a positive future: the Plan is one of the primary tools for addressing these challenges and opportunities.

57. The development of this Plan was informed by evidence which has examined the challenges and opportunities affecting the Lake District. These seven evidence papers are available (see [Appendix 13](#)) and cover:

- Climate Action
- Historic Environment and Cultural Landscape
- Farming
- A Lake District for the Nation
- Nature and Land Management
- Communities and Economy
- Transport

58. The evidence papers are also supported by the following reports:

- [State of the Park Report](#) (2023)
- State of Conservation Report (2024)
<https://whc.unesco.org/document/218382>
- Periodic Reporting Questionnaire (2023)
<https://whc.unesco.org/document/218045>

59. The evidence base identifies the following main challenges and opportunities:

State of Conservation

60. The World Heritage Committee has made a number of recommendations for the improved management of the World Heritage Site, both at the time of designation in 2017 and subsequently. These include action on the use of unsealed roads, addressing water pollution, securing hefting and commoning, planning matters (managed through the Local Plan), natural flood management, housing and transport. Our proposed actions as a Partnership to address these challenges are incorporated in our Ambitions and Objectives, with specific actions for the first two years of the Plan's delivery set out in our Action Plan. In responding to UNESCO's recommendations, we will report on progress in these areas through Periodic Reporting and by inputting to any State of Conservation Reports requested of the UK Government. We will provide a sound understanding of the challenges and threats that affect, or could potentially affect, the World Heritage Site and its attributes (what makes it significant; see [Plan Monitoring](#) section and [Appendix 3, 9 and 15](#)).

Climate change

61. The Lake District faces major climate challenges, including rising temperatures and extremely variable weather patterns which threatens the cultural landscape, wildlife, infrastructure and communities living in the Lake District. In response, efforts are underway across the National Park to support Cumbria's goal of becoming a zero-carbon county by 2037. There are several opportunities for both climate mitigation and adaptation including peatland restoration and woodland creation, which can store carbon. Improving energy efficiency in buildings and reducing car use through the provision of better, greener public transport while encouraging active travel can help lower emissions and are key decarbonisation strategies. Sustainable land management practices and nature-based solutions can enhance resilience to climate change and future predictions of increased rainfall and frequency of drought.

Nature recovery

62. Habitats and species are being lost at an unprecedented rate due to habitat degradation, poor management, pollution, and the impacts of invasive, non-native species. The Government has set ambitious targets for nature recovery, and

national parks and other protected landscapes want, and need, to lead the way. The development of the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy provides real opportunities to bring farmers, land managers and Partners together around landscape-scale nature recovery ambitions, guiding efforts to reverse biodiversity decline. Farming-led nature recovery has substantial potential in the Lake District alongside alternative forms of land use, where suitable, including increased woodland cover and peatland restoration. Developing blended finance approaches⁴ is an opportunity to fund nature recovery and offers farmers new ways to earn income. To support efforts, it is important to collect more data in a consistent way and involve local people - including through citizen science - to improve understanding of the current condition of habitats and species, and the impact of conservation efforts over time.

Economy and funding

63. A thriving rural economy underpins the ability to be able to deliver for nature, climate and people. The rural economy and communities in the Lake District are impacted by labour supply constraints, low labour productivity and acute skills shortages. Economic uncertainty, and cuts to funding at a national and regional scale, is affecting the resourcing for delivery of the Partnership Plan. Devolution presents an opportunity to take greater control over Cumbria's ambition to deliver the national growth agenda, enabling localised decision-making to drive investment, unlock potential, and empower communities, whilst ensuring the rural voice is considered and prioritised within any new strategic mayoral combined authority. The Lake District embraces sustainable development as a catalyst for growth and will contribute to Cumbria's '*Going for Growth Economic Strategy 2025-2045*', which includes tackling the productivity gap, enabling Cumbria to compete nationally in key sectors.

Farming and land management

64. Farming is continuing to experience its biggest changes in decades, with changes to farming economics and pressures on farmers and land managers to deliver more – more food production, more for nature and more for the climate. In the Lake District, farming is the main land use, covering 63% of the National Park. The drive towards payment for public goods and schemes recognising the importance of cultural landscapes, such as the Farming in Protected Landscapes grant programme, has provided opportunities for Lake District farmers. However,

⁴ Blended finance approaches for nature recovery would use a mixture of public funding, such as from agri-environment scheme grants with private finance, which could be from philanthropic giving or through schemes that encourage the purchase of environmental credits.

there remains uncertainty regarding the funding that will be available to farmers and land managers through other Government environmental land management schemes in the coming years. Clear and reliable support is essential to help farmers and land managers going forward, in order to deliver nature-friendly farming and keep playing their crucial role in caring for the land, supporting communities, and producing food.

Transport and accessibility

65. How people travel to and around the Lake District could change significantly.

Many residents and visitors are already open to using more sustainable transport⁵ and as a consequence in the future there could be less reliance on private cars. To support this shift, public transport must improve, especially in areas beyond the main travel corridors, to enable residents and visitors to travel car free through the Lake District. Better transport links would also reduce carbon emissions and traffic. Past investments in walking and cycling routes have been shown to encourage people to travel differently. The Lake District's Active Travel Network Plan highlights key routes that could bring economic, environmental, and health benefits. With 1,864 miles of rights of way already available, more investment could make them even more attractive alternatives to car travel. Potential devolution (see 'Policy Changes' section below) could present an opportunity to develop a more holistic and integrated approach to transport across Cumbria.

The next generation, declining population, and housing

66. The Lake District is a special place to live, but its communities are facing demographic challenges that threaten their future. The population is shrinking, especially among working-age people, while the number of older residents is growing. High house prices, high numbers of second homes and holiday lets, and a lack of affordable housing are making it hard for young people and families to stay in, or move to, the Lake District. To support local services and attract more working-age residents and address employment needs, action is required to improve the balance between under- or temporarily occupied homes (second homes and holiday lets) and permanent dwellings. An increase in the delivery of local occupancy, affordable and social housing will make small contributions to

⁵ Sustainable transport is defined as 'Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.' (Campaign for Better Transport – National Planning Policy Framework definition.)

enable local, working people to continue living in the Lake District, but addressing the proportion of under- or temporarily-occupied homes could result in more significant contributions to this housing shortfall.

Policy changes

67. Since the adoption of the 2020-2026 Partnership Plan, significant policy changes have impacted the Lake District. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 shifted the requirement for 'Responsible Bodies' to further the purposes of national parks. This strengthening of the legislation for national parks should form the basis for strong partnerships and joint working, enabling greater commitment and resources to the delivery of this Plan. Supporting delivery of this Plan is a key way in which relevant bodies can demonstrate their commitment to furthering the purposes of the National Park, as set out in the legislation.
68. Directly affecting delivery of this Partnership Plan, the Government has also introduced a new Protected Landscapes and Targets and Outcomes Framework which sets ambitious targets for national parks and other protected landscapes to deliver for nature, the climate and the historic environment, while also improving engagement and access for all.
69. Significant changes will occur to local structures and partnerships during the life of this plan. The Lake District falls within an area prioritised under the Devolution Priority Programme, which aims to establish a mayoral authority in 2026 and deliver mayoral elections in May 2027. Devolution, if it progresses, will shift how local decisions are taken and therefore could have a significant impact on Plan delivery. Many other policy changes will affect the Lake District over the new five years and this Plan aim to respond flexibly to challenges and opportunities presented.

Health and wellbeing

70. Everyone, no matter their background, should be able to enjoy the Lake District landscape, its nature, beauty, and cultural heritage. Research shows that spending time in nature improves both mental and physical health, and more people are now using outdoor spaces for exercise, which also helps reduce healthcare costs. However, many people still face barriers to accessing the Lake District, especially young people; those with health conditions or disabilities; people on low incomes and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Improving access and infrastructure in and around the Lake District will boost the health and wellbeing of both visitors and residents.

Water quality

71. The Lake District's waterbodies face many pressures, including pollution from sewage, agriculture, abandoned mines, and drainage from roads and other land-uses. Climate change is making these challenges worse by increasing the risk of flooding, drought, wildfires, polluted run-off, reduced river flows and algal blooms, while also raising the future demand for water. These combined pressures threaten freshwater habitats and the species that depend on them, risking further damage to the natural environment. To protect these vital ecosystems, urgent investment and coordinated action in sustainable, integrated water management is needed. Priority should be given to reducing pollution and, where appropriate, reversing historic changes made to rivers - like straightening or adding weirs - that have impacted water quality and flow rates.

Unique heritage

72. The historic environment, history and culture of the Lake District is the foundation of our communities and economy, providing a sense of place and distinctive character. The landscape is the result of thousands of years of human modification of the fells, valleys and woodland through farming and industry interacting with the natural and physical environment. This has left a rich legacy of archaeological sites, buildings and gardens - including ancient field systems, farms and settlements, villas and designed landscapes - and a long history of traditional hill-farming practices including hefted flocks and the use of commons. The Lake District can also proudly claim to be the birthplace of the conservation movement, while supporting a long tradition of tourism, as well as continuing - as it has been for centuries - as a source of artistic inspiration. Sustaining the global significance of this world heritage cultural landscape occurs in tandem with restoring and enhancing its natural heritage and national park Special Qualities, while continuing as a living-working landscape which is valued by the local community and our millions of visitors.

The 2051 Vision

73. In 2051 it will be 100 years since the Lake District became a national park, and 34 years since inscription as a World Heritage Site. Securing the new 2051 vision for the Lake District will need all those who live, work in, visit and have statutory obligation to the Lake District to do their part.

It's 2051...

The Lake District is deeply valued by the nation as a thriving, working landscape, which is nature and heritage rich, climate resilient, and socially and economically vibrant.

Ambitions

74. We have wide representation as Partners (on behalf of farmers and land managers, residents, communities, parishes, local authorities, organisations and other public bodies, visitors, businesses and specialists) which has helped to identify a clear set of shared and challenging ambitions that will help us realise the Vision.

75. Our ambitions are all intertwined, helping us to look after this very special place and achieve both our national park purposes and sustain and enhance our world heritage site.

[add Ambitions infographic from designer]

76. The Plan's ambitions are:

In 2051...

- Habitats are restored, and species are recovering, enabling nature to flourish in a more joined-up landscape.
- Water is clean and plentiful for people and nature through restoring natural processes and reducing pollution.
- Carbon emissions from human activity are reduced and the Lake District stores more carbon than it emits.
- The Lake District is more resilient to the effects of the future climate.

