



**Meeting of the Lake District National Park Partnership
Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 09:30-16:30 – Crook Memorial Hall**

MINUTES

Partner Name	Organisation	Apologies received
Celia Caulcott	Independent Chair	
	ACT	Lorraine Smyth Fran Richardson
Peter Frost-Pennington	Business Task Force	
Sarah Mitchell	Cumberland Council	Sally Lansbury
Rachel Kelly	Cumbria Association of Local Councils	Sonia Hutchinson
Robert Frewen	Country Land & Business Association	Harriet Ranson
	Cumbria & Lakes Local Access Forum	Carole Barr
Gill Haigh	Cumbria Tourism	
	Cumbria Wildlife Trust	Steve Trotter
Jen Cormack	Enterprising Cumbria	
Ellyse Mather	Environment Agency	Carol Holt
Jake Thompson Mark Holroyd Keith Jones	Forestry Commission/Forestry England	
Simon Johnson	Fresh Water Biological Association	
Mike Hill	Friends of the Lake District	
Kristof Fatsar Marie Smallwood	Historic England	
Sarah Swindley	Lake District Foundation	Keith Ashcroft
Steve Ratcliffe Gavin Capstick Rob Allison Phil Drane Chloe Swift Hanna Latty Tim Duckmanton Georgia Barnes Sarah Williams Tiffany Hunt Peter Walter	LDNPA LDNPA Member LDNPA Member	
Veronica Fiorato Adrian Anderson	LDNPP	
Clare Argent	Natural England	Kerry Rennie
	National Trust	Jez Westgarth
James Airey	National Farmers Union	
	RSPB	James Archer Phil Bolam

Luke Bryant	West Cumbria Rivers Trust	Jodie Mills
Phil Greenup	Westmorland and Furness Council	Judith Derbyshire Angela Jones
John Gorst	United Utilities	Kate Stark
Helen Manns	University of Cumbria	

Observers	Organisation	Apologies received
	Woodland Trust	Pete Leeson
Jody Ferguson	Local Nature Partnership	

1. Partnership Chair: agreement on a further 3-year term (Tiffany Hunt, LDNPA)

The Chair was asked to leave the room, whilst Tiffany Hunt (LDNPA) explained that the Partnership Chair would like to be considered for a second term of three years. This was unanimously approved by Partners and Celia was welcomed back into the meeting and thanked for her work for the Partnership thus far:

DECISION: Celia Caulcott approved as LDNPP Chair for further three year term (to Spring 2029)

2. Welcome and introduction (Chair)

The Chair welcomed attendees to Crook and outlined the agenda, noting the importance of determining approval for the Plan to progress to Authority and the planned workshop sessions.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting – 16th March 2026 Bassenthwaite (Chair)

No amends received, duly approved by Partners.

4. Chair's announcements (Chair)

Annual Report: data/case study responses

Partners were reminded to submit their annual report data and case studies (only a 37% response so far). It is an important report which details Partnership successes and challenges.

Climate Action: Action 1

Gavin Capstick reminded Partners to submit their climate/emissions reduction data as only 9 Partners have so far done so. Partners have been provided with a MS Form link to enable this (deadline is 30th June).

5. World Heritage Site updates (Veronica Fiorato, LDNPP and Steve Ratcliffe, LDNPA)

Veronica welcomed new WHS-focused resource and introduced Georgia Barnes (WHS Coordinator) and Sarah Williams (Communications and Engagement Officer) who were at the meeting.

Steve gave an update on unsealed roads, explaining that evidence was required before consideration of the need for Traffic Restriction Orders (TROs). There are nine (off-road)

routes in the Lake District that have been proposed for monitoring over a 9-year period, which would allow fluctuations in use to be analysed over time. UNESCO has requested that this be speeded up and options are being explored, but there are significant cost implications.

There is a first draft hefting strategy which is now feeding into a broader Agro-pastoral System strategy which is being worked up by LDNPA and Natural England. In response to a question from Partners, Hanna Latty confirmed this process will include input from the farming community. There are concerns around the viability of aspects of agro-pastoral and hefting practices and both will be integrated in the Agro-pastoral strategy. The strategy will need to overcome the nebulous nature (and scarcity) of data, when monitoring this.

