



Lake District
National Park
Partnership

Lake District National Park Partnership

Annual report

2025 - 26



July 2026

LAKE DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP PLAN

Annual Report 2025-2026

Chair's Foreword

The current Lake District National Park Partnership Management Plan was published in 2020, during one of the most difficult times the county, country and world had experienced since the end of the Second World War. Covid had closed down much of the world, much of what we had taken for granted had changed, and the long-term consequences were unknown. That the plan was developed and published was a tremendous achievement. That as time has gone by we have been able to make progress against this plan is also a great achievement. Hence the importance of, on a regular basis, recording what has been done and the difference that has been made.

This report is the last time we will provide such a report on an annual basis for this Plan: next time we will set out the full achievements of the 2020-2026 management plan. I hope that you will see areas of real progress, and recognise that where there is challenge, there are many reasons why. I know that you will recognise the hard work that has gone into delivering the plan in the last year and join with me in thanking everyone who has contributed to this.

Dr Celia Caulcott

Independent Chair of the Lake District National Park Partnership



Photo credit: Milton Haworth

Introduction

Welcome to the 2025-26 Annual Report for the Lake District National Park Partnership. This is the final report relating to our 2020-26 Partnership Plan, a six- year review of our achievements will follow later this year. In these pages you can explore our progress on the key themes of: Climate Action; Securing the Future of Farming, Forestry, Nature Recovery and Climate Change; A Lake District for Everyone; Sustainable Travel and Transport; Vibrant Communities and a Prosperous Economy and the English Lake District World Heritage Site.

Many of our projects are supported by different combinations of Partnership members; this enables us to address complex issues as each organisation brings its own expertise to the table. Whilst this allows us to be pragmatically efficient with our limited resources, more importantly it demonstrates that solving many of our challenges can deliver multiple benefits simultaneously. We have included information under each case study to show this.

The Annual Report Key Outcome pages highlight some recent successes and developments, whereas the table at the beginning of the report sets out a full statement on our progress on Plan delivery. Summaries of our achievements are colour-coded. Green denotes those targets that have been achieved or have exceeded expectations. Amber represents those which are on target. Red indicates those have not been achieved. Grey represents those targets which have no data reported for this year, sometimes because reporting periods from various organisations do not match the timetable for this review.

Update on our Targets 2025-26

The chart below summarises our delivery against all our Partnership Plan targets.

1a	Environmental advice for farmers, foresters and land managers	No data provided	
1b	Delivering the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme.	100% of FiPL funds allocated have been spent.	
		A target of 25% for each FiPL theme was set. The target was exceeded for Nature and People, but was under target for Place and Climate.	
		FiPL has reached over 926 farm businesses, where a target of 300 was set.	
1c	Support and share knowledge about project delivery and future bids to Landscape Recovery Schemes.	No data provided	
		No data provided	
		No data provided	
1d	High take-up and secure successful delivery of Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier schemes.	55% of the Lake District is registered as Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Scheme land, remaining static since 2020. There has been 1 new agreement in 2025-26 and 7 are now in development.	
1e	Blended finance project opportunities for natural capital from private, charitable and public funding.	16 blended finance projects are developing exceeding our target of 5 across the Lake District.	
Action 2: Supporting the emerging Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy by delivering the Lake District National Park Nature Recovery Plan, championing and resourcing the recovery of priority and protected habitats and species.			
2a	Increase understanding within the farming community regarding nature and climate recovery, maintaining cultural heritage, and Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) projects.	A total of 16 events were completed against a target of 12.	
2b	Delivering targets for woodland creation and restoration schemes	Woodland currently accounts for 12.7% of the land area or 29,004ha. A target of woodland cover increasing by 253ha per annum was set. No data provided for 2025-26.	
2c	Delivering targets for peatland restoration	A target of 468ha of peatland restored per year was set. In 2025-26, 310ha was restored.	
		A target of 700 tCOe per year was set. In 2024, 639 tCOe was sequestered, short of target.	
2d	Supporting the delivery of the species recovery projects for Pine Marten and Freshwater Pearl Mussel.	Research projects were conducted	
		A target of 3 translocations/ releases per year was set. No new ones this year.	