- Rural communities are sustainable⁶ and a diverse economy is thriving, supporting regenerative tourism⁷, enabling more people to live and work in the Lake District.
- Farming is viable, nature-friendly and delivers quality produce while maintaining the Lake District's distinctive agricultural practices.
- The distinctive historic environment of the Lake District is conserved and enhanced, ensuring it is better understood and looked after for future generations.
- The Lake District is improving people's wellbeing, and they are inspired to value, look after and enjoy it through living, working and visiting responsibly and sustainably.
- Public transport⁸ and active travel⁹ are the preferred ways of moving around, allowing more people to get where they need to go, when they need to get there, reducing the impacts of private vehicles on the Lake District.

Objectives

77. To deliver these ambitions we have set clear, targeted objectives for the next five years to help make our Vision a reality. In each case we have explained what success will look like in 2031.

78. The Lake District National Park Partnership is committed to setting targets that are realistic yet challenging, reflecting the scale of our collective ambition but being realistic about what can be delivered. Our targets are designed to drive progress and remain flexible enough to adapt if circumstances change.

79. The Partnership also acknowledges the evolving funding landscape. Levels of government funding are not guaranteed beyond current spending periods, and while opportunities for private finance and investment in natural capital are growing, these mechanisms are not yet fully established or accessible at the

⁶ Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

⁷ A regenerative economy is one that aims to restore and renew natural resources rather than deplete them, focusing on sustainable and equitable growth while prioritising environmental and social wellbeing.

⁸ Public transport is buses, trains, boats and other forms of transport that are available to the public with fixed fares and defined routes or areas covered.

⁹ Active travel refers to journeys made by walking, wheeling, or cycling. It includes trips that are made by foot, pedal-cycles, e-cycles, adapted cycles, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, push-scooters and on horseback.

scale required. This uncertainty means some targets will depend on new funding streams to secure the resources needed for delivery.

80. Each objective helps to deliver one or more of the ambitions to deliver our Vision (see also [Appendix 15](#)). However, as our objectives are for the first five years of our 25-year Vision, we recognise that there is a necessary pathway to delivery, so not all aspects of each ambition will be covered in this Plan.

81. Over the next five years we will:

A Deliver nature's recovery through:

- Improving the condition of protected sites¹⁰
- Securing improved management for nature on non-protected sites¹¹ and creating more species-rich habitats

Targets:

- Increase Core Nature Areas¹² from 14.96% to 30% (baseline 87,394 acres (35,367ha) or 14.9%, in 2023-24)
- 60% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest¹³ (SSSIs) are in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' condition (baseline 47%, May 2025).
- 60% of SSSIs are assessed as having actions on track to achieve favourable condition (baseline 20.9%, May 2025).
- 1,060 ha more species rich habitat on non-protected sites.
- 65% of land managers have adopted nature friendly farming¹⁴, across at least 10% of their land holding. [Natural England is developing indicator TI_05 for this 'Percentage of land managers adopting nature friendly farming on a percentage of their land'. This is due in April 2026]

¹⁰ Protected Sites are areas which are protected for nature through national, European and international legislation and include National Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (see below), Marine Protected Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protected Sites and RAMSAR sites (wetland sites of international importance)

¹¹ Non-protected sites are areas which are of significance for nature but are not protected sites (as above) and include County Wildlife Sites

¹² Core Nature Areas are defined as SSSIs (defined at footnote 4) which are in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition, National Nature Reserves and public woodland under favourable management for biodiversity (the national forest estate). See: [30by30 on land in England: confirmed criteria and next steps - GOV.UK](#)

¹³ Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are legally protected areas of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora they contain, or important geological or physiological features that may lay in their boundaries

¹⁴ There is no fixed definition of nature friendly farming. Nature friendly farming is an umbrella term to describe farming systems and practices that enhance and protect biodiversity and contribute to tackling climate change alongside food production. [nature-friendly-farming.pdf](#)

- Target: Species restoration projects target is under development

B Improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns for nature and people by:

- reducing pollution and restoring freshwater habitats.¹⁵

Targets:

- More than 75% of waterbodies will be achieving good ecological status (baseline 43%)
- 100% of current Designated Bathing Waters are achieving a 'good' or above status (baseline 78%: 66% are classified as excellent status; 12% good, 22% poor, 2024)
- 100% of Lake District actions¹⁶ within Diffuse Water Pollution Plans¹⁷ have been achieved, or are on track to be completed (baseline 0%, 80 actions)
- Reduce spills by 90% from 23 storm overflows¹⁸ (baseline =being established) and remove 77.4kg of Phosphorous from the Windermere catchment (baseline 0kg)
- Improve levels of pollution from abandoned metal mines in at least 13,7 miles (22km); 20% of rivers currently impacted (baseline 68 miles/110km)
- Target: Occurrences of aquatic invasive species is under development

¹⁵ The objective for water is distinct from Ambition 2 as it specifies the waterbody types for the 5-year plan, whereas the ambition is more holistic (e.g. could include the sea/maritime habitats and pollution). Objective A will also contribute to the delivery of Ambition 2)

¹⁶ The actions within Diffuse Water Pollution Plans that are considered relevant for this target are those which are related to areas within the National Park boundary (the catchment areas covered by DWPPs are not exclusively within the National Park. Additional actions may be added, but for the purposes of this target we will review progress against the original actions agreed between Natural England and Environment Agency as of September 2025.

¹⁷ Diffuse Pollution Plans are a joint Natural England and Environment Agency tool used to plan and agree strategic action at the catchment-scale, in relation to diffuse pollution affecting protected sites. There are Plans in place for the Kent, Eden, Derwent and Ehen Catchments.

¹⁸ In the Lake District National Park (LDNP), United Utilities have 45 overflows with Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan (SODRP) overflow drivers. SODRP is a UK government strategy to reduce pollution from sewer overflows during heavy rain. In Asset Management Period 8 (2025-2030), United Utilities have committed to delivering spill reduction projects on 23 overflows in the LDNP that will bring them in line with the 10 spills per year target (as a 10-year average) set out in the SODRP.

C Reduce emissions by:

- Reducing carbon from travel
- Reducing agricultural greenhouse gases
- Inspiring and engaging more people to retrofit buildings to improve energy efficiency and maximise embodied carbon¹⁹

Targets:

- Reducing Carbon emissions overall by 77%, aligned to achieving Carbon net zero by 2037 (baseline, Lake District Carbon budget, Summer 2025)
- Target: CO2 emission reductions from travel is under development
- Agricultural greenhouse gases reduced by 21% (63,000 tonnes CO2 equivalent, methane and nitrous oxide)
- Target: retrofitting buildings target is under development

D Increase the resilience of the landscape²⁰, and its carbon storage potential, through:

- Restoring peatland
- Increasing tree and woodland cover and improving management
- Improving soil health
- Improving catchment management

Targets:

- 6,168 acres (2,500 ha) peatland restored (3% of all peatland)
- Additional 3,089 acres (1,250 ha) of tree and woodland cover

¹⁹ This objective specifies the particular types of emissions we wish to target in our plan to 2031, whereas Ambition 3 is more holistic (other emissions reductions will be necessary) and will result in the Lake District becoming carbon negative.

²⁰ Resilient landscapes have the ability to withstand and recover from disturbances such as natural disasters and climate change (including flooding and drought) and human activities (including wildfires). Key factors for resilience include biodiversity, healthy ecosystems and sustainable management practices.

- Target: woodland management target is under development
- Target: Agri-environment schemes improving soil health/ground surface roughness target is under development
- Target: River restoration target is under development
- Target: Catchment management resilience target is under development

E Help rural communities to be sustainable²¹ and vibrant by:

- Increasing the supply and mix (size, ownership/rent) of affordable or occupancy restricted homes and controlling the proportion of houses used for second homes and short-term holiday letting
- Expanding and diversify the workforce through upskilling and creating training and job opportunities.
- Creating conditions for economic growth through infrastructure and place-based investment, and promoting a regenerative visitor economy²²
- Reducing visitor pressures on communities, landscapes, and the environment through maximising the impact resources and powers available.

Targets:

- 400 housing unit permissions for affordable/local occupancy homes and 400 housing unit completions for affordable/local occupancy
- Proportion of housing used for second homes/short-term holiday lets. No increase in the proportion of homes in non-permanent occupancy by parish (baseline = 29.5% of houses used as second homes/holiday lets across all Parishes)
- Increase in the number of pupils across Lake District primary schools
- Target: Participation in skills training target is under development.
- Target: Participation in business support target is under development.

²¹ Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

²² A regenerative economy is an economy that aims to restore and renew natural resources rather than deplete them, focusing on sustainable and equitable growth while prioritising environmental and social wellbeing.

- Target: Economic growth investment target is under development.
- Target: Digital connectivity target is under development.
- Target: Visitor management target is under development.

F Improve the viability and resilience of farms²³ by:

- Enhancing the provision of farm advice through a joined-up network of farm advisors and an integrated farm advice network for the LDNP.
- Increasing the adoption of farmer-led nature-friendly farming practices
- Maintaining functioning hefting²⁴ and commoning systems^{25 26}
- Improving opportunities to develop, promote and champion quality produce to improve dietary health for public benefit.
- Supporting farmers to establish new and alternative income streams through farm business diversification²⁷

Targets:

- Target: Farm advice target is under development.
- 65% of land managers have adopted nature friendly farming, covering at least 10% of their landholdings [Natural England is developing indicator TI_05 for this 'Percentage of land managers adopting nature friendly farming on a percentage of their land'. This is due in April 2026]
- Target: Agri-environment scheme target is under development.

²³ A farm is defined as a multifaceted rural business centred around the core action of producing annual outputs of food or livestock for selling for onward breeding or into the food chain

²⁴ Hefting is a traditional practice where sheep learn to stay within a certain area of open, unfenced land without needing physical boundaries.

²⁵ Commoning refers to the use of common land where people (known as commoners) have rights to graze livestock, gather wood and so on.

²⁶ A functioning hefting and commoning system is one that is workable and financially viable for the commoners and graziers, is genetically resilient, and is multi-functional, offering environmental stewardship, sustainable food production and community resilience in remote areas, as well as representing a deep connection between livestock and people, with knowledge and skills passed down through the generations.