Steve gave an update on the State of Conversation (SoC) report, which will go to the UNESCO committee in December 2026, with the first draft to be ready by September. The LDNPP will have oversight of this.

6. Defra Initiatives Update (Gavin Capstick, LDNPA)

Gavin Capstick (LDNPA) gave a further update (having already mentioned at the Bassenthwaite meeting and earlier) on DEFRA pilots including a place-based 'Pathfinder' project (involving a number of DEFRA 'family' partners) to develop a coordinated, common, aligned vision for activity across stakeholders. This is designed to help remove the barriers 'customers' may face when dealing with multiple DEFRA organisations.

*It has subsequently been confirmed that the Lake District will **NOT** be taking part in Pathfinder at this time which will remain focussed on Dartmoor.*

Gavin also reminded Partners of the (Hilary Cottam) 'Uplands Experiment' project involving nature protection and cultural heritage in two upland specific areas (Dartmoor and Cumbria). The new Secretary of State is supportive and committed to providing budget for the initiatives. A team is currently being built in Dartmoor. A pilot is being developed for this, with active discussions with DEFRA, and liaison with Dartmoor, on how the Lake District can be similarly involved.

ACTION: Further updates to be provided at Partnership meetings as applicable.

7. Devolution (Tom Andrews)

Tom gave an update on the Cumbria Combined Authority (CCA), its governance and organisation, competencies and areas of focus and priorities. He also outlined the timescales for the Mayoral elections. *See slides for detail.* Tom also confirmed that the CAA will become the transport authority for Cumbria (the unitary authorities will remain highways authorities) and that Enterprising Cumbria is now part of CCA and will be integrated further over time. The CCA is intended to add value, not duplicate activity already happening.

The Chair noted that interactions with the CCA, alongside the existing two local authorities, will be very important to the Partnership. The Partnership should also consider arrangement hustings with perspective Mayoral candidates in due course, and continue to engage to ensure the LDNPP and LDNPA are involved with the CCA.

Comments/discussion from Partners (various):

- Importance of the natural environment to Cumbria and how this interacts with CCA
- Relationship of the CCA and the LDNPA (GC advised the LDNPA was looking to be a non-constituent member of the CCA)
- Spatial interactions between the CCA and LDNPA as LDNPA is a planning authority
- Importance of neutral language/position around visitor levies/tourist tax powers – this has been an area where there is not consensus in the Partnership, for example. Some Partners voiced that it was important to consider the unintended consequences of any such scheme
- CCA may have working groups that will interact with LDNPP – these will be designed to be lean
- How to unlock funds for coastal visitor economy?
- Important of SMEs, agricultural and hospitality to Cumbria economy (not all about Barrow defence industry or nuclear)
- Should community and environment be linked in CAA sub-groups – risk of dilution?
- Questions around importance of science to Cumbria
- Whilst extra government funding is welcome, must be remembered the new authority will be small and have to spin multiple plates
- Water is a key Cumbrian resource, but need to think about how waste (grey) water is used to cool data centres (not drinking water!)
- Do traditional measures of growth work for Cumbria?
- Communication (roads and digital) challenges in Cumbria are key
- Discussion around how existing local authorities fit into the model
- Clear opportunity to leverage additional powers and funding over time as aspects of national funding have regional aspects and helps central government departments to deal with devolved authorities directly

ACTION: Share slides in follow up email and links to further devolution information and prospectus (complete)

Comfort Break

8. Partnership Plan (Chair)

The Chair reminded Partners of the enormous collective effort that the Plan development has represented for the Partnership, and thanked all Partners for the constructive support and resources dedicated to the process. The complexity and challenges of this piece of work should not be underestimated, nor the compromises that are so vital in such an endeavour.

Comments from Partners (various):

- The Plan is necessarily procedural at this stage but has agility to ensure it can incorporate new activity as necessary (with the scope of the objectives) given the initial 2-year action focus
- The overall big picture is ambitious and transformative, but here have been necessary compromises on specific areas (i.e. Transport) which may not have gone as far as some Partners wanted, but as far the Partnership could at this stage
- The Plan has an important balance, which is crucial for a 5-year period

- LDNPA Members have also scrutinised the Plan, as have the public with a wide-ranging online and in-person consultation events. That feedback has been valuable and has resulted in changes
- Many Partners agreed this was an 'exciting moment'
- Behavioural change (of people using the Park) is a long-term piece of work that will need careful development
- Partners discussed the difference between regulatory plans and statutory plans (such as the Partnership Plan)
- Partners discussed the use of Lake District data vs Cumbria data cuts and the impact on the Plan (Measures of Success) for transport

DECISION: Partners agreed the transport Measures of Success should align with the Cumbria Destination Management Plan targets.

Mike Hill (FoLD) outlined that they could not support Objective I (Transport) specifically as FoLD felt it was not ambitious/transformational enough, and that they felt the draft ignored the learnings from the Partnership Task and Finish Transport Group on visitor contributions. However, Mike made it clear that FoLD objecting to Objective I does not stand in the way of Partners approving the draft to go to Authority and FoLD fully support all other areas of the Plan.

ACTION: Partners approved the draft Partnership Plan to go forward to Authority (24th June) for consideration for adoption as the statutory plan for the Lake District.

The Chair thanked Partners for this important decision and congratulated all involved.

Veronica gave an overview of timescales based on final approval in June (July 'launch'), or further refinement requirement (which would mean Autumn go live – there is contingency for this but summer would be preferable so that delivery can commence sooner).

9. Workshop 1: Action Plan (Partnership Manager/Various Facilitators)

Partners were asked to comment on the refined actions in the Action Plan, with a facilitator supporting the discussion in each topic area (around the room). They also helped to populate/clarify outstanding questions regarding the 'other projects' section. Headline feedback was provided back to the meeting from each group. The output will be taken away and reviewed to feed into the Action Plan work.

Workshop output (photographs) available to Partners on request

Lunch Break

10. Workshop 2: Partnership membership (Partnership Manager/Chair)

Partners split into 4 tables for this conversation, with each group feeding back their top 3 ideas. Partners were asked to think about new Partners in terms of the who, and the why.

Workshop output (photographs) available to Partners on request

11. Workshop 3: Plan delivery – governance and reporting (Partnership Manager/Chair)

Partner groups were mixed up and they were asked to consider and discuss a suggested model (based on previous feedback from Rheged meeting). They were asked to discuss, with each group feeding back their top 3 ideas/suggestions and as well as highlighting and recording examples from other Partnerships or organisations that work well.

Workshop output (photographs) available to Partners on request

12.AOB (Chair)

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions, noted the enormous achievement of collectively developing and approving the Plan, and the helpful workshop discussions.

Further work will be done on the Action Plan draft ahead of Authority approval of the Plan and the move to delivery.

The Chair noted it was the final meeting for Mike Hill (Friends of the Lake District) and thanked him for his support for the Partnership, and his role as critical friend during the Plan development. Mike was presented with a Lake District gift, a card and a bottle of wine and he wished the Partnership well.

REMINDER: Next Partnership Meeting: 9th July – now confirmed as Blackwell House and Windermere Jetty. Agenda and papers to follow.

General list of acronyms used at Partnership meetings:

AES	Agri-Environment Schemes
BA	Breakthrough Actions
BDUK	Broadband Delivery UK
BTF	Business Task Force
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CLS	Carbon Landscapes Scheme
CHF	Community Housing Fund
CLT	Community Land Trusts
CLH	Community-led Housing
CW	Cumbria Woodlands
CWT	Cumbria Wildlife Trust
FC	Forestry Commission
FLD	Friends of the Lake District
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
FTTP	Fibre to the premises
FTE	Full time equivalent
GS	Gain Share
HLS	Higher Level Stewardship
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LDNPA	Lake District National Park Authority
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
NCA	National Character Area
NE	Natural England
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
NFM	Natural Flood Management
NFU	National Farmers Union
NT	National Trust
SOTP	State of The Park Report
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
TOR	Terms of reference
TVGM	Tactical Visitor Management Group
UU	United Utilities