

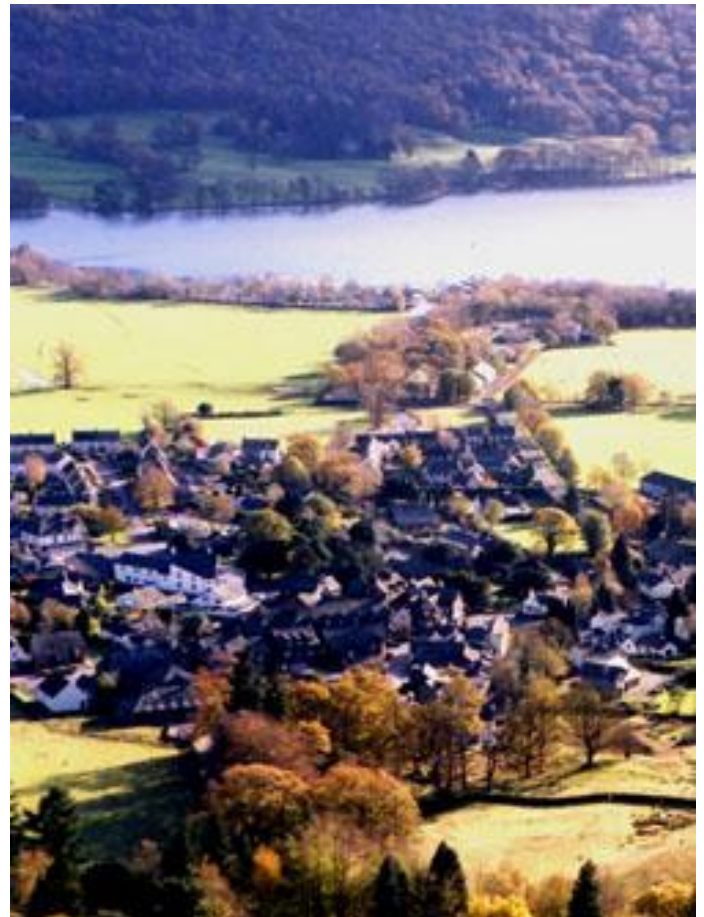
CONISTON

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2015

A Community Planning document which will supplement the Local Plan as part of the DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE AREA and will be in place from adoption until 2025.



*Coniston from
Maundry Bank, 1940*



*Present day Coniston
from Maundry Bank*

Coniston Neighbourhood Plan

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Why have a Neighbourhood Plan and what is the process?

In September 2012 Coniston Parish Council completed the review of the second Parish Plan produced by the community. From this there were some issues identified specifically about planning, the future of Coniston and in particular ensuring the community retains control of its own destiny. As a result it was identified a Neighbourhood Plan would be beneficial.

One of the facilities of the Localism Act 2011 is to enable more decision-making at a local level. One way to do this is to encourage communities to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. The Coniston Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Coniston Parish Council as the Qualifying Body and covers the whole of the parish - this Neighbourhood Area was designated on 26 February 2014. The Plan complies with European and national legislation.

This Plan will be in place until 2025 and is designed to cover future development up to that time. However this date will not form a cut-off point. Future development beyond this date will continue to be proposed and a new Neighbourhood Plan may then be required to replace this one.

The local planning authority (Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA)) will consider the contents of this Plan when making decisions on planning applications. This is to ensure that the views of the local community are taken fully into account in the decision making process.

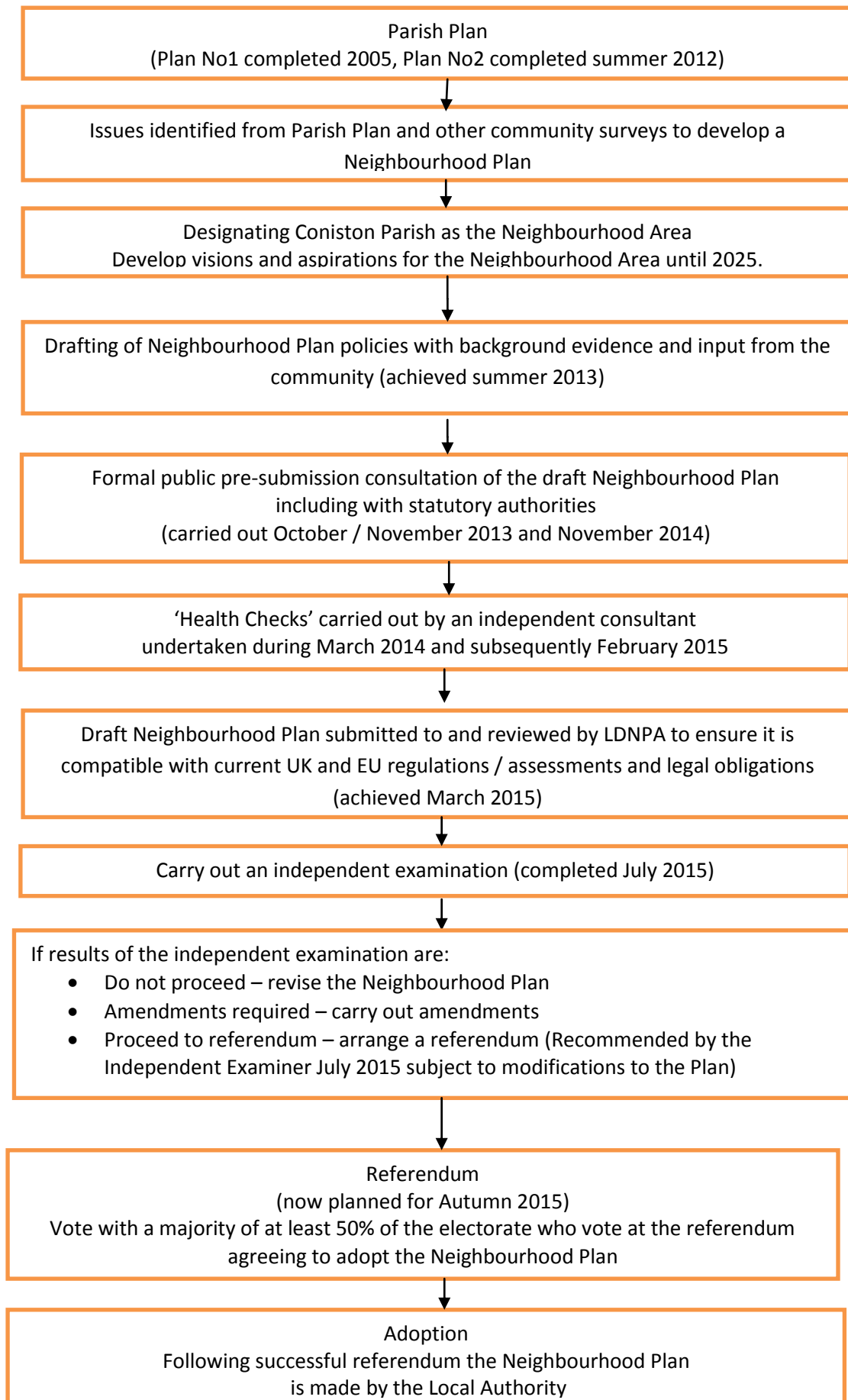
The Coniston Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan for the area and will sit along-side the LDNPA's Local Plan. It covers the period 2015 to 2025. The Coniston Neighbourhood Plan has drawn the fundamental issues that it addresses directly from the 2012 Coniston Parish Plan, on-going community engagement and the work of Coniston and Torver Community Land Trust.