²⁷ Farm diversification involves adding enterprises to a farm business outside of agricultural activity, utilising the farm's resources such as land and buildings, as well as skills and knowledge. It can provide a significant additional income to a farm business, depending on the opportunities available to a particular farm. See the [Farm Diversification - Upland Farmer Toolkit](#)

- Target: Functioning hefting, commoning and breed target(s) is under development.
- Target: Local produce target is under development.

G Improve the management of the historic environment by:

- Increasing our understanding through survey and the monitoring of the condition of heritage assets
- Reducing the number of nationally designated²⁸ heritage assets²⁹ that are at risk³⁰
- Improving the condition of non-designated heritage assets³¹
- Encouraging the retention of traditional skills and practices and growing the number of skilled craftspeople

Targets:

- Decrease the number of heritage assets on the national Heritage at Risk Register by 4 (baseline 22 monuments, 8 listed buildings in 2024)
- 40 conservation projects delivered that have improved the condition of a non-designated heritage asset
- 2% (18 miles²/47 km²) increase of area that has a Level 1 archaeological survey³² (baseline 35% in 2022)
- Decrease the number of Grade II buildings at risk³³ by 4 (baseline 70 as of October 2025³⁴)
- 100% of conservation area management plans and appraisals up to date

²⁸ Nationally designated heritage assets are world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and protected wrecks that are on the National Heritage List for England.

²⁹ Heritage assets are defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance because of its historic interest

³⁰ Heritage assets at risk are detailed in Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register which provides an annual snapshot of the health of England's valued historic buildings and places.

³¹ Non-designated heritage assets are sites which are not on the National Heritage List for England but have a degree of significance because of their historic interest

³² A Level 1 archaeological survey is a programme of non-intrusive field evaluation which seeks to determine, record and report on the presence, nature, extent, preservation and significance of archaeological remains within a defined area. The evaluation is conducted through a systematic walkover survey recording heritage assets encountered within the scope of study.

³³ Buildings at risk for this purpose is those listed on the LDNPA Grade II Buildings at Risk register

³⁴ New survey of condition of listed buildings taking place in 2026

- Target: Traditional skills target is under development.

H Inspire people to enjoy, understand and care for the Lake District, through:

- Capitalising on a better understanding of the health and wellbeing benefits of being active outdoors
- Improving the rights of way network, Miles without Stiles and related facilities
- Increasing volunteering opportunities
- Delivering more engagement³⁵ programmes

Targets:³⁶

- Target: Health and wellbeing target is under development.
- 65% of the Public Rights of Way Network passes the 'ease of use' condition³⁷ (baseline - 58.2%, June 2025)
- 74% of Miles without Stiles meet their route standard³⁸ (baseline - 58% (29/50), December 2024)
- 6 miles (10km) of accessible paths have been improved to ensure access for all by meeting Miles without Stiles standard.
- Target: Volunteering target is under development.
- Target: Engagement target is under development.

³⁵ Definition of engagement currently being refined

³⁶ Many of these targets also help to deliver Ambition 9

³⁷ Ease of use is measured and monitored through annual surveys whereby a randomly selected sample of paths (comprising 5% of the total length of rights of way network) is surveyed in a nationally agreed methodology, which is applied across all national parks to enable us to compare and benchmark. The surveys cover surfaces, gates, stiles, bridges, signage and highlight any obstructions on the route, such as fallen trees.

³⁸ Route standard refers to the gradings associated with the Miles Without Stile network. There are four grades: for all, for many, for some and challenge. The specifications for these can be found here: www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/mileswithoutstiles

I **Improve integrated sustainable travel³⁹ and reduce dependency on private vehicles through:**

- greater provision of services, infrastructure, information and marketing.

Targets

- 12% increase in the proportion of visitors (45% total proportion of visitors) of whom the main mode of getting around the Lake District is sustainable and active⁴⁰ (baseline - 33%, Cumbria Visitor Survey 2022)
- 10% increase in the amount of bus passengers
- 10% increase in the annual bus mileage of services
- 10% increase in rail station usage in the Lake District
- 10% reduction in the proportion of visitors for whom the main mode of travel of getting around the Lake District is private vehicle (e.g. car) (baseline 68% Cumbria Visitor Survey 2022)

Action Plan

82. The Action Plan (also known as the Delivery Plan) outlines how we will transform our thinking into reality. It will identify steps with clear responsibilities, a timeframe, and resource requirements to direct us towards our desired outcomes.

83. The Action Plan will be a separate document to the Partnership Plan that will be kept up-to-date through regular review in order to respond to new opportunities or challenges that require a course of action. It will initially identify actions for the first two years of the Plan (2026-2028).

84. As a Partnership, we agreed the following guiding principles to assist us identifying actions:

- We will not identify actions that will happen anyway (business as usual)

³⁹ Sustainable travel is that which has a reduced impact on the wider environment, through reduced emissions and which has reduced impacts on local communities through parking and congestion.

⁴⁰ Active travel refers to journeys made by walking, wheeling, or cycling. It includes trips that are made by foot, pedal-cycles, e-cycles, adapted cycles, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, push-scooters and on horseback.

- We will only identify actions that require collective Partnership delivery (individual actions that deliver the Plan can be found in individual Partner organisation corporate/business plans)

85. A template, with examples from the emerging Action Plan can be found at [Appendix 15](#).

86. There is a raft of other plans that will help to support the delivery of the Vision and ambitions of this Plan including:

- Lake District World Heritage Site Interpretation Strategy
- [Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)
- [Lake District Nature Recovery Plan](#)
- [Cumbria Economic Strategy: Going for Growth](#)
- [Cumbria Destination Management Plan](#)
- Cumbria Climate Adaption Plan
- [Westmorland and Furness Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024-2034](#)
- [Cumberland Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 to 2028](#)
- [Westmorland and Furness Council Plan 2023-2027](#)
- [Cumberland Council Plan 2023-2027](#)
- All Partner organisation business plans and strategies
- [Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan](#)
- [Heart of the Lakes Active Travel Infrastructure Strategy](#)
- [Smarter Travel: A vision for smarter visitor travel in the Lake District National Park 2018-2040](#)
- [Lake District Local Plan](#)
- [Lake District Active Travel Network Plan 2025](#)
- [Zero Carbon Cumbria Emissions Reduction Action Plan](#)
- [Westmorland and Furness Council Climate Action Plan](#)
- [Cumberland Council Climate and Nature Strategy](#)
- [Lake District National Park Partnership Nature Recovery Delivery Plan](#)

- [The Catchment Plan: protecting, enhancing and monitoring South Cumbria](#)
- [Catchment Plan – West Cumbria Catchment Partnership](#)
- [Eden Catchment Partnership](#)

87. As we seek to look after and continually improve the Lake District through positive management, we know that there will always be new projects, programmes or proposals that will emerge over the next five years. By drafting a two-year Action Plan we will have the agility to respond to unforeseen challenges while also embracing opportunities which may emerge.

How does the Partnership Plan link to the Lake District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework?

88. The Partnership Plan sets the 2051 Vision for the Lake District and our shared long-term ambitions to deliver this vision, as well as the objectives for the next five years. It is the key strategic plan for the management of the National Park and the World Heritage Site.

89. The Local Plan is different, but complementary: it is a spatial, land-use plan, setting out where development should happen for housing and economic activity, and what it should look like. Its policies support the delivery of this Partnership Plan.

90. The Local Plan is a means of delivering aspects of the Partnership Plan, and the challenges and opportunities identified, such as the draft Partnership Plan objective on housing.

91. A number of Local Plan policies are relevant to the protection of both the Lake District's Special Qualities and the World Heritage Site's attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (including policies 01, 05, 07, 26 and 27) and can be found here: [Local Plan](#).

92. The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. This document is the foundation for the Lake District Local Plan and sets out the great weight that should be given to conserving and enhancing both national parks and world heritage sites, with the latter being described as being of the highest significance.

93. The National Planning Policy Framework also establishes the weight that should be given to management plans for both national parks and world heritage sites.

The Government's associated Planning Practice Guidance on the application of policy for the national environment explains that national park plans *'do not form part of the statutory development plan [here the Local Plan], but they help to set out the strategic context for development.'* Also that: *'They may contain information which is relevant when preparing plan policies, or which is a material consideration when assessing planning applications* ([Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 8-040-20190721](#))

94. For world heritage site management plans the Government's Planning Practice Guidance on the historic environment states: 'Given their importance in helping to sustain and enhance the significance of the World Heritage Site, relevant policies in management plans need to be taken into account in preparing development plans for the historic or natural environment (as appropriate) and in determining relevant planning applications.' ([Paragraph: 034 Reference ID: 18a-034-20190723](#))
95. This means that the Partnership Plan is also a 'material consideration' in the planning process, i.e. a matter which should be taken into account when determining a planning application or an appeal against a planning decision.

Policies

96. The [National Park statutory purposes and duty](#), and the [World Heritage Site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value](#) and obligations under the [World Heritage Convention](#) are the starting point for any management and decision-making for the Lake District. We believe that our ability to manage the Lake District successfully is dependent upon our clear, shared Vision and Ambitions for how we ultimately want the place to be; we use our Vision to guide our management approaches and decisions.
97. The Partnership has developed policies to help guide our decision-making to achieve continual improvement, look after the Lake District through positive management, and deliver our Vision.
98. We know that there will always be new projects, programmes or proposals that will emerge over the five-year life of the Plan. Our policies will allow us to form a view as to whether these are something that we should support because they help to deliver our Vision and its Ambitions, whether we should be requesting changes to proposals, or where we should be recommending something should not take place due to the harm that could be caused.

99. The Sustainability Appraisal ([Appendix 10](#)) and Habitats Regulations Assessment ([Appendix 12](#)) further demonstrate how the policies will deliver sustainable development in the Lake District.

100. Our policies are all interlinked and should be read together and not in isolation.

101. Our policies are:

1. A world-class living cultural landscape of exceptional beauty

Our Policy is to:

- a) Protect and conserve the extraordinary beauty and harmony of the Lake District landscape and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value and Special Qualities.
- b) Support the maintenance of traditional upland farming systems in the Lake District based on the open fell hefted grazing of locally distinctive breeds of livestock including the Herdwick sheep, and commons management.
- c) Maintain, enhance, and celebrate the historic environment.
- d) Encourage and support the retention of traditional skills and practices.