		A target of 2 Reintroduction Engagements per year was set, 14 were achieved this year.	
		A target of 1 Captive breeding programme per year was set. The Freshwater Pearl Mussel project continues, but no new programmes happened this year.	
2e	Work with the Cumbria LNRS team and partners to develop an effective and efficient Cumbria-wide partnership approach for extent and condition of priority habitats.	Data collation has begun following the November publication of the LNRS.	
2f	Preparation of a Wild Deer Management Strategy by March 2025.	The target of publishing a Wild Deer Management Strategy was set and achieved in March 2025.	
Action 3: Reduce the contributions farming and land management make to greenhouse gas emissions in line with the National Farmers Union net zero goal and support farmers and land managers on adaptation			
3a	Carbon budget assessments for individual farms, farm clusters and community farming initiatives.	A target of 100 farm business carbon audits per year was set. No figures are available for 2025-26, but discussions are underway to rectify this for next year.	
3b	Delivery of farming-led carbon reduction or carbon storage measures, including using the learning from farm carbon audits.	The Partnership are working with Zero Carbon Cumbria ready for the next Partnership Plan.	
3c	Promoting and supporting farmers and land managers in delivering climate adaptation and resilience	A target of 100 farms engaged in natural flood management. This now stands at over 60.	
		A target was set of 750 farmers engaged in soil health actions. 296 are active.	
Action 4: Maintain, celebrate and strengthen traditional Lake District farming systems by:			
4a	Preparing and publishing an updated Lake District Shepherds' Guide in 2025.	The Shepherds' Guide has been published.	
		Monitoring of fell going flocks can now be completed following publication of the Shepherds Guide. 8.6% of hefted flocks were lost between 2017 and 2022, with flocks concentrating onto fewer commons.	
4b	Commons in successful agri-environment schemes (AES) and landscape recovery pilots	A target of increasing the amount of Common land in AES. This cannot be reported upon as data is not available in this way.	
		The number of Common land and cultural heritage options have remained static across adopted AES schemes.	

5	Support the Love Windermere Partnership	The number of positive communications & engagements increases.	
		Level of partners involvement in Love Windermere increases	
		Partners contributing to Love Windermere projects increases.	
LAKE DISTRICT FOR EVERYONE			
Action 1: Identify priority activity and seek investment to ensure the Lake District is a place for everyone and where all are welcome, with particular focus on the identified key audiences of: black, brown and racially minoritised people; people with disabilities, and people from underserved/deprived areas of Cumbria, all with a particular focus on young people.			
1a	Seeking resource, delivering and sharing learning from the Journeys Project.	Journeys project successfully completed in 2024-25.	
1b	Supporting the Black Nature in Residence residency.	Black Nature in Residence residency successfully completed 2024-25.	
1c	Developing joint ways of working to support the Accessible Cumbria Partnership.	Accessible Cumbria Partnership improved access to the Lake District through information technology and infrastructure – see STT Action 11.	
1d	Delivering Collaboration Hub projects to support the LD4E Key Outcome.	Recommendations from the Wasdale Citizens Panel are under development.	
2	Consider whether Lake District for Everyone should be a cross-cutting theme for the Partnership and the next Plan.	A Lake District for Everyone core theme will be continued into the next plan.	
SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT			
1	Initiatives for multi-modal ticketing and enhanced connectivity from the West Coast Mainline in 2024-25.	A target of 3 Multi-modal ticket projects per year was set and 1 was created.	
		A target of 5 onward bus route improvements was set and by 2025-26 this target was reached	
2	Support rail upgrades on all Cumbrian lines in 2024-25.	A target of 6 rail improvements was set and 4 were achieved up to 2024-26. This year the Lakes Line Business case is with the Government for consideration.	
3	Develop marketing initiatives for all sustainable and active transport modes.	A target of 4 marketing initiatives for sustainable travel was set and achieved in 2025-26.	
4	Work in partnership to secure the decarbonisation of transport	A target of 108 EV charge points by the end of the Plan; we now have 138 across the Lake District exceeding expectations.	
		A target of 30% visitors using EVs to arrive/ travel around Lake	