It is expected that the Neighbourhood Plan will assist in overcoming the major issues that the community is facing which are:

- the loss of village homes (homes occupied permanently)*, *the rate of loss is currently running at between 2 and 4 homes per quarter.*
- the lack of affordable homes to allow village families to remain in their home village, *despite successful affordable housing schemes the full requirement of affordable homes has never been satisfied.*
- the lack of local homes to allow professional families to move to the village, *it is estimated that, even if the affordable housing need can be fully satisfied, the resident population numbers will continue to decline as village homes are lost to the weekend home sector.*
- the effect on the village of the decline in tourism within the Lake District, *there is firm evidence that the steady rise in tourism that occurred during the 1980's and 1990's ceased in the early years of the 21st century and there is now a slow decline.*
- the potential for overburdening the community with excessive tourism *in the 2011-12 Coniston Parish Plan a 'top-tier' concern voiced by the community was that there should be no major developments or over-developments*
- and the potential loss of village facilities. *as the population declines village facilities will be lost, especially where they are operated by volunteers who are village people.*

***FOR INFORMATION** - It is appreciated that controlling the loss of village homes may not be possible in the present term by use of planning legislation. However Coniston and Torver Community Land Trust is currently running a project to encourage owners of smaller second homes to allow their home to be used for permanent and local occupancy on short-term leases by reviewing the cost comparison between using the properties this way as an alternative to holiday lets. Changes to legislation in the future may make the control of the loss village homes more practical.

Flowchart of Process of Neighbourhood Plan for Coniston



Introduction to Coniston

“.....Further off the beaten track, and culturally distinct from the rest of South Lakeland, Coniston is fiercely independent, and while you’ll get a warm welcome wherever you go, the locals aren’t quite as in thrall to the gods of tourism and rampant consumerism as elsewhere in the Lakes.....”.

Mark Sutcliffe, Editor, Country Walking Magazine, May 2014.

Coniston is the fifth largest settlement within the Lake District National Park. It is an old mining village and the evidence of many centuries of copper mining and slate quarrying are still very evident within the parish.

The Coniston Mine closed in 1898. It was one of the largest copper mines in Europe during the Victorian era and following closure many of the skilled miners moved away from the parish to find work elsewhere. The slate quarrying industry started in the 13th Century. It continued to expand until the middle years of the 20th Century but has since declined significantly. During the 1960’s approximately 60% of village families were involved in some way with the slate industry and their descendents still live within the parish. This industry still supports a significant number of local families.

The first tourists arrived in Coniston during the 18th Century. Later, during the Victorian era, tourism expanded greatly, partially as a result of the opening of the passenger railway service to the village. The Coniston Branch Line closed to passenger traffic in 1959, a victim of the Beeching cuts.

Coniston is a relatively isolated village. The nearest large villages to Coniston are Hawkshead, 4 miles away and Ambleside, 8 miles away. However, despite being relatively isolated, Coniston is a popular tourist resort and is regarded by many as the finest venue for mountain walking in Northern England. Consequently its main popularity is with those who enjoy outdoor pursuits on its mountains and lake. Fortunately, despite its popularity, Coniston has not developed into a mass-tourist venue in the same way as other Lake District villages have. It retains a busy village community and still maintains a ‘local’ character which is well-appreciated by its regular discerning visitors.

Notwithstanding the fact that Coniston has a strong community, the Parish Plan exercises in both 2005 and 2012 identified a number of major issues that were already beginning to affect the community or were likely to affect the community in the near future.

The major issue of concern identified by the 2005 Parish Plan was a critical need for affordable housing to retain young village families that would otherwise move away from their home village. A housing-needs survey in the same year showed that a further 66 affordable homes were required. At that time over 40% of the housing stock in Coniston had ceased to be village homes but had become second homes and holiday houses. By the time the 2012 Parish Plan had been completed this figure had risen to 49%. The report ‘Affordable Housing for Lakeland Communities’ published by Coniston and Torver Community Land Trust (CLT) is also relevant evidence.

The 2012 Parish Plan reinforced this need for affordable housing but also reflected on further major community concerns including the fact that future development within the community both to provide affordable housing, and also for commercial reasons, should be on a modest scale.

An additional issue is the fact that the Lake District National Park, including Coniston has seen a decline in visitor numbers over the period 2008 to 2012. However this decline of numbers for Coniston is marginally less than the overall percentage decline within the National Park as a whole. Nevertheless it is clear that Coniston needs to re-focus on its main accolade; the fact that it is one of the leading mountain walking centres in Northern England. There is also a clear need to develop businesses not directly connected to tourism to reduce the dependency of the livelihood of the community on a single industry. To assist in this requirement it is essential to promote the introduction of Ultra High-speed Broadband.