2. Mineral extraction in the Lake District

Our Policy is to:

Support the extraction of building stone and slate where this is principally needed to maintain the Special Quality of 'distinctive buildings and settlement character' and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, in line with policies in the Local Plan.

3. Well-considered tree and woodland establishment and improvement

Our Policy is to:

- a) Maximise the number of established woodlands that are well managed. Prioritise woodland where there is a significant opportunity to enhance their resilience and contribution to the landscape including the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, biodiversity, recreation, historic environment, flood prevention, carbon storage, and productivity.
- b) Support the establishment of new tree cover throughout the Lake District, at a locally agreed scale, guided by the Partnership's [woodland creation and tree establishment guidelines for the Lake District National Park](#). Our

goal is to focus on achieving the optimum balance between: timber production; flood prevention; carbon storage; water quality; soil stability; biodiversity; the historic environment; conservation of the cultural landscape; recreation; loss of grazing land; landscape change; hefting, and communal management of common land, where relevant.

- c) Manage the spread of disease in tree species, increase resilience to pests, and take a planned approach to landscape restoration, if and where required, to increase the resilience of woodlands.

4. Resilient and well-functioning habitats and wildlife

Our Policy is to:

Support interventions that help to achieve bigger, better and more joined up resilient habitats and species in line with the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy, contributing to delivering 30 x 30 as well as other national targets to restore nature.

5. The continuation of the Lake District as a source of artistic, literary, and cultural inspiration

Our Policy is to:

- a) Support opportunities for continued inspiration from the cultural landscape and heritage by further understanding and celebrating artistic inspiration, cultural traditions, skills and activities.
- b) Conserve, maintain, manage and make use of cultural heritage assets through supporting and promoting how these assets are understood and interpreted, in line with the World Heritage Interpretation Strategy, which will support cultural tourism in the Lake District.

6. Profitable farming, land management and forestry, maintaining traditional land-based skills and sustaining our agro-pastoral farming system

Our Policy is to:

- a) Ensure farming, forestry and land management remain or become more resilient through securing funding for the delivery of public goods, adding value to their products, securing efficiency savings, identifying and establishing new markets and diversifying their income.

- b) Support and encourage young people into farming, forestry and land management, to maintain traditional skills and develop new ones to accrue the knowledge necessary for the maintenance of our cultural landscape.

7. A responsible Lake District visitor economy

Our Policy is to:

- a) Champion and support regenerative tourism development that contributes to the enhancement and regeneration of the places and communities in which it operates, helping reduce carbon emissions and increase nature recovery.
- b) Ensure the Lake District visitor economy continues to grow by attracting UK and overseas visitors, encouraging longer, and more overnight, stays as outlined in the Cumbria Destination Management Plan.
- c) Support initiatives that promote the Lake District as a year-round destination to a range of audiences at different times of year.
- d) Support the evolution of all types of visitor accommodation, to meet continuously changing domestic and international visitor expectations guided by policies of the Local Plan.
- e) Support skills training to improve the quality of the hospitality sector.

8. Access to services

Our Policy is to:

- a) Support complete coverage of superfast broadband and 4G mobile telephone coverage to all premises in every valley, and targeted 5G coverage.
- b) Support initiatives throughout the Lake District which provide access to a wider range of services, including mobile services, and the multi-use of community buildings and business premises.
- c) Support provision for residents and visitors alike to have access to healthcare services and facilities that meet their essential needs.

9. Access to a range of employment opportunities

Our Policy is to:

- a) Support the promotion of the Lake District as a desirable place to locate businesses on the basis of digital infrastructure, workforce, quality of life

and a high-quality environment and cultural heritage, using the Local Plan to guide investment decisions.

- b) Promote Rural Service Centres as locations for business where the travel and accommodation needs for employees can most easily be met.
- c) Maximise the Lake District's potential for green economic growth through, for example, natural capital investments to embed green recovery and increase jobs and investment.

10. Availability and supply of a full range of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet local needs, and a high proportion of housing in permanent occupation

Our Policy is to:

- a) Ensure new homes contribute to community vibrancy by requiring their permanent occupancy, as part of the planning consent.
- b) Support appropriate ways to tackle excessive numbers of empty and, or holiday homes where this occurs.
- c) Ensure that local community housing needs are met, including by supporting community-led schemes to meet local needs in appropriate locations, guided by the Local Plan.
- d) Ensure the work of housing authorities, enablers and housing providers is coordinated to maximise the delivery of new affordable housing.

11. Increased resilience to flooding

Our Policy is to:

- a) Secure optimum solutions to flood resilience with a whole-catchment approach, balancing the need to reduce flood risk in towns and villages against potential impacts up and down stream, including on agricultural land, and sustaining the Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.
- b) Mitigate and adapt to the likelihood and severity of flooding that is predicted to result from climate change by increasing resilience to flooding, including through Natural Flood Management approaches, or protecting settlements with hard defences, whilst sustaining the Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.

- c) Encourage interventions to increase soil health⁴¹ by developing an improved understanding of good soil husbandry and ways to conserve and enhance the quality, stability and function of soils.

12. Sustained major industries and provision of infrastructure outside the Lake District

Our Policy is to:

Recognise the importance of nuclear and low carbon energy industries in West Cumbria, the defence sector in South Cumbria, and other major economic investments in Cumbria. Where they do not prejudice the Lake District, its setting, Special Qualities, attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, or visitor economy we will assist with the development of proposals for associated infrastructure.

13. Addressing workforce and skills gaps

Our Policy is to:

- a) Support initiatives that maintain a working age population which can provide a workforce for existing and new businesses.
- b) Support initiatives that address labour shortages and skills gaps in the local workforce, including delivery of Enterprising Cumbria's Going for Growth: Cumbria's Economic Strategy 2025-2045.

14. An effective and integrated transport infrastructure supporting low carbon travel options

Our Policy is to:

- a) Support improvements to the Cumbria Coast and Furness rail lines, the Lakes Line and Windermere ferry where they contribute to an integrated transport service and do not prejudice the Lake District's Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.
- b) Support development and delivery of infrastructure and services that decarbonises travel and enables low carbon and active travel (including cycling and walking infrastructure, electric vehicles, electric bikes and other modes of transport), and more people to reach the Lake District by rail and integrated onward travel.

⁴¹ In a healthy soil, the interactions between chemistry (pH, nutrients and contaminants), physics (soil structure and water balance) and biology (including earthworms, microbes and plant roots) are optimised for the conditions in that place.

- c) Support initiatives that revolutionise how visitors and residents travel using smart technology developments, including options for shared transport.

15. An inclusive destination with opportunities to discover, appreciate and experience a unique, rich cultural landscape

Our Policy is to:

- a) Support regenerative tourism that benefits the environment, supports communities, and ensures that every visitor has the best experience through the breadth of activity. Experiences will benefit visitors' health and wellbeing and enhance their understanding and appreciation of the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value and Special Qualities of the Lake District.

Landscape and environment

- I. Sustain the Lake District as a place to experience a unique landscape and environment in a variety of ways, offering opportunities for experiencing tranquillity, peacefulness, spiritual refreshment, dark skies, and wildlife.
- II. Support the maintenance of routes and rights of navigation so people can explore and enjoy, ensuring appropriate management practices where necessary.

Culture and heritage

- III. Support the conservation and enhancement, and use the Interpretation Strategy, to promote the Lake District's cultural heritage assets to improve learning and understanding.

Inclusive and accessible

- IV. Support and promote new and existing opportunities for inclusive and accessible adventure on foot, bicycles, ropes, in and on water, and through events – all sensitive to the unique landscape, guided where appropriate through the Active Travel Network Plan.
- V. Support organised events where they are sensitively managed and where the organisers have undertaken community engagement and consultation, and developed event management plans, including mitigation of any impacts.

Hospitality, food and drink

- VI. Encourage a consistently high standard of hospitality and a warm welcome for everyone.

- VII. Celebrate the provenance and quality of Cumbria's food and drink by championing local produce available in the Lake District, raising its profile through the World Heritage Site brand.
- b) Promote the Lake District as a place for everyone to enjoy and appreciate, and to support the nation's health and wellbeing.
 - c) Support opportunities for people to give, in order to significantly increase the amount of contributions made by visitors, to sustain, maintain and improve the Lake District's environment and the landscape.

Monitoring, reporting and Plan review

102. This Partnership Plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure that the Partnership is delivering effectively, updating strategies and actions to reflect any changes in circumstances and responds to any challenges and opportunities within the plan period.
103. The monitoring of the condition of the Special Qualities of the National Park and Attributes of Outstanding of Value of the World Heritage Site are essential to determine whether we are protecting and enhancing the Lake District and successfully addressing the many challenges set out in this management plan.
104. Other monitoring is also necessary and important and is built into our targets, for example the monitoring and reporting on the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest to ensure that they are being positively managed.
105. Delivery against our 2-year Action Plan will be regularly monitored to ensure we are on track, the method and frequency for which is to be determined.
106. Annual progress (by financial year) will be monitored through an Annual Report produced in the subsequent financial year. This will also track progress against the delivery of our Objectives using the targets set out in paragraph 39 and the in-year actions (examples are at [Appendix 15](#)).
107. At the end of the five-year period, a Plan Review report will be produced detailing how we have delivered against our Objectives.

National Park monitoring

108. Monitoring of the condition of the National Park is required by Government and this is presented in the State of Park report which is produced every five years. The last report was produced in 2023 and can be found [here](#). This concluded that of the thirteen Special Qualities, seven were in good condition and six were in moderate condition. This evidence has been used as part of the evidence base for the development of the 2026-2031 Partnership Plan.
109. The next State of the Park report is due in 2028 and will in turn inform the development of the subsequent Partnership Plan (2031-2036).
110. In addition, Government has recently introduced the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF) setting protected landscapes, including national parks, 10 targets to deliver for nature, climate, the historic environment and access for all. Our PLTOF targets are set out in the Partnership

Plan and have been woven throughout relevant objectives (see Objectives targets and [Appendix 7](#)), and delivery against these targets is built into the Plan monitoring process and will be reviewed annually.

World Heritage Site monitoring

111. Monitoring the state of conservation of the World Heritage Site is required by UNESCO under the World Heritage Convention through the Operational Guidelines and is provided through both periodic and reactive monitoring. Periodic Reporting is undertaken about every eight years. Additional reporting is undertaken as required under paragraphs 172 and 174 of the Operational Guidelines. Further reporting may be required at UNESCO's request through State of Conservation reports if particular queries or issues are raised. State of Conservation reports are considered by the World Heritage Committee. This Partnership Plan, and its associated Action Plan, responds to issues raised by UNESCO at the time that the Lake District became a World Heritage Site in 2017 and subsequently (see [Appendix 9](#)).

112. Periodic Reporting is a monitoring tool which is a self-assessment of the World Heritage Site's condition and challenges. The Periodic Reporting exercise consists of a questionnaire in two sections, with one to be completed by the UK Government (the State Party) and the other by the World Heritage Site property (for the English Lake District this is prepared by the Lake District National Park Partnership).

The last Periodic Report took place in [2023](#). The findings from periodic reporting for a region (in the case of the Lake District this is the Europe and North America region) are published indicating issues, current trends and challenges for that region, and can be found [here](#).

113. Periodic reporting takes place approximately every eight years.

114. Our last State of Conservation Report was completed and submitted in 2024, <https://whc.unesco.org/document/218382>, responding to issues raised by UNESCO. This included a supporting matrix, setting out ancillary information to demonstrate Partnership activity across a wide range of issues. (This matrix is regularly updated by the Partnership.) The draft decision produced by the World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO advisory bodies was adopted without discussion by the World Heritage Committee in July 2025. This made further recommendations and commented on progress made. The Committee's decision can be found here: [UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136](#)

115. Periodic reporting and State of Conservation reports have both been used as evidence for the development of this Plan. UNESCO/World Heritage Committee recommendations have been incorporated into it and are monitored with other actions in the Plan.
116. UNESCO has also developed a heritage toolkit which provides a globally tested self-assessment methodology to support those managing world heritage sites, and key stakeholders, to evaluate the effectiveness of management approaches for world heritage sites: [Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit](#)

Indicators

117. Indicators are being developed to monitor progress on the plan. These indicators will align with the State of Conservation, the condition of Special Qualities, periodic reporting, and ambitions set out in this Plan to assess the overall condition of the Lake District.

Plan review

118. The Partnership Plan will be reviewed regularly as part of on-going monitoring of effectiveness. Assuming adoption in 2026, a full review will commence in 2030 in preparation for a new Plan being adopted in 2031.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Our National Park Purpose

National Parks are established for two reasons:

Purpose 1: to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.

Purpose 2: to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 makes clear that if these purposes are in conflict then conservation must take priority. This is known as the ‘Sandford Principle’ and stems from the 1974 Sandford Committee recommendation that enjoyment of national parks *‘shall be in a manner and by such means as will leave their natural beauty unimpaired for the enjoyment of this and future generations.’*

National Park authorities also have a National Park Duty:

National Park Duty: to seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park in pursuit of our purposes.

These commitments are enshrined in law and all relevant public bodies must have regard to, and further them.

A requirement of being a National Park is to identify the ‘Special Qualities’ of each place (see [Appendix 2](#)). These explain what gives a protected landscape its distinctive character and why it should be cherished and enjoyed by the nation.

Appendix 2 - The Lake District National Park's Purposes and Special Qualities

All national parks in England and Wales have two main purposes:

Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage

Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the **special qualities** of national parks to the public

Each national park has a number of Special Qualities which set out why it has been designated as a protected landscape for the benefit of the nation. In the Lake District there are 13 of these, which are summarised below.

The Lake District's Special Qualities are:

1. A world-class cultural landscape
2. Complex geology and geomorphology
3. Rich archaeology and historic landscape
4. Unique farming heritage and concentration of common land
5. The high fells
6. Wealth of habitats and wildlife
7. Mosaics of lakes, tarns, rivers and coast
8. Extensive seminatural woodlands
9. Distinctive buildings and settlement character
10. A source of artistic inspiration
11. A model for protecting cultural landscapes
12. A long tradition of tourism and outdoor activities
13. Opportunities for quiet enjoyment

For every Special Quality there is an explanatory paragraph which expands on the significance of each. When UNESCO designated the Lake District as a World Heritage Site, some parts of these Special Qualities also became its attributes of Outstanding Universal Value; these are part of the reasons why it is a World Heritage Site and are highlighted in bold in the Special Quality explanatory paragraphs which can be found here: [Lake District Special Qualities](#). The table below explains how the Plan's ambitions, objectives and policies help deliver the special qualities.

Special Quality	Key plan policy, ambitions and objectives
A world-class cultural landscape	Ambition 1-9, Objectives A-I, Policies 1, 3, 4, 6, 11
Complex geology and geomorphology	Ambition 1, Objective A, Policies 1, 2, 4
Rich archaeology and historic landscape	Ambition 7, Objective G, Policy 2
Unique farming heritage and concentration of common land	Ambition 6, Objective A, F, Policies 1, 6
The high fells	Ambitions 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, Objectives D, F, Policy 1
Wealth of habitats and wildlife	Ambitions 1, 2, 4, 6, Objectives A, B, D, Policies 3, 4, 6
Mosaics of lakes, tarns, rivers and coast	Ambition 1, 2, 3, 4, Objective A, B, Policies 1, 11
Extensive seminatural woodlands	Ambition 1, 3, 4, Objective A, B, D, Policies 3, 4
Distinctive buildings and settlement character	Ambition 7, Objective E, G, Policies 2, 8
A source of artistic inspiration	Ambition 6, 7, 8, Objective H, Policy 5
A model for protecting cultural landscapes	Ambition 1, 5, 6, 7, Objective G, Policies 5, 9, 10
A long tradition of tourism and outdoor activities	Ambition 5, 8, 9, Objective H, Policies 7, 9, 14
Opportunities for quiet enjoyment	Ambition 7 and 8, Objective H, I, Policy 15

Appendix 3 - English Lake District – our World Heritage Obligations

The UK Government ratified UNESCO's 1972 [World Heritage Convention](#) in 1984. The Convention identifies, preserves and promotes cultural and natural sites of global significance and protects them for future generations.

The Convention sets out the duties of [States Parties](#) (governments) in identifying potential sites and their role in protecting and preserving them. By signing the Convention, each country pledges to conserve not only the world heritage sites situated on its territory, but also to protect its national heritage. The States Parties are encouraged to integrate the protection of the cultural and natural heritage into regional planning programmes, set up staff and services at their sites, undertake scientific and technical conservation research and adopt measures which give this heritage a function in the day-to-day life of the community.

The Convention stipulates the obligation of States Parties to report regularly to the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of their world heritage sites. These reports are crucial to the work of the Committee as they enable it to assess the conditions of the sites, decide on specific programme needs and resolve recurrent problems.

It also encourages States Parties to strengthen the appreciation of the public for world heritage properties and to enhance their protection through educational and information programmes.

The English Lake District (as it is known internationally) was designated as a world heritage site in 2017. A brief synthesis and comments on the integrity, authenticity and management of the World Heritage Site can be read in full here: [UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30](#)

Articles 4 and 5, set out the UK Government's key obligations under the Convention:

- **Article 4:** '...ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage...'
- **Article 5:** To ensure that effective and active measures are taken for the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage...'

Appendix 4 - English Lake District – Statement and Attributes of Outstanding Universal Value

The English Lake District's Statement of Outstanding Universal Values was set out by the UK Government and adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2017 at the time of inscription. The World Heritage List entry curated by the World Heritage Centre can be read here: [The English Lake District - UNESCO World Heritage Centre](#)

Each world heritage site has a series of attributes (aspects of a property such as features of interest or traditions) which collectively explain why a site is of global significance and helps to make it understandable. For the English Lake District, the Partnership has identified nine attributes from the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, and has summarised these as set out below:

1. Extraordinary beauty and harmony
2. Agro-pastoral system
3. Local industries
4. Towns and settlements
5. Early tourism
6. Villas, gardens and formal landscapes
7. Sites and collections associated with the Picturesque and Romanticism
8. Landscape conservation
9. The ability of people to experience the spirit and feeling of the Lake District

The component features and aspects of each attribute are set out in a series of explanatory bullet points which can be read here: [Attributes of Outstanding Universal Value : Lake District National Park](#). These are a guide to recognising the attributes across the Lake District. The attributes have been grouped in relation to the three themes of Outstanding Universal Value

Theme 1: A landscape of exceptional beauty, shaped by persistent and distinctive agro-pastoral traditions and local industry which gives it special character.

Theme 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.

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

Appendix 5 - World Heritage Site Organisations, Terminology and Guidelines

UNESCO

UNESCO stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. It is a specialised agency of the United Nations, established in 1945 with the objective to contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication (see: [UNESCO : Building Peace through Education, Science and Culture, communication and information](#)).

World Heritage Convention

UNESCO seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage sites around the world which are considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. This is embodied in an international treaty called the '*Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*' or the World Heritage Convention for short. This was adopted by UNESCO in 1972.

World Heritage Site Inscription (the World Heritage 'List')

World heritage sites are considered to be of special importance for everyone, including future generations. They represent the most significant or exceptional examples of the world's cultural and/or natural heritage. World heritage site inscription (being added to the World Heritage List) is the ultimate recognition of a site or area's global significance.

What makes the concept of world heritage exceptional is its universal application: world heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located.

World Heritage Committee

The World Heritage Committee is UNESCO's main body in charge of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The Committee agrees which sites are added to the World Heritage List as well as which ones should be removed. It also examines reports on the state of conservation of world heritage sites asking State Parties to take action where sites could be better managed.

World Heritage family UK

The English Lake District World Heritage Site is one of 35 world heritage sites in the United Kingdom and its territories (for the full list see: [UK World Heritage Sites](#)). World heritage sites are just one the many UNESCO designations in the UK, others are Biospheres, Creative Cities, Global Geoparks, Learning Cities and Memory of the World.

World Heritage UK

World Heritage UK is an organisation set up in 2015 to undertake networking, advocacy and promotion for the UK's 35 world heritage sites, and the tentative list of sites progressing towards world heritage status (see: [World Heritage UK](#)).

State Party

The State Party is the government or state which has signed up to the World Heritage Convention. For the English Lake District this is the UK Government. In practical terms this means the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, which represents the UK Government ('the State Party') in implementing the Convention, advised by Historic England, the government's specialist adviser on the historic environment.

Operational Guidelines

The World Heritage Committee has developed a set of instructions in the form of the [Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention](#). The guidelines set out the procedures for the protection and conservation of world heritage sites and the process for inscription, international assistance and national and international support. The guidelines are crucial for ensuring that the Outstanding Universal Value of a site is properly identified, protected and conserved.

Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit 2.0

UNESCO has also produced a good practice guide called [Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0](#) which is designed to support those managing world heritage sites. It provides a self-assessment methodology to evaluate management effectiveness in a world heritage site or other heritage place.

World Heritage Site Management Plan guidance

UNESCO and the UK State Party require every world heritage site to have a management plan to demonstrate how a site's Outstanding Universal Value will be conserved and enhanced. For UK world heritage sites, Historic England has produced [Guidance on the Production of World Heritage Property Management Plans](#) which has been used in the preparation of this plan.

Management of the eastern extension to the national park

The World Heritage Site was designated in 2017 and - as is explained at paragraph 20 - the national park was extended in 2016. Therefore, the two boundaries are not quite the same, with the national park being slightly larger in the north-east and south-east of the Park. Largely the two areas are treated the same for management purposes. However, proposals within the National Park extension area would be assessed for their impact on the Special Qualities of the Park and the setting of the World Heritage Site as they would not be within the latter. There would also be some limited aspects of land-use planning, such as where permitted development rights might still apply in the extension area but would not in the World Heritage Site to the west.

Buffer zone

Some world heritage sites include a buffer zone around the site for the site's protection.

Buffer zones are clearly delineated area(s) outside a world heritage site and adjacent to its boundaries which contribute to the protection, conservation, management, integrity, authenticity and sustainability of the Outstanding Universal Value of the site. A buffer zone reflects the different types and levels of protection, conservation and management needed to protect the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value of a site.

Buffer zones are not part of the designated site, but where proposed are considered by UNESCO at the time of designation or subsequently. Where adopted they are an integral component of a State Party's commitment to the management of a world heritage site.

There is no buffer zone for the English Lake District World Heritage Site. It is also not proposed to create one for three main reasons:

1. The World Heritage Site is of sufficient size to act as its own buffer. As the World Heritage Site largely follows the boundaries of the National Park, England's largest national park, and is also England's largest World Heritage

Site, it is big enough to prevent development that will have an adverse impact on the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.

2. Secondly, as a national park, the Lake District has the highest level of landscape protection within the UK planning system and this is recognised in national spatial planning policy (as set out in paragraphs 79-86). This means that the neighbouring planning authorities must take into account the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park when considering development proposals outside the Park boundaries. If such proposals are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park (together encompassing the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value) then they should be refused. In the more than half a century since the creation of the Lake District National Park, these arrangements have worked effectively to protect it, so it is considered that there is no need to change this by introducing a buffer zone.
3. In addition, the two neighbouring planning authorities (Cumberland Council and Westmorland & Furness Council) are members of the Lake District National Park Partnership and are therefore committed to the positive management of the World Heritage Site.

Setting

‘Setting’ is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as the surroundings in which a heritage is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset and may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

A world heritage site’s setting relates to the environment that is part of, or contributes to, its significance, Outstanding Universal Value, and distinctive character. The setting might also play an essential role in protecting the authenticity and integrity of a world heritage site and will support management and maintenance of its Outstanding Universal Value.

The broader setting, may relate to the property’s topography, natural and built environment, and other elements such as infrastructure, land use patterns, spatial organization, and visual relationships. It may also include related social and cultural practices, economic processes and other intangible dimensions of heritage such as perceptions and associations. Management of the broader setting is related to its role in supporting the Outstanding Universal Value.

Whilst there is no buffer zone for the English Lake District World Heritage Site, development within its setting which would affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site would be considered under the National Planning Policy Framework and Historic England’s guidance on the setting of heritage assets.

Integrity

UNESCO defines integrity⁴² as:

- Wholeness: all the necessary attributes are within the property;
- Intactness: all the necessary attributes are still present – none are lost or have been significantly damaged or have decayed;
- Absence of threats: none of the attributes are threatened by development, deterioration or neglect.

A statement regarding the integrity of a world heritage site at the time of inscription is set out in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value adopted by UNESCO.

For the English Lake District this reads:

'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.'

When attributes or their component features are diminished or harmed within the site this can represent a threat to integrity.

Authenticity

UNESCO defines authenticity in its Operational Guidelines as:

A world heritage property may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if its cultural values (as recognised in the nomination document) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including:

- form and design;
- materials and substance;

⁴² Definition of integrity outlined in UNESCO Resource Manual [Preparing World Heritage Nominations](#), page 65

- use and function;
- traditions, techniques and management systems;
- location and setting;
- language, and other forms of intangible heritage;
- spirit and feeling; and
- other internal and external factors

Attributes such as spirit and feeling do not lend themselves easily to practical applications of the conditions of authenticity but nevertheless are important indicators of character and sense of place, for example, in communities maintaining tradition and cultural continuity.

A statement regarding the authenticity of a world heritage site at the time of inscription is also set out in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value adopted by UNESCO.

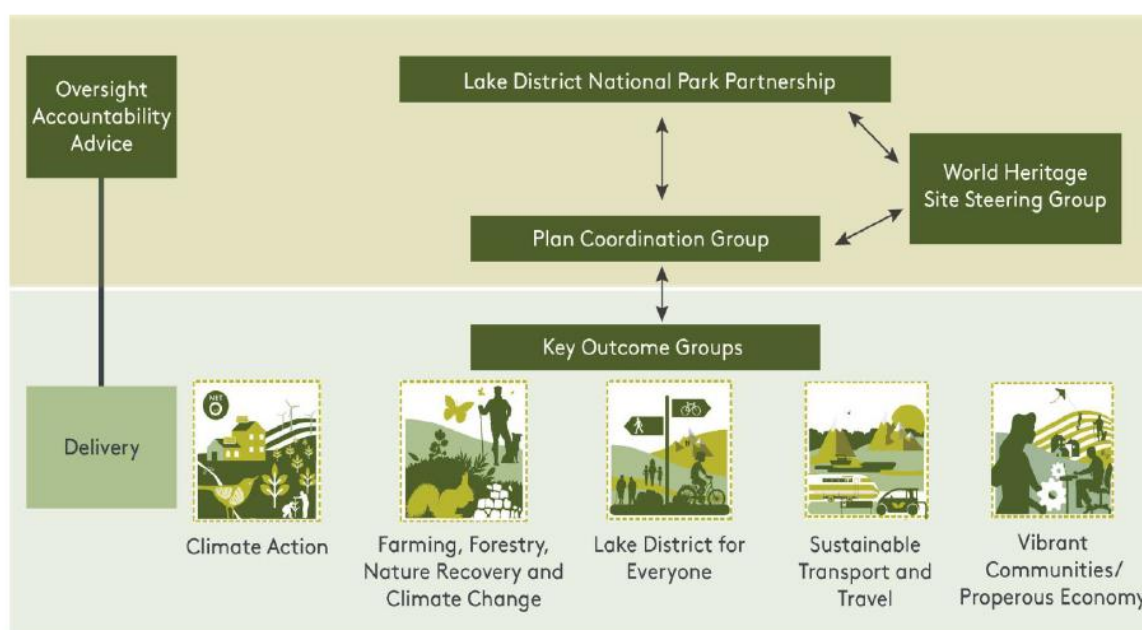
The English Lake District's statement on authenticity reads:

'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.'

Appendix 6 - Governance

The below governance diagram sets out the current arrangements for the Partnership in 2025. The Partnership will, however, explore differing arrangements for the new Plan, particularly around the Key Outcome Groups which are not likely to survive in this form into the next Plan period. The Governance diagram will therefore be updated as these conversations progress.

At the time of writing (October 2025) the following diagram shows how the governance of the Partnership works:



The Partnership Committee has overall responsibility for Partnership activities with a nominated representative from each Partner organisation or their substitute attending. Key decisions on the management of the Lake District are taken by this committee through reaching a consensus of Partners. The committee is supported by the Plan Coordination Group (with a particular focus on monitoring the progress of Plan delivery), and the World Heritage Site Steering Group (which advises the Partnership on all matters relating to the World Heritage Site's inscription).

Key Outcome Groups, reflecting the five key work strands set out in the Plan, are responsible for coordinating delivery of their own Plan actions and report on progress up to the Plan Coordination Group and Partnership Committee.

Individual 'task and finish' or working groups may be set up from time to time to help the Key Outcome Groups to deliver particular projects.

At the time of writing, a Register of Volunteer Specialists is being established to support the World Heritage Site Steering Group and Partnership by providing

specialist advice across all the World Heritage Site attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (what makes the World Heritage Site special on a global stage). An Interpretation Strategy Delivery Board is also being established. Both will report to the World Heritage Site Steering Group.

For the National Park, Natural England (the Government's specialist adviser on the natural environment) is a Partner and provides a link to the Department for the Environment and Rural Affairs. For the World Heritage Site, Historic England (the Government's specialist adviser on the historic environment) is also a Partner, providing a link to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and through DCMS to UNESCO.

Memorandum of Understanding

The Partnership has a Memorandum of Understanding which sets out the principal tenants of how the Partnership will work together and what is expected of Partners. This is not a legal binding document but demonstrates Partners' values, behaviours and ways of working.

Terms of Reference

Each Partnership sub-committee or group has its own terms of reference. These are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

Appendix 7 - Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework

The Government’s [Protected Landscape Targets and Outcomes Framework](#) sets out ten ambitious targets for all national parks and national landscapes to deliver. The targets for each Protected Landscape are based on its unique characteristics and landscape and therefore its ability to help to deliver the Government’s targets towards three goals from the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023. These are: Goal 1, Thriving plants and wildlife; Goal 7, Mitigating and adapting to climate change; and Goal 10, Enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment.

We have set out our contribution to these by agreeing with Partners outcomes and targets to prioritise action and focus efforts, through the delivery of this Partnership Plan. Ten Initial targets were set by Natural England who have worked with us to understand the landscape’s environmental potential. These are relevant to our statutory purposes, take an evidence-led approach, and utilise the best and most up-to-date data that is available for monitoring and reporting.

The table below sets out the national and local targets. Government’s deadlines for delivery (column 1) are varied and do not always align with our 5-year Plan cycle and 2-year Action Plan (column 3).

National Target	Indicator	Lake District Target
<p>Target 1</p> <p>Restore or create more than 250,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats within Protected Landscapes, outside protected sites by 2042 (from a 2022 baseline).</p>	<p>Extent of wildlife rich habitat created or restored within Protected Landscapes, outside of protected sites</p>	<p>Currently 524 acres (212 ha) per year</p> <p>2,619 acres (1,060 ha) by 2031</p>
<p>Target 2</p> <p>Bring 80% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes into favourable condition by 2042.</p>	<p>Percentage of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes in favourable condition</p>	<p>80% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes into favourable condition by 2042.</p> <p>By the end of our Plan, in 2031, we are aiming to deliver 60% in favourable condition</p>

National Target	Indicator	Lake District Target
		(Lake District Nature Recovery Plan target)
<p>Target 3</p> <p>For 60% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes assessed as having ‘actions on track’ to achieve favourable condition by 31 January 2028.</p>	<p>Percentage of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes assessed as having ‘actions on track’ to achieve favourable condition</p>	<p>60% of SSSIs within the Lake District assessed as having ‘actions on track’ to achieve favourable condition by 31 January 2028 (Note: this is the PLTOF target date for this action).</p>
<p>Target 4</p> <p>Continuing favourable management of all existing priority habitat already in favourable condition outside of SSSIs (from a 2022 baseline) and increasing to include all newly restored or created habitat through agri-environment schemes by 2042.</p>	<p>Extent of priority habitat within Protected Landscapes, outside of protected sites, in favourable management through agri-environment schemes</p>	<p>Continuing favourable management of all existing priority habitat already in favourable condition outside of SSSIs (from a 2022 baseline) and increasing to include all newly restored or created habitat through agri-environment schemes by 2042.</p>
<p>Target 5</p> <p>Ensuring at least 65% to 80% of land managers adopt nature friendly farming on at least 10% to 15% of their land by 2030</p>	<p>Percentage of land managers adopting nature-friendly farming on a percentage of their land</p>	<p>At least 65% to 80% of land managers adopt nature friendly farming on at least 10% to 15% of their land by 2030.</p> <p>By the end of our Plan, in 2031, we are aiming to deliver 80% of land managers adopting nature friendly farming on at least 10% to 15% of their land</p>

National Target	Indicator	Lake District Target
<p>Target 6</p> <p>Reduce net greenhouse gas emissions in Protected Landscapes to net zero by 2050 relative to 1990 levels.</p>	<p>The level of greenhouse gas emissions within Protected Landscapes</p>	<p>Cumbria has a Net Zero ambition of 2037.</p> <p>By the end of our Plan, in 2031, we are aiming to deliver 912,537 CO₂te (from Small World Consulting Carbon footprint assessment & proposed pathway to Net Zero 2022)</p>
<p>Target 7</p> <p>Restore approximately 130,000 hectares of peat in Protected Landscapes by 2050.</p>	<p>Extent of peat under restoration in Protected Landscapes</p>	<p>1,236 acres (500 ha) per year</p> <p>By the end of our Plan, in 2031, this will be an additional 6,178 acres (2500 ha).</p>
<p>Target 8</p> <p>Increase tree canopy and woodland cover (combined) by 3% of total land area in Protected Landscapes by 2050 (from 2022 baseline).</p>	<p>Extent of tree canopy and woodland cover in Protected Landscapes</p>	<p>618 acres (250 ha) per year</p> <p>By the end of our Plan, in 2031, this will be an additional 3,090 acres (1,250 ha).</p>
<p>Target 9</p> <p>Improve and promote accessibility to and engagement with Protected Landscapes for all using existing metrics in our Access for All programme.</p>	<p>Improve and promote accessibility to and engagement with Protected Landscapes for all using existing metrics in our Access for All programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metres of accessible path as a percentage of total path 	<p>By the end of our Plan, in 2031:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65% of the Public Rights of Way will be in 'ease of use' condition • 12 miles (20km) of accessible paths will have been improved • 5,750 volunteer days per year have been contributed

National Target	Indicator	Lake District Target
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of accessible toilets and rest stops • Number of disability accessible parking spaces • Number of accessible gates and gaps • Number of visits and volunteer days facilitated by new equipment • Number of schools engaged (primary and secondary) both inside and outside the Protected Landscape boundary • Number of volunteer days • Number of accessible or easy access routes for which wayfinding has been created or improved • Policies in place to ensure Protected Landscapes are taking positive action to widen the diversity of their staff, boards and volunteers 	

National Target	Indicator	Lake District Target
<p>Target 10</p> <p>Decrease the number of nationally designated heritage assets at risk in Protected Landscapes.</p>	<p>Number and percentage of nationally designated heritage assets in Protected Landscapes to be deemed at risk. To separately cover the categories of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled monuments • Registered parks and gardens • Registered battlefields • Listed buildings (grade I or II*) • Protected wreck sites 	<p>By the end of our Plan, in 2031, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease the number of Grade II buildings at risk by 4 • Decrease the number of heritage assets on the national Heritage at Risk Register by 4

Appendix 8 - Policy Landscape

While some of the documents below might appear to relate solely to the National Park or to the World Heritage Site, there are often mutual benefits. For instance, the protections afforded to the National Park under the UK planning system will often also indirectly protect the World Heritage Site and its attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. Equally, work to positively manage the World Heritage Site will often also benefit the Special Qualities of the National Park.

It is possible that the below policy landscape may change over the five-year life of the Plan. The proposed agile Action Plan should allow for any such changes to be accommodated.

National Policy Context

This Partnership Plan is guided by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) '*Management plans for Protected Landscapes in England*' and Historic England's '*Guidance on the Production of World Heritage Property Management Plans*'. Our evidence papers (see [Appendix 13](#)) include further references to the national policy context that has informed this Partnership Plan.

International Policy Context

There is also an international policy context for the Plan, which includes a number of key world heritage documents:

- United Nation's [Sustainable Development](#) goals
- Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (the most recent version published in 2025; see <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>)
- Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention (2015) - <https://whc.unesco.org/document/139747>
- Policy document on Climate Action for World Heritage (2023) - <https://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/204421>
- UNESCO *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context* (2022) - <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/>
- [European Landscape Convention - Council of Europe](#) (2000)
- Council of Europe [Environment Strategy](#) (2025)

Local Policy Context

Several key local policies and reports have also informed the Plan, including:

- [Partnership's Plan 2020-2026](#)
- [UNESCO Inscription of the English Lake District World Heritage Site](#)
- [State of the Park Report \(2023\)](#)
- State of Conservation report (2024) whc.unesco.org/document/218382
- Periodic Reporting Questionnaire (2023) whc.unesco.org/document/218045
- [Lake District Local Plan](#)
- [Lake District National Park Partnership Nature Recovery Delivery Plan](#)
- [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)
- [Zero Carbon Cumbria Farming and Other Land Use Emissions reduction and sequestration action plan](#)
- Cumbria [Destination Management Plan](#)
- [Smarter Travel: A vision for smarter visitor travel in the Lake District National Park 2018 – 2040](#)
- [Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan 2022 – 2037](#)

Appendix 9 - How the Plan delivers for World Heritage Attributes and State of Conservation

The Plan is grounded in a thorough understanding of the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. It also responds to State of Conservation recommendations from UNESCO (both at the time that the World Heritage Site was inscribed in 2017 and subsequently). The following tables provides a summary of how the Plan will deliver for both of these, setting out the key policies, ambitions, objectives and other relevant activity over the five-year period.

Attribute of Outstanding Universal Value	Key Plan policies, ambitions and objectives
Extraordinary beauty and harmony	Policy 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 15; Ambition 1, 2, 6, 8; Objective A, B, D, F, G, I
Agro-pastoral system	Policy 1, 6, 15; Ambition 6, 7; Objective F, G
Local industries	Policy 1, 2, 6, 12; Ambition 5, 7; Objective E, G
Towns and Settlements	Policy 1, 2, 7, 9, 15; Ambition 5, 7; Objective E, G
Early Tourism	Policy 1, 15; Ambition 7; Objective G
Villas, gardens and formal landscapes	Policy 1, 3, 4, 5, 15; Ambition 1, 2, 7; Objective A, B, G
Sites and collections associated with the Picturesque and Romanticism	Policy 5, 15; Ambition 7; Objective G
Landscape conservation	Policy 1, 5, 15; Ambition 8; Objective H
The ability of people to experience the spirit and feeling of the Lake District	Policy 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 14, 15; Ambition 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; Objective A, B, D, E, F, G, H, I

UNESCO Recommendation (at inscription in 2017, and subsequently)	World Heritage Committee decision/recommendation	Key Plan policies, ambitions, objectives and other initiatives
Recommendations at the time of inscription in 2017		
Quarrying activities within the property will be progressively downsized limited to conservation of the assets	<u>UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 recommendation a)</u>	Policy 2, Objective G Local Plan

supporting the attributes of the property		
NWCC energy transportation	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 Recommendation b)	No longer an issue
Integration of World Heritage consideration into the local plans and policies	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 Recommendation c)	Preparation of a new management Plan
Address issues that threaten the shepherding tradition, financially compensating farmers for their heritage services, and values such as genetic diversity of herds and food security	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 Recommendation d)	Policy 1, 6; Ambition 6; Objective F, State Party (through DCMS, DEFRA, Historic England and Natural England) with Partnership support
Rebalancing to improving natural resources with conserving the valuable cultural landscape that the Lake District	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 Recommendation e)	Policy 1, 3, 4, 6 Ambition 1, 2, 6 Objective A, B
Strengthening risk preparedness for floods and other disasters incorporating local knowledge on how to cope	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 Recommendation f)	Policy 4, 11; Ambition 2, 4; Objective B, D; draft Natural Flood Management guidelines
Developing convincing programs to prevent depopulation, including: develop affordable housing for new households and for local retirees, ensure a mix of commercial outlets that serve the local community, further develop and market local products that benefit residents and local farmers,	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 Recommendations g ii), g ii) and g iii)	Policy 10; Ambition 5; Objective E; Local Plan

Developing an interpretation strategy which communicates the different strands of the Outstanding Universal Value	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 Recommendation h)	Policies 5, 15; Ambition 8; Objective H
Conservation of landscape-defining features and vernacular architecture and Victorian buildings, in the whole property	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 41 COM 8B.30 Recommendation i)	Policy 1, 5, 15 Ambition 7 Objective C, G
2025 recommendations		
Addressing private vehicular traffic in the property	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 3	Policy 14; Ambition 9; Objective I
Integrating OUV concerns into Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 3	Policy 4, 11; Ambition 2, 4; Objective B, D; draft Natural Flood Management guidelines
Monitoring water quality in Lake Windermere	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 3	Policy 4; Ambition 2; Objective B; work of the Love Windermere Partnership
Integrating the Interpretation Strategy into the Partnership Plan	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 4	Policies 5, 15; Ambition 8; Objective H
Affordable and local needs housing; restricting second homes and holiday lets	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 5	Policy 10; Ambition 5; Objective E; Local Plan
Elterwater Quarry development proposal	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 6	Local Plan
Honister Slate Mine zip-wire proposal	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 7	Local Plan
Outstanding Universal Value-led vision to guide prioritisation of forms of enjoyment/leisure activities	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 8	Policy 15; Ambition 8; Objective H

Unsealed road use	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 9	Policy 14, 15; Local Plan; LDNPA Business Plan
Hefting system	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 10	Policy 1, 6; Ambition 6; Objective F
National long-term strategy for agro-pastoral system support	UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 47 COM 7B.136 Recommendation 11	Policy 1, 6; State Party (through DCMS, DEFRA, Historic England and Natural England) with Partnership support

Appendix 10 - Sustainability Appraisal

What is the Sustainability Appraisal?