		District. By 2025-26 this has reached 15.1%	
5	Develop high quality active travel measures	A target of 6 additional Cycle routes per year. None in 2025-26, but an Active Travel Plan for 2026-31 includes 8 new networks and 66 improvements.	
		Borderlands Business Case submitted to develop the Keswick to Threlkeld extension, Grasmere to Dunmail Raise and Thirlmere West Shore.	
		Active Travel England plan agreed and forms part of the new 2026-2031 Partnership Plan.	
6	Pilot sustainable travel improvements with communities.	A target of 5 community sustainable travel improvements developed. There are now 4.	
7	Results from the research project develop and support delivery of a list of SMART actions.	Research project used for 6 further investigations and bids, as well as in developing SMART actions for the next Partnership Plan.	
8	Work with Councils to deliver and promote bus service improvements.	There were no new bus service improvements this year.	
9	Deliver better facilities at key transport hubs.	There were no additional facilities at key transport hubs this year.	
10	Partners to commit to a reduction in travel and travel-related carbon emissions.	A target of 80% hybrid or online Partner meetings. This dropped from 87% to 77% this year; however, this is because of the need for numerous in-person Plan development workshops.	
		With a target of 90% accessible Partnership meetings only 80% were so in 2025-26.	
11	Develop accessible and inclusive active travel opportunities	A target of 3 new or improved Miles without Stiles routes; 3 were added.	
		A target of 5 new sets of accessibility equipment. Increases in changing facilities from 13 to 26, tramper numbers have doubled, and a suite of accessible itineraries have been provided.	
		A target of 3 promotions of accessible and inclusive travel options. By 2025-26 there are 6.	
12	Partners to promote public transport and active travel in their communications.	6 Partners now have promotional activities for sustainable travel.	

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES AND A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY			
Action 1: Manage the impact of second homes and short-term holiday lets in the Lake District			
1a	Introduce a registration system and database for short-term holiday lets	Government will be introducing a registration system for short term holiday lets. Local councils have introduced a Council Tax premium for these types of dwelling.	
1b	Implement planning land-use changes related to short-term holiday lets		
1c	Work with other groups to lobby government to further control short-term holiday lets and second homes.		
1d	Support Councils to encourage the conversion of second homes to residential dwellings.	Low target of 5% converted from second homes to residential dwellings.	
Action 2: Secure the delivery of key projects within the Windermere Gateway area including:			
2a	Securing Homes England and Westmorland and Furness Council funding by December 2024.	The scheme could not be accomplished within timescales set by Homes England for the funding provided.	
2b	Delivery of highway improvements and access infrastructure by March 2026.		
2c	Delivery of housing and employment sites by: - Securing an outline planning permission for affordable and local needs homes, and employment space at Orrest Head Farm, Windermere) by December 2024.	Focus has shifted temporarily towards a 'transformational welcome' around the station.	
2d	Seek funding to deliver the Windermere railway line and station improvements by December 2024.	Plans have been submitted to Government to fund the Lakes Line passing loop and platform, aiming to double train frequency and reduce road congestion, collisions, and emissions.	
Action 3: By March 2025 agree a long-term plan for transformational change to visitor management in Wasdale and Ullswater Valleys.			
3a	By March 2025 agree a long-term plan for transformational change to visitor management in Wasdale Valley.	Wasdale Visitor Management plan agreed March 2025.	
3b	By March 2025 agree a long-term plan for transformational change to visitor management in Ullswater Valley.	Ullswater Visitor Management plan agreed March 2025. Additional plans were agreed for Hawkshead and West of Windermere in 2025-26.	
4	Lobby transport operators and infrastructure providers to help connect people with jobs in rural areas.	Improving bus route and services before 8am and after 6pm. No data provided 2025-26.	
5	Connect gigabit capable broadband in hard-to-reach premises in the Lake District.	A target of 99% of premises Gigabit capable, increased from 43 to 65% in 2025-26	
6	Work with suppliers, communities and the UK Government to improve broadband connectivity to ensure that no one and no place is left behind.	A target that no more than 1% of properties lack broadband. This has increased from 3.5% to 5% having no plan in place to make them gigabit enabled.	

7	Monitor 4G coverage in the National Park so that no-one and no place is left behind.	A target of 70% of 4G geographic coverage across the Lake District from all 4 mobile network operators combined. This has now reached 88% by at least one provider and 62% for all.	
8	Support local authorities in the development of Cumbria’s climate change adaption plan round four by September 2025.	A target of a Climate Adaption Plan in in place by Dec 2025. No data provided.	
9	Work with the Cumbria Rural Housing Enabler Service to bring forward Lake District National Park Authority site allocations by March 2026.	No data provided	
10	Proactively promote energy efficiency, sustainable building measures/ retrofit options for homeowners and businesses.	A target of preparing and adopting Reuse of Existing Buildings Supplementary Planning Document by March 2026. No data provided.	
		27% baseline identified in 2024. No data provided	
WORLD HERITAGE SITE			
1	Prepare an interpretation strategy and action plan for the English Lake District WHS	Published, and an action plan created. An Interpretation Strategy Delivery Board now operates. New digital project regarding industrial heritage underway.	
2	Work with Partners to submit a State of Conservation report for UNESCO	State of Conservation report submitted to DCMS/Historic England by Dec 2024. (Request for an update by December 2026.)	