Other potential issues that are likely to affect the community have been identified during the work of Coniston and Torver CLT. As well as identifying the acute need for affordable homes it has gone further and recognised that providing sufficient affordable homes will not prevent the population of the community from further decline. There is therefore a real need to encourage some families attracted to the expanding industries of Low Furness to set up permanent homes in the community either by purchasing existing properties or by allowing self-build of dwellings within the Parish.

The village at present

There is currently a good range of local services and social amenities including a primary and secondary school, fire station, post office and shops with basic supplies, although there are concerns about the potential future decline of these. The main employment locally is agricultural, slate quarrying and tourism although there are many other smaller local businesses. Coniston has a wide range of social and recreational opportunities. The population of the Parish is 928 (Census 2011).

Present special qualities of Coniston:-

- Thriving friendly village community – the number of clubs & societies is increasing.
- Rural old style community
- Picturesque landscape – enjoyed by local families and visitors to the village.
- Important flora & fauna
- Good range of local services & social amenities
- Village retains families that have been in the area for generations
- Iconic housing design, for example, The Banks, Yewdale Road shops, Tilberthwaite Avenue.
- Extensive recreational facilities on the mountains, lower fells, lake shore and lake for the benefit of the local community and visitors.

A vision for the parish in 2025

The parish of Coniston of 2025 will comprise of:

- a vibrant community with its current character still intact;
- a village that is similar to the present despite a small amount of growth and development;
- a permanent resident population that has increased; and
- have sufficient children to help maintain the viability of the primary and secondary schools.

Planning Process

Current planning policies


The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) Core Strategy 2010 explains how the Planning Authority will deliver the overall vision for the National Park strategically and spatially by 2025. These are core policies which are criteria or area based and which broadly guide development in the Lake District National Park as a whole.

Development in Coniston will be assessed against the relevant policies within the Core Strategy (Local Plan Part One) and specifically by Policy CS09: South Distinctive Area. The village is considered to be a Rural Service Centre, one of thirteen within the Lake District National Park. The Development Plan also comprises the LDNPA Allocations of Land and Minerals Safeguarding Areas – Parts Two and Three respectively of the Local Plan.

The Coniston Neighbourhood Plan is additional to the Core Strategy and in general conformity with it. The Neighbourhood Plan provides more in-depth policies that the community wishes to be pursued. It is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan including the Allocation of Land policy and the Minerals Safeguarding Areas, Parts 2 and 3 respectively.

Coniston Neighbourhood Plan Area



 Neighbourhood Plan Area

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Neighbourhood Plan Format

Each of the following eight Sections of the Neighbourhood Plan are set out using the following sub-sections:

Objectives – sub-component objectives of the vision.

Background Information – significant facts (including key outcomes of community consultation) that help justify the provisions in the policy that follows. This information is supplemented where appropriate with Annexes to the Plan and/or separate evidence and supporting documents. Reference is also made to relevant strategic policies in the Lake District National Authority Park Core Strategy.

Policy – the key development and land use requirement for the topic being presented.

How to Implement – how the policy will be applied to have its intended effect.

1. Our Community

Objectives

- 1.1 Coniston will remain a friendly, progressive, family-based parish of all ages with a wide range of facilities and services.
- 1.2 The unique character of Coniston and the surrounding landscape will be retained.

Background Information

In Coniston Parish Plan 2011/12 the following were requested to be retained by the community:-

- Maintain the character of the village
- Current facilities to stay within the village
- No major developments or over-developments

Following further engagement with local people the concerns and requirements of the community, as given in the Parish Plan 2011/12 have been included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Please refer to:

LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS02 – Achieving vibrant & sustainable communities.

Policy CNP 1 – Our Community

- 1.A The Neighbourhood Plan supports development of an appropriate scale that meets the needs of the community particularly where it enhances the role of Coniston as a rural service centre and helps to retain its unique character and maintain and enhance that of the spectacular surrounding landscape.**
- 1.B In particular the Neighbourhood Plan supports developments that provide direct community benefits**

How to Implement

Through the determination of planning applications.

Through ensuring that Coniston Parish Council and other appropriate bodies are involved at all stages of development.

“Appropriate scale of development” is that of a scale and nature appropriate to the character and function of Coniston as a Rural Service Centre

“Direct community benefits” is where the development brings a social or financial benefit to the community of Coniston secured by a planning condition or legal agreement.

2. Businesses

Objectives

- 2.1 To ensure that local businesses will prosper and expand, in particular providing additional quality, full-time, permanent and well-paid jobs.
- 2.2 The community and local businesses will have access to an effective broadband service across the Parish.

Background Information

Businesses referred to in Coniston Parish Plan 2011/12 as being important are:-

- Farming businesses
- Slate industry
- Filling station and motor mechanics
- Estate Management
- Bank
- Local shops
- Local cafes, pubs and hotels
- Local tradesmen
- Accommodation providers

Businesses which it is also acknowledged provide important employment for the community are:

- Slate quarrying industry,
- National Trust maintenance site and wood-yard, Boon Crag,
- Coniston Boating Centre site and associated businesses,
- Outdoor Pursuit Centres and Brantwood.

Please refer to:

- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS10 – Achieving design excellence
- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS20 - Vibrant settlement centres
- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS22 – Employment

Local income levels:

Average median household income in the National Park in 2011 was £26,899
(CACI 2012)

In Coniston the average median household income in 2011 was £21,126

Internet speeds currently obtained by village businesses are 0.5 Mbps (standard high-speed broadband)

The number of local permanent residents (LPR's) who are employed locally is approximately 37%.

There has been a slow natural decline in the tourism industry in the Lake District since 2002. Coniston, along with several other Lake District communities is keen to support and assist new enterprises that create well paid jobs with year-round employment especially where it helps to develop alternative industry which is not directly dependent on tourism.

Policy CNP 2 - Businesses

- 2.A Development proposals will be supported that will enable the expansion and retention of existing local businesses. Support will also be given to development proposals for the establishment of new businesses that diversify and strengthen the local economy without significantly adversely affecting the local community**
- 2.B The upgrading of broadband in the Parish will be encouraged, including the introduction of ultra-high speed broadband at 50Mbps and any further appropriate improvements over time, to assist local businesses and the community as a whole.**

How to Implement – Action Plan

Through the determination of planning applications.

Coniston Parish Council will work with all relevant agencies and authorities including South Lakeland District Council, the Lake District National Park Partnership Business Taskforce and the CBI Small Business Taskforce to support development proposals that will enable the appropriate expansion of local businesses.

Coniston Parish Council will work with Connecting Cumbria to enable access to ultra-high speed broadband in Coniston for those who require it.

3. HOUSING – including affordable, empty properties, conversions, local needs homes, self-build & second homes

Objectives

- 3.1 To ensure that local people, including young families, will be able to live in their home village so that they can take an active part in community life.
- 3.2 To support new build schemes that will provide permanent and affordable homes to meet the needs of local people.
- 3.3 To encourage custom or self-build housing as a way of delivering more homes for local people.

Background Information

As requested in Coniston Parish Plan 2011/12:-

- Aim for small developments of typically up to 7 houses per site for local affordable housing
- Any additional dwellings within the Parish must meet the need for permanent homes within the village.
- Character of village is maintained
- Core of local people needed to live in houses in the village to maintain sustainability
- Concerns at the number of houses that do not have local occupancy clauses on them and the potential loss of these homes to the second home market.

Coniston Housing Needs Survey Report – 2013, carried out by Coniston and Torver CLT identified need of 31 dwellings, mainly 1 and 2 bedroomed. See the Coniston Housing-needs Survey 2013.

Census 2011

- Total households = 635 of which 216 are second / holiday homes (34.5%)(although local knowledge puts this figure at 47%)

Figures from Lake District National Park Authority:-

Median figures

- Average median house price in the National Park is £243,617 (CACI 2014)
- Average median household income in the National Park is £27,857 (CACI 2014)
- In Coniston Parish the average median household income is £23,971
- Based on median figures the income to house price affordability ratio is 8.7:1

Lower quartile figures

These refer to people on low incomes and lower house prices.

- House price in the National Park is £180,590
- Household income in the National Park is £15,324
- In Coniston Parish the household income is £13,701

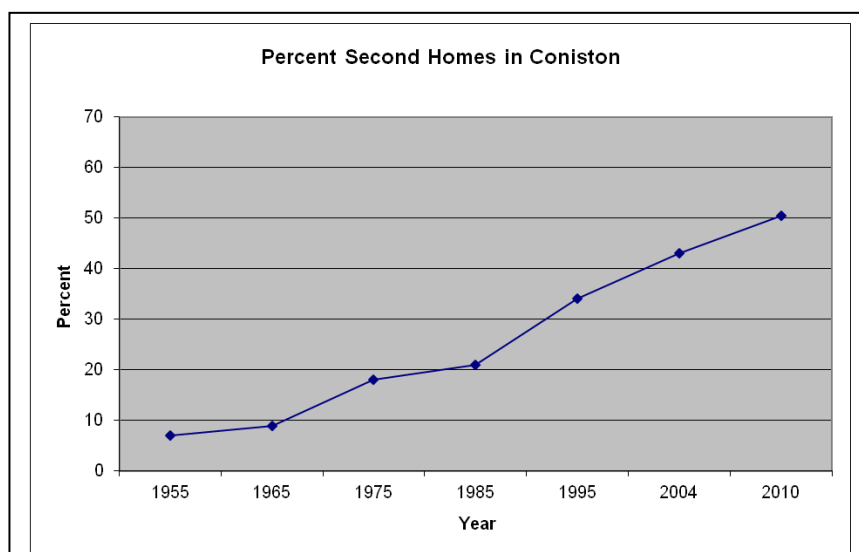
Based on mean figures income to house price affordability ratio for Coniston Parish is 10.2:1 (CACI 2014).

Strict Section 106 agreements have been applied to all homes developed in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver Community Land Trust since 2008 as well as local occupancy agreements on privately developed Local Needs housing.

Please refer to:

- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS10 – Achieving design excellence
- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS18 – Housing provision
- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS22a – Re-use of buildings for holiday letting accommodation
- LDNPA Allocations of Land site CO01H at land off Collingwood Close, Coniston

For definitions of the different types of housing please see Annex 8.



Coniston Parish Council and Coniston & Torver CLT are concerned at the effect that the reduction in permanent residents is having on community sustainability and vibrancy. In particular village voluntary services are at future risk.

The attached chart shows the percent of second homes in Coniston Parish Since 1955 data has been collected from:

1955, 1965 – District Council records
 1965, 1975 – Cllr Bill Rawdon Smith
 1985 – calculations by the local GP

1995 – 2010 – calculations made by Coniston Housing Trust

Policy CNP 3 - Housing

3.A Housing development will be permitted that provides:-

- **Housing that meets local need and local affordable need; or**
- **Custom or self build housing for permanent occupation in accordance with the Lake District National Park’s Supplementary Planning Guidance on Housing Provision.**

How to Implement – Action plan

Through the determination of planning applications.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with Coniston and Torver CLT will strive to ensure that:

- sufficient affordable homes are available to satisfy the results of current housing-needs surveys. Priority will be given through Section 106 agreements, or equivalent, to residents of Coniston parish who are in need of an affordable home when such homes are allocated or re-allocated,

- sufficient Local Needs Homes are available to satisfy the results of the most recent Coniston and Torver Local Needs Homes survey (for details please see Companion Document '*Evidence to back up the Coniston Neighbourhood Plan*').

Developers should refer to the Lake District National Park Authority's Housing Provision Supplementary Planning Document 'How we use Core Strategy Policy CS18 'Housing Provision' in Planning Decisions' Adopted March 2014.

Developers are requested to consult the Coniston and Torver CLT on the preparation of proposals for new housing developments and conversions.

4. Buildings, Structures & Sites of Historic Importance

Objectives

- 4.1 The unique character of the area will continue to be retained and enhanced by conserving locally important sites of historic value.

Background Information

Coniston currently has 5 Grade II* and 51 listed Grade II sites within the parish and 9 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. (See data in the Companion Document '*Evidence to back up the Coniston Neighbourhood Plan*'). There are also Heritage at Risk sites within the Parish.

However, there are significant numbers of sites in the parish which are considered to be important to the community but are not covered by any form of English Heritage listings.

In August 2008 an historic building and site survey of Coniston sites was carried out jointly by the Coniston Local History Group and Coniston Parish Council. This resulted in an informal list of locally important heritage assets being drawn up. The Lake District National Park Authority will be requested to consult on and formally approve this local list so that it can be used to guide planning decisions.

Please refer to:

LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS27 – The Acclaimed Historic Environment

Policy CNP 4 – Buildings Structure & Sites of Historic Importance

Development proposals will seek to conserve and enhance the character, integrity and setting of the historic environment including:-

- **Scheduled ancient monuments,**
- **Listed Buildings;**
- **Locally Important Heritage Assets**

How to Implement

Through the determination of planning applications.

5. Community Facilities and Services

Objectives

- 5.1 To retain and enhance Community facilities and village services, and to encourage new facilities and services where necessary.

Background Information

Valued services identified in Coniston Parish Plan 2011/12:

- GP surgery with dispensing service
- District Nurses
- First Responders
- Coniston Carers
- Coniston Sports & Social Centre and Football field
- Coniston CE Primary School (2014 – number on roll 48, school capacity 70)
- John Ruskin Secondary School (2014 – number on roll 154, school capacity 240)
- Coniston Childcare
- Outdoor swimming pool at John Ruskin Secondary School
- Playground
- Sports grounds – bowling, cricket & tennis
- Coniston Institute
- Fire Station & retained Fire & Rescue crew
- Coniston Mountain Rescue Team
- Library
- Public toilets
- Youth Clubs
- Churches
- Recycling facilities
- Number of clubs and organisations in the village
- Tourist Information Centre

Please refer to:

- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS19 – Community, health & education facilities
- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS20 – Vibrant settlement centres
- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS21 – Open space and recreation

Policy CNP 5 – Community Facilities and Services

- 5.A Development proposals that will provide new and improved community facilities and services will be supported.**
- 5.B Measures to retain and develop existing community facilities and services that may be at risk of closure will be investigated and supported where feasible, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a community need for the facility or service or that the community use of the property is no longer suitable or viable.**

How to Implement

Through the determination of planning applications.

6. Tourism

Objectives

- 6.1 Coniston will continue to offer a quality tourism experience which works in harmony with the local landscape and biodiversity, and brings benefits to the local community.

Background Information

Coniston was one of the very first villages in the Lake District to welcome visitors (1710). During the early years of the 19th century tourism, as an industry, developed despite lack of suitable means of transport, as intrepid travellers reached the locality on foot and wrote about the village and its scenic attractions. Today, Coniston's special attraction as a visitor destination is that it still appears as a hard-working, friendly, 'real' local village and maintains a healthy distance from the pressures of mass-tourism and tacky tourist attractions. Those who provide facilities for visitors should aim to maintain this quality of service and Coniston's unique appeal to avoid discerning visitors from going elsewhere.

Currently (2014) the number of bed-spaces available for visitor accommodation are:

Hotels	57
Guest Houses / B&B	104
Youth hostels	86
Self catering accommodation	150

The following visitor attractions can be enjoyed in Coniston:-

- The landscape and natural history
- Coniston Water
- Coniston Boating Centre
- Steam Yacht Gondola
- Coniston Launch
- Ruskin Museum
- Brantwood House and Museum
- Coniston's rich industrial history
- Tarn Hows
- Rights of way and footpaths including Cumbria Way.
- Mountaineering venues, for example Dow Crag, Grey Crag.
- Iconic fell walking routes such as the ascent of Coniston Old Man.

Coniston has a Tourist Information Centre which has been run solely by local volunteers since 2008.

Many successful events are held within Coniston:-

- Records Week
- Coniston 14 Road Race – community organised event
- Malcolm Wilson Rally
- Coppermines / Grizedale Stages Rally
- Fred Whitton Four Seasons Ride
- Montane Lakeland 50 and Lakeland 100 Challenges
- Coniston to Barrow walk (as part of Keswick to Barrow walk)
- Guide Dogs Annual Charity Challenge
- Long distance swims

- Lakeland Trails Marathon & Coniston Challenge races

Important Visitor Accommodation available in the Parish

- Two Youth Hostels – Coppermines and Holly How
- Outdoor Education Centres – Low Bank Ground and Thurston
- Camping / caravan sites – Beckthwaite, Coniston Hall, Park Coppice, Pier Cottage
- Holiday Fellowship – Monk Coniston
- Hotels, guest houses and bed & breakfasts
- Self catering accommodation.

Visitor numbers for Coniston

- 250,000 – 300,000 (Jura Consultants producing the Ruskin Museum Business Plan for Bluebird Project in 2003)
- 30,000 Coniston Launch in 2010
- 27,934 Brantwood in 2010.

Visitor numbers for the Lake District National Park

- 15.8 million visitors a year (Source: STEAM 2009: Cumbria Tourism)
- 23.1 million tourist days (Source: STEAM 2009: Cumbria Tourism)
- Visitors to the Lake District coming by private motor vehicle: 89 per cent

Community concerns relating to tourism voiced during the Community Consultation exercise are that improved staff training is felt to be necessary within the tourist sector and the fact that some businesses would benefit significantly by up-grading their hospitality.

Please refer to:

- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS21 – Open space & recreation
- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS24 – Delivering sustainable tourism
- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS25 – Protecting the spectacular landscape
- LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS28 – Lakeshore development

Policy CNP6 - Tourism

- 6.A The development of new tourist attractions that have no significant adverse impact on the local community and are of an appropriate scale will be supported.**
- 6.B The development of proposals that constitute an appropriate extension and / or improvement of existing tourist attractions and services, in particular:-**
- **Steam Yacht Gondola**
 - **Coniston Launch**
 - **Ruskin Museum**
 - **Brantwood**
 - **Coniston Boating Centre**
 - **Industrial archaeological sites including The Coniston Coppermines, Penny Rigg Copper Mill and Coniston Old Man 18th Century slate workings, will be supported**

How to Implement – Action Plan

Through the determination of planning applications.