In accordance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations, the Sustainability Appraisal includes an appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' considered during the preparation of the Plan.

Executive summary

Overall, this Plan offers an important opportunity to address many of the sustainability issues prevalent in the Lake District. This Plan provides a balanced approach to delivering sustainable management of the Lake District, its Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. Assessment of the Plan policies against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives has identified a wide range of potential positive effects, with many significantly positive effects possible. No significant adverse effects were identified by the appraisal.

The Sustainability Appraisal is here:

https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0033/188691/Sustainability-Appraisal-Oct-2025.pdf

Appendix 11 - Equality Impact Assessment

What is the Equality Impact Assessment?

The Equality Impact Assessment focuses on the potential impact of the Plan in relation to the Lake District's communities, residents, visitors, stakeholders and the business community. Specifically, it focuses on groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Executive summary

This Equality Impact Assessment has evaluated any potential impacts arising from the Partnership Plan on protected characteristics. The assessment has not identified any potential adverse impacts and instead considers that the Plan will promote and encourage equality, diversity and inclusion across the Lake District.

The Equality Impact Assessment is here:

<https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf/file/0035/188693/Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sept-2025.pdf>

Appendix 12 - Habitat Regulations Assessment

What is the Habitat Regulations Assessment?

The Habitat Regulations Assessment identifies, describes and assesses the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan on European designated sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites) within and around the Lake District area.

Executive summary

The Habitat Regulations Screening Assessment examined the Plan's policies for any impacts on the European Sites within or within 15km of the National Park. The assessment further considered in-combination effects with other relevant plans and strategies. The Habitat Regulations Assessment concluded that, provided the mitigation measures are implemented, the Partnership's Plan would not give rise to any effects which would harm the integrity of sites. In conclusion, subject to mitigation measures, the Partnership's Plan will not lead to likely significant effects on European Sites within or outside of the National Park boundary.

The Habitat Regulations Assessment is here:

https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0034/188692/Lake-District-National-Park-Partnership-Plan-HRA-Sept-2025.pdf

Appendix 13 - Supporting Evidence

In preparation for the development of this Plan, seven thematic evidence papers were prepared. These looked at the following topics:

- Climate action
- Nature and land management
- Farming
- A Lake District for the nation
- Transport
- Communities and the economy
- Historic environment and the cultural landscape

Each paper sets out the headline facts and figures, discusses the current issues and future opportunities and provides links to the principal legal and strategic documents for the theme. Supporting documents can be read here: [Supporting Documents](#)

Appendix 14 - Select glossary of terms

A

Active travel journeys made by walking, wheeling, or cycling. It includes trips that are made by foot, pedal-cycles, e-cycles, adapted cycles, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, push-scooters and on horseback

Attributes (world heritage)

attributes are aspects of a world heritage site which are associated with or express the site's Outstanding Universal Value. Attributes can be tangible or intangible.

B

Blended finance (nature) using a mixture of public funding, such as from agri-environment scheme grants with private finance, which could be from philanthropic giving or through schemes that encourage the purchase of environmental credits

Buffer Zone (world heritage)

buffer zones are clearly delineated area(s) outside a world heritage site and adjacent to its boundaries which contribute to the protection, conservation, management, integrity, authenticity and sustainability of the Outstanding Universal Value of the site.

C

Catchment an area where water and rainfall naturally drains, such as from a mountain into a river valley

Catchment management managing the land and water resources within a catchment area to ensure sustainable water quality and availability

Commoning the use of common land where people (known as commoners) have rights to graze livestock, gather wood and so on

Core Nature Areas SSSIs (defined below) which are in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition, National Nature

Reserves and public woodland under favourable management for biodiversity (the national forest estate). See: [30by30 on land in England: confirmed criteria and next steps - GOV.UK](#)

D

Diffuse Pollution Plans a joint Natural England and Environment Agency tool used to plan and agree strategic action at the catchment-scale, in relation to diffuse pollution affecting protected sites.

E

Ease of use (footpaths) measured and monitored through annual surveys whereby a randomly selected sample of paths (comprising 5% of the total length of a rights of way network) is surveyed using a nationally agreed methodology, which is applied across all national parks to enable comparison and benchmarking to be undertaken. The surveys cover surfaces, gates, stiles, bridges, signage and highlight any obstructions on the route, such as fallen trees

F

Farm A multifaceted rural business centred around the core action of producing annual outputs of food or livestock for selling for onward breeding or into the food chain

Farm diversification adding enterprises to a farm business outside of agricultural activity, utilising the farm's resources such as land and buildings, as well as skills and knowledge. It can provide a significant additional income to a farm business, depending on the opportunities available to a particular farm. See the [Farm Diversification - Upland Farmer Toolkit](#)

Functioning hefting and commoning system

one that is workable and financially viable for the commoners and graziers, is genetically resilient, and is multi-functional, offering environmental stewardship, sustainable food production and community resilience in remote areas, as well as representing a deep connection between livestock and people, with knowledge and skills passed down through the generations.

G

H

Hefting a traditional practice where sheep learn to stay within a certain area of open, unfenced land without needing physical boundaries.

Heritage assets defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance because of its historic interest

I

J

K

L

Level 1 archaeological survey

a programme of non-intrusive field evaluation which seeks to determine, record and report on the presence, nature, extent, preservation and significance of archaeological remains within a defined area. The evaluation is conducted through a systematic walkover survey recording heritage assets encountered within the scope of study.

Local (worker) either a Lake District resident working in the Lake District, or a resident of an immediately surrounding area – such as the west coast, Furness peninsula, Kendal and Penrith environs etc – that lives just outside the Lake District but travels into it to work.

M

N

Nationally designated heritage assets

world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, registered

battlefields and protected wrecks that are on the National Heritage List for England.

Nature-friendly farming There is no fixed definition of nature friendly farming. Nature friendly farming is an umbrella term to describe farming systems and practices that enhance and protect biodiversity and contribute to tackling climate change alongside food production. [nature-friendly-farming.pdf](#)

Non-designated heritage assets

sites which are not on the National Heritage List for England but have a degree of significance because of their historic interest

Non-protected sites (nature)

areas which are of significance for nature but are not protected sites (see below) and include County Wildlife Sites

O

Outstanding Universal Value

an explanation as to why a world heritage site is of the highest importance to the global community

P

Protected Sites (nature) areas which are protected for nature through national, European and international legislation and include National Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (see below), Marine Protected Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protected Sites and RAMSAR sites (wetland sites of international importance)

Public transport buses, trains, boats and other forms of transport that are available to the public with fixed fares and defined routes or areas covered

Q

R

Regenerative economy one that aims to restore and renew natural resources rather than deplete them, focusing on sustainable and

equitable growth while prioritising environmental and social wellbeing

Resilient landscapes landscapes with the ability to withstand and recover from disturbances such as natural disasters and climate change (including flooding and drought) and human activities (including wildfires). Key factors for resilience include biodiversity, healthy ecosystems and sustainable management practices.

Route standard (paths) refers to the gradings associated with the Miles Without Stiles network. There are four grades: for all, for many, for some and challenge. The specifications for these can be found here: www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/mileswithoutstiles

S

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

legally protected areas of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora they contain, or important geological or physiological features that may lay in their boundaries

Soil health the health of the soil: in a healthy soil, the interactions between chemistry (pH, nutrients and contaminants), physics (soil structure and water balance) and biology (including earthworms, microbes and plant roots) are optimised for the conditions in that place.

Sustainable communities

places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all

Sustainable transport any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport. (Campaign for Better Transport – National Planning Policy Framework definition.)

Sustainable travel has a reduced impact on the wider environment, through reduced emissions and which has reduced impacts on local communities through parking and congestion.

T

U

UNESCO

UNESCO stands for the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organisation

V

W

X

Y

Z

Appendix 15 - Action Plan template and examples

Action No	Summary of Action Aim (e.g. more bus users)	Proposed Action wording	What does success look like (by 2028)	Ambition No(s) this action supports	Objective letter(s) this action supports	Suggested lead Partner organisation	Suggested Partners to help deliver	Budget: £ (source)/in kind resource	Do we have a baseline or need to establish one (Y/N/E)	Baseline =
1	Increased carbon storage potential of the landscape	Ensure at least 500ha of peat restoration works is undertaken each year	1000ha of the Lake District's peat is under restoration	1, 2, 3, 4	D	CWT (hosting Cumbria Peat Partnership)	CLA LDNPA NE NFU NT JU WCRT/RTs	tbc	Y	PLTOF (2026)
2	Increased carbon storage potential of the landscape	Establish 250 ha of trees in the landscape and/or woodlands each year	500ha increase in tree and woodland cover	1, 3, 4	D	FC	CLA FE FLD LDNPA NE NFU NT RSPB JU WCRT/RTs	tbc	Y	PLTOF (2026)
3	Delivering affordable and local needs housing	Secure planning consent for affordable and local needs homes at Windermere Gateway (in line with land allocation CSE01M) by April 2028	Planning consent has been granted	5	E	W&F	LDNPA NT	tbc	Y	0