Climate Action

What is it?

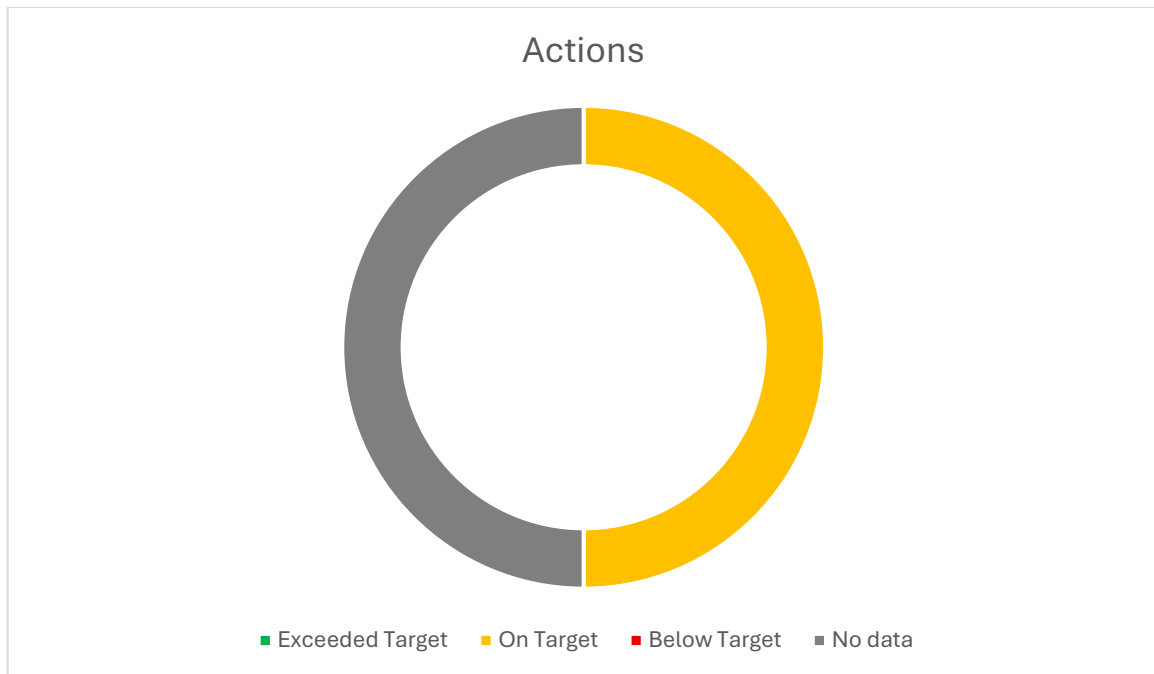
Globally and nationally the response to addressing climate change has not been adequate. Global warming reached 1°C in 2017 and sadly, our original target of 1.5°C this year. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has now modelled we may reach 2°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate, therefore adaptation and mitigation is crucial.

Climate change is therefore a universal pressure on, and threat to, the Lake District, its environment, economy and communities. The UK Government passed laws in 2019 to end its contribution to global warming by 2050. This means the UK will be required to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

Urgent actions to reduce carbon emissions are required and the Lake District must play its part. The impacts of climate change are evident now and will impact all aspects of the National Park. Increasing our focus on adapting to a changing climate and increasing the resilience of the Lake District, particularly around water resources management, is a pressing need.

Update on Targets 2025-26

The chart below summarises our delivery against all our Climate Action targets.



Action 1 – All Partners’ business plans contribute towards Cumbria’s ambition for net zero by 2037.

100% of partners have business plans contribute towards Cumbria’s ambition for net zero by 2037.

Action 2 – Zero Carbon Cumbria Carbon reduction projects

No data provided

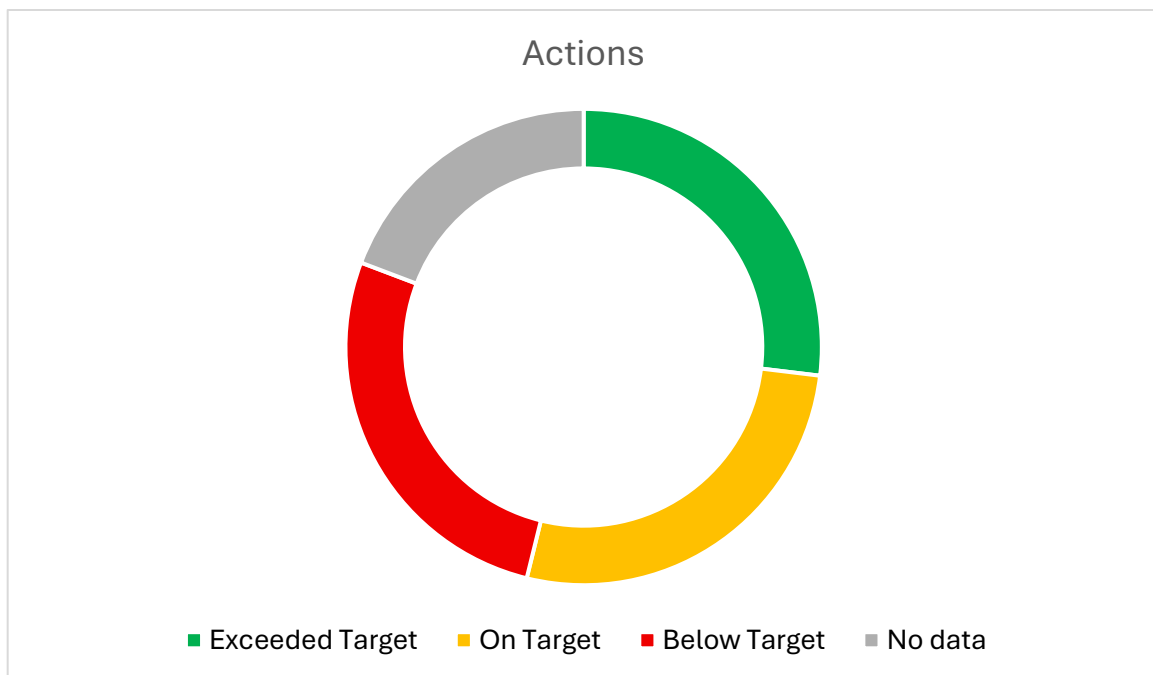
Securing Future of Farming, Forestry, Nature Recovery and Climate Action

What is it?

The Lake District National Park faces the biggest change in half a century with implementation of the Agriculture Act 2020 and the Government's ambitions as set out in its 25-Year Environment Plan. Our farming traditions, our natural environment and our climate are in crisis. Recovering from these crises drives the priorities and objectives for our Plan.

Update on our Targets 2025-26

The chart below summarises our delivery against all our 'Future of Farming, Forestry, Nature and Climate Action' targets.



Action 1- Develop and deliver a coordinated Partnership transition support programme to enable business adaptation, nature and climate recovery, and maintenance of the cultural landscape and supporting support young entrants by securing the high take up of options within the Government's Agricultural Transition Plan 2021-2024.

Action 1a - Business environmental advice provided to farmers, foresters and land managers