Coniston Parish Council will review development proposals from tourist providers including the Coniston Business Forum and will work and give advice to all tourist providers on the suitability of the proposals to the Community.

7. Transport / Traffic Management / Parking

Objectives

- 7.1 To ensure that the number of vehicles on the local road network will be sustainable, allowing local people to go about their daily business unhindered. Visitors will be encouraged to choose to explore the Coniston area by bus, boat, bike and foot as an alternative to car and will encourage the continued development of off-road facilities.
- 7.2 To improve the management of traffic and the provision of additional parking facilities where there is a proven need as part of a local traffic management scheme.

Background Information

Figures from Cumbria County Council:-

A593 Broughton to Torver southbound – average daily traffic in 2012 = 572 vehicles
 A593 Broughton to Torver northbound – average daily traffic in 2012 = 588 vehicles

A5084 Lowick Bridge southbound – average daily traffic in 2012 = 853 vehicles
 A5084 Lowick Bridge northbound – average daily traffic in 2012 = 932 vehicles

A593 Clappersgate southbound – average daily traffic in 2012 = 3290 vehicles
 A593 Clappersgate northbound – average daily traffic in 2012 = 3304 vehicles

Congestion issues occur during the following dates and times.

Route	Date period	Times
A593, Ambleside to Coniston	Bank holiday weekends plus weekends March to October. Weekdays, holiday periods plus June to September.	9:30 am to 5:00pm.
A593, Coniston to Broughton		
A5084, Torver to Lowick Green		
B5285, Hawkshead to Coniston		

The Community values the bus connections from Ulverston and Windermere (X12 and 505).

Currently there is limited coach parking with only 2 coach parking spaces available on Lake Road by Coniston Water and 3 coach parking spaces at Ruskin Avenue. Frequency of coach visits during the main tourist season (May to September) is:

Month	Average weekly visits
May	Average 6.5 a week, (1 per day)
June	Average 7.8 a week, (< 2 per day)
July	Average 9.7 a week, (1 to 2 a day)
August	Average 9.2 a week, (1 to 2 per day)
September	Average 5.5 a week, (up to 1 per day)
Other times	Average 2.3 a week, (up to 1 every 2 days)

The on-street time restricted parking on Yewdale Road, where the majority of the shops are located, is valued by the community. The free car parking is available on Coppermines Road, Station Road, Old Furness Road, the Walna Scar Fell Gate, Hawkshead Old Road, Shepherds

Bridge Lane, and other areas throughout the village is valued by the community and benefits visitors to the area.

Comparative details of visitor parking per week in the central village car park during the main tourist season is shown in the Companion Document '*Evidence to back up the Coniston Neighbourhood Plan*'.

Please refer to LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS14 – Sustainable transport solutions.

The community considers that many sections of the main roads serving Coniston are narrow with blind corners and present a hazard to both cyclists and pedestrians. Further use of main roads by cyclists should be discouraged until suitable alternatives are available.

The community has expressed concern about the fact that the permitted dimensions of tour buses that are allowed to use the main roads that serve the village has increased in recent years (by approximately 11%).

Policy CNP 7 – Transport / Traffic Management / Parking

- 7.A The development of new and improved off-road infrastructure for walkers, cyclists and horse riders will be supported.**
- 7.B Improvement to the management of traffic throughout the parish will be supported.**
- 7.C Additional parking facilities should be provided only where there is a demonstrated proven need as part of a local traffic management scheme.**

How to Implement – Action Plan

Through the determination of planning applications.

Coniston Parish Council will review with Cumbria County Council Highways the transport issues, including establishing off-road cycle routes to key locations within the parish, improving 2-way traffic on Lake Road and reviewing the need for additional car parking in the parish.

Coniston Parish Council will work with Lake District National Park Authority, National Trust and land owners to improve signage for footpaths and bridleways.

Coniston Parish Council will pursue new bridleways from Coniston to Broughton, Coniston-Hawkshead and around Coniston Water by liaising with landowners and horse riders.

8. Environmental Sustainability

Objectives

- 8.1 To protect the local environment, including the landscape, groundwater, special habitats, flora and fauna.
- 8.2 To ensure that the risk of flooding to the community is reduced.
- 8.3 To protect the water catchment area and to protect and enhance important environmental areas for their biodiversity and tranquillity.
- 8.4 To promote renewable and low carbon energy schemes that benefit the local community and that do not adversely affect the landscape character of the National Park or its Special Qualities.

Background Information

Coniston as a community is generally supportive of the LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS15 which requires that all new development incorporates the highest practical energy efficiency standards. Where possible, Coniston residents would also like to see existing buildings obtain higher still energy efficiency standards.

Renewable Energy

Potential sites for additional renewable energy hydroelectric schemes include:

- Former Far End Saw Mill site, fed from Yewdale Beck
- Scrow Beck (also known as Meally Gill) (above the existing Coppermines Beck scheme)

Flooding

The flooding events in 2005 and more seriously in 2009 suggest that increased storm rainfall events are to be anticipated. Part of Coniston is a designated flood risk area by the Environment Agency with serious potential threat to life and property.

Additionally, there are records of historic flooding in Coniston dating back to 1850. Flood modelling carried out by the Environment Agency confirms which areas in the village are at greatest risk of flooding. Twelve residential properties out of approximately 500 in the village were flooded in 2009 which is to date the worst flooding experienced in Coniston since 1950.

The sites in the Parish designated as being prone to flooding are shown on the Environment Agency flood map (April 2014 edition) (see Companion Document '*Evidence to back up the Coniston Neighbourhood Plan*').

There is a Low and Medium Risk of flooding within the village and a High Risk of flooding adjacent to the lake shore.

Definitions and references:

Quieter areas = restful, tranquil areas, free of loud noise, and also natural areas with no developments.

Green corridor = land close to urban environment with habitat to support wildlife, biodiversity and promotes environmentally sustainable forms of transport

Please also refer to:

LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS16 – Generating renewable and low carbon energy

LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS17- Development and Flood Risk

LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS25 – Protecting the spectacular landscape

LDNPA Core Strategy CS26 – Geodiversity and biodiversity

Policy CNP 8 – Environmental Sustainability

- 8.A The following areas will be protected and managed to enhance their environmental assets:-**
- **the Coniston & Crake Catchment area to ensure the long-term protection of water quality within the area.**
 - **Yewdale Wood to enhance its biodiversity as a green corridor**
 - **the quieter areas:**
 - **at the head of Coniston Lake in the Monk Coniston area**
 - **the Yewdale and Tilberthwaite Valleys**
 - **Coppermines Valley**
 - **the Common Lands to the south of the Village**
- 8.B Development proposals and engineering works which reduce the risk of flooding will be supported.**
- 8.C Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy schemes will be supported where such schemes are in accordance with national and strategic policies.**

How to Implement – Action Plan

Through the determination of planning applications. The management of development and land use change will be guided by the Lake District Landscape Character Assessment as set out in Core Strategy Policy CS25. This will assist in maintaining the special qualities of the water catchment area, the green corridor and the quieter areas. Additionally, Core Strategy Policy CS26 seeks opportunities to expand and strengthen the integrity, resilience and network of habitats, enhance priority habitats and species and promote and restore natural processes.

Coniston is supportive of renewable energy and the objectives of LDNPA Core Strategy Policy CS16. In particular, the parish is keen to attract renewable energy schemes that demonstrate evidence of community consultation at early stages in the development – especially when this leads to a tangible benefit to the community. This could, for example, be in the form of allowing community investment in the scheme or developer investment in other low carbon initiatives in Coniston. The Parish will identify potential schemes and invite interest from private funders.

The parish is keen to see its renewable energy opportunities optimally utilised. The parish is particularly keen to develop local hydroelectricity potential, and would like to see greater use of renewable heating – especially in off-gas buildings, to achieve the greatest reductions in fuel bills and carbon emissions. Therefore, as above, the parish will identify potential schemes and

invite interest from private funders.

Risk to the community from future flooding incidents will be significantly reduced by joint action between the Coniston Flood Forum Group, Coniston Parish Council, local authorities and the Environment Agency.

Monitoring and Plan Review

Coniston Parish Council, supported by the Lake District National Park Authority will monitor and review progress annually of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The attached Performance Monitoring Framework (Annex 2) shows how the implementation of each policy in the Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken and what efforts will be made to address under-performance.

An overarching review of the issues and concerns within the community will take place every 5 years. If this and/or the annual monitoring work shows that the Neighbourhood Plan is no longer fit for purpose then work will start on altering part or producing a new Plan.

Otherwise it is envisaged that the Plan will be replaced by a new one in 2025.

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Complementary Supporting Actions – These do not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan

Policy 2

Sites for development for employment and also for housing are selected by the Coniston & Torver Community Land Trust (CLT) in conjunction with Coniston Parish Council and also the planning team at the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA).

Coniston Parish Council will campaign to improve transport access to Coniston to enhance the availability of people commuting to and from the village for employment purposes.

Policy 3

Coniston Parish Council and the Coniston & Torver CLT will strive to have the restriction rescinded concerning the current 'local connection' definition for occupancy of Local Need homes. Currently occupancy is restricted to those who originate from the South Distinctive area of the Lake District National Park as defined by the LDNPA's Housing Provision Supplementary Planning Document.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with Coniston & Torver CLT wishes the local connection area to be extended in the future to include parishes in surrounding areas as well as the whole of Low Furness. Historically, Coniston has close employment and cultural links with Low Furness and we wish to be able to encourage those who move to the expanding industries of this area, for example GKN plc and the Barrow Shipyard site of BAE Systems, to be able to purchase homes in Coniston built to the Local Homes criteria.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with Coniston & Torver CLT is keen to continue the work previously carried out in partnership with the LDNPA to develop, as a joint project, a list of sites which may be suitable for housing and which, in total, will meet the existing housing need, as assessed through the Housing Needs Surveys. They will also consider housing needs under Local Needs Homes and Affordable Housing for Sale criteria.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with Coniston & Torver CLT will encourage the return of weekend homes to permanent occupancy.

Coniston & Torver CLT will continue to monitor and record the reduction in numbers of permanent village residents and will publish the results periodically. They will also recommend effective corrective action to take to halt such a decline.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT will encourage new developments to be of a style in keeping with the village and use local materials and where possible, local tradesmen.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT will lobby South Lakeland District Council to increase Council Tax on second homes. Coniston Parish Council will also lobby central Government, through our Member of Parliament, to amend the planning regulations so that the conversion of dwellings to holiday lets requires planning permission for change of use.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT will work to encourage the return of existing second homes to housing that meets local need.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT will maintain a list of empty homes and will actively endeavour to return homes to the local affordable housing stock

by either assisting the home owner to obtain funding to carry out improvements or by acquiring the lease/ownership of the home to carry out the work.

The Coniston and Torver CLT will continue to assist planning inspectors during planning appeals and actively monitor and comment on the results of appeals.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT will continue to oppose the development of all housing which is out of proportion and context to the surroundings and is not sympathetic to the immediate setting and neighbouring buildings.

Policy 4

The list of locally important heritage assets will be reviewed periodically by Coniston Parish Council and Coniston and Torver CLT in conjunction with the Coniston Local History Group.

Policy 5

The services given in the Background Information will be monitored carefully for issues or trends that may affect their business so that any necessary action can be taken in a timely manner which may prevent loss of specific services.

Coniston Parish Council will facilitate an annual meeting of public and private stakeholders of relevance to the area to provide positive feedback and ensure service providers are aware of the relative isolation of Coniston and the problems that could occur if facilities were closed or removed.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT will have regular contact with both schools in the village and be aware of any potential required changes.

The community considers it essential to retain a primary and secondary school in the Neighbourhood Area. Coniston Parish Council will strive to help maintain these facilities by making sure affordable housing needs are completely met, thereby ensuring young local families can remain in the parish and also by encouraging second home owners to allow their properties to be leased to those wishing to remain in the community.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT will develop a Community Asset Register for South Lakeland District Council to ensure the community is told when any properties on this register come up for sale thereby enabling the community to acquire the property if appropriate.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT will develop a Parish Register for vulnerable properties and land not eligible for inclusion in the Community Asset Register to enable the community to protect them and have some control over future use (see also Policy 4).

Policy 6

Coniston Parish Council will monitor the effect on Coniston of the recent decline in tourism in the Lake District National Park and help, discuss and advise both those serving the tourist industry and also the wider community on what development proposals would be acceptable to counteract this decline, in accordance with the policies of this Plan.

Coniston Parish Council will continue to encourage visitors to make use of, and enjoy the outdoor opportunities provided by the mountains, forests, fell-sides and the Lake that are within the Parish.

Coniston Parish Council will also support and encourage tourist signposting of the above attractions from both the A590 and A591 routes.

Coniston Parish Council will encourage and assist tourism providers to build on the present accolade that Coniston is one of the leading centres for mountain walking in the North of England.

Coniston Parish Council is keen to support organised events that make use of the Parish's natural mountain, fell and water features where they are in accordance with the policies of this Plan and do not interfere with the life of the community or create overcrowding or excessive noise. In particular Coniston Parish Council will also continue to encourage and support recreational events that:

- provide a direct economic benefit to the Parish community,
- use the Cumbria County Council Notification of Events Form
- follow guidance given in Nurture Lakeland Guide to Sustainable Organised Recreational Events
- publicise their events to the community in advance
- Have minimal negative effect on the local community.

Policy 7

Coniston Parish Council will encourage authorities to improve the local road network to increase ease of access to and from Coniston for all road users.

Coniston Parish Council will work with bus transport authorities to examine the feasibility of: establishing new routes such as linking Coniston directly to the West Coast Main Line rail services at Oxenholme via Ambleside and Hawkshead, and improving the connections between new electric train services running from Manchester Airport into Windermere station once electrification to Windermere has been completed.

Coniston Parish Council will work with local organisations and authorities on car park pricing with the aim of establish appropriate realistic pricing for car parks to support the community, local businesses and help encourage visitors to the area.

Coniston Parish Council will work with Cumbria County Council Highways Department to accommodate the parking of additional coaches at agreed locations on the edge of the village.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT will work with Cumbria County Council Highways, the LDNPA Planning Department and landowners to survey the car-parking needs for residents and visitors to the village and establish any required off-road parking to meet the results of the survey.

Coniston Parish Council will work with Cumbria County Council Highways to identify possible solutions to the problems that are likely to be caused by the permitted increase in the size of tour buses using the narrow main roads into the village.

Policy 8

Coniston Parish Council will support and promote any work that is undertaken to protect and enhance the natural environment and the landscape of the parish.

Studies by Coniston and Crake Catchment Partnership are ongoing with respect to the effect of current environmental issues on the long term water quality in Coniston Water and associated watercourses.

Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with Coniston Flood Forum will liaise with the Environment Agency to request and support any hard engineering solutions to flooding threat and associated planning requirements and to ensure these plans are implemented in a timely manner. They will liaise with Cumbria County Council to ensure that all drains and gullies are kept well maintained to an agreed schedule to guard against surface water flooding. They will also ensure that full accurate assessments of flooding consequences are carried out with all proposed new developments in the parish.

Coniston Parish Council will work with South Lakeland District Council and Cumbria County Council to educate the parish on reducing wastage (for example water & energy saving) and to encourage the development of environmentally friendly schemes (for example walking buses).

Process of Determining Planning Applications – This does not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan

Planning applications are processed by the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) Development Management Team. Applications are decided either through delegated powers by planning officers (Scheme of Delegation) or by the Development Control Committee.

The community is permitted to comment on planning applications and their comments are considered when applications are processed by the Development Management Team. A checklist has been drawn up by Coniston Parish Council in conjunction with the Coniston & Torver CLT to be used as an aid-memoir to ensure all relevant points are considered when community comments are drafted. (See Annex 6)

The Development Control Committee meets monthly to consider planning applications, enforcement issues and other matters relating to the Town and Country Planning Acts. The Committee consists of 14 members representing local and national interests drawn from Cumbria County Council and District Authorities in addition to appointments made by the Secretary of State (some of these from Parish Councils).

Specifically, over the past ten years, the community of Coniston has developed a close form of co-operation with its planning authority with regards to planning for the village. In particular it runs the programme for the development of affordable housing and 'local-needs' housing based on Housing Needs Surveys. It also monitors compliance with occupancy restrictions. Coniston has over 160 dwellings carrying some form of occupancy restriction and any potential abuse of a restriction is reported to the Compliance Team at the Planning Authority for investigation and, if necessary, corrective action.

Additionally, work taken on by the Coniston & Torver CLT include some tasks normally performed by Housing and Planning Authorities. A summary of the development of this co-operation is given in the Companion Document '*Evidence to back up the Coniston Neighbourhood Plan*'.

Glossary of Terms – Definitions of categories of homes

Section 106 – These legal agreements, made under the provisions of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, lay down the requirements agreed between the planning authority and the applicant. Section 106 agreements will remain in force even when ownership of the property changes.

Local Need Housing - Local need housing can only be occupied by someone who can demonstrate a local connection. This is secured through the use of legal occupancy restrictions applied to the home. No price control mechanism is applied so these homes are not classed as 'affordable'. But the local occupancy clauses do in effect make the units slightly cheaper.

Affordable Housing – These comprise social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing. Affordable housing is provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing will include provisions to remain at an affordable price for all future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

- 1) **Social Rented Housing** is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.
- 2) **Affordable Rented Housing** is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).
- 3) **Intermediate Housing** are homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels (subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above). They include:
 - discounted sale, where the initial price is discounted in line with the affordable housing prices set by the Housing Authority and the discount is applied upon resale,
 - shared ownership, where a share of the equity is sold and a rent charged on the unsold equity.
 - shared equity, where a share of the equity is sold but unlike shared ownership no rental element is applied.

These can include other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

Village Homes - homes occupied permanently by village people (a definition used by the Coniston & Torver Community Land Trust) .

Second Homes - privately-owned habitable accommodation not occupied by anyone as their main residential home. Use is normally as:

- either a weekend or holiday home
- or as a furnished 'holiday let' home