No data provided

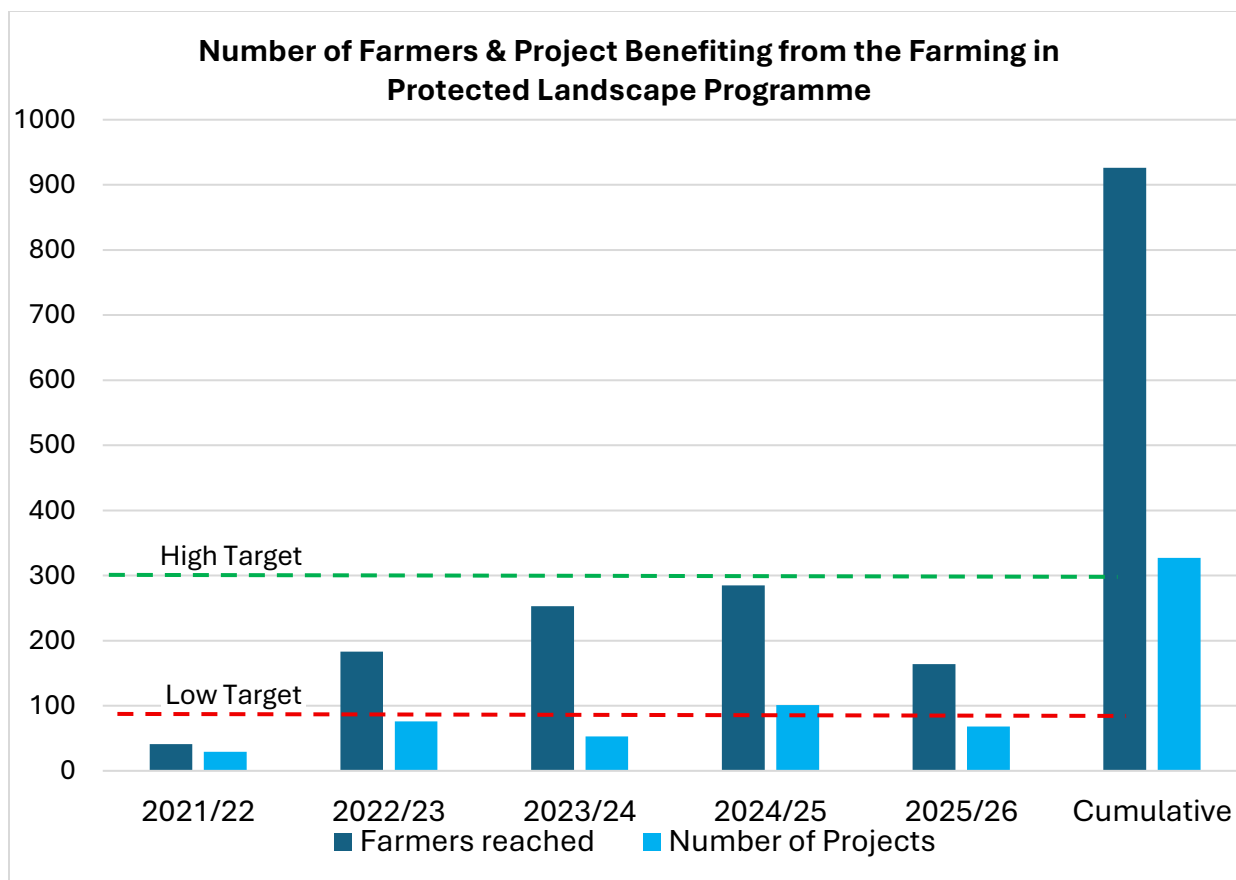
Action 1b – Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme

The Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme (FiPL) supported by DEFRA, continues to go from strength to strength, with DEFRA recently confirming the scheme will run for another three years to 2029. In total the programme invested £1.15m in farming businesses in 2025-26. This year, 164 farmers were supported through FiPL including 9 farm clusters. Farm clusters allow groups of farmers to work formally together to share priorities and ambitions, knowledge and skills. There were 68 diverse new projects across 2,452 ha of the Lake District including: leather production; portable processing equipment; barn repairs and restoration; curlew management, and river and habitat restoration. Sixty-six schools experienced 102 educational farm visits.

Projects against the four FiPL themes can be broken down for the reporting year as:

Outcome	Number of projects	Spend
Nature	35	£449,389.02
People	24	£362,092.09
Place	9	£362,263.61
Total	68	£1,173,744.72

The success of FiPL cannot be underestimated. Since its inception in 2021, over £6m has been invested in our farm businesses with a match of £1.3m. We have well exceeded our target of supporting 300 farmers, with a total of 926 engaged covering 327 different projects. However, this is just about a quarter of farmers in the Lake District and we would love to reach many more.



Case Study: Expanding biochar production and helping a heritage forestry business become net zero.

Applicants: www.naturalcharcoal.co.uk

Location – Great Lindeth Wood, Bouth, Ulverston

Total amount funded - £21,461.44

Biochar is used for soil health and animal gut health. The applicants wanted to expand their biochar production at Great Lindreth Wood by purchasing a second kiln. Additional infrastructure in the form of a new undercover building would allow them to produce more. An off-grid solar system enables year-round operation as well as greater public engagement, supported by an on-site composting toilet. Processing timber from Great Lindreth Wood was enhanced through the purchase of a new bandsaw mill sharing this with others in the valley. The wood for the building was planked from the timber that had come down during Storm Arwen.

If you would like to learn more about the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme, please follow this link <https://lakedistrict.gov.uk/protect/farming-in-the-lake-district/farming-in-protected-landscapes/>.

Action 1c – Landscape Recovery schemes

- *LRS Partnership Engagement –*
- *Completion of Heritage Impact Assessments –*
- *Shared Learning across schemes –*

No data provided

Action 1d – Countryside Stewardship Agreements

- *Number of additional agreements in 2025-26 – 2026-27 in progress.*
- *Agri-Environment Agreements in the Lake District – 436 (increase of 1 on 2024-25)*

There are currently 436 Countryside Stewardship High Tier and Higher-Level Stewardship schemes within the National Park, plus seven more that are moving through the application process. Natural England works with the owner or occupier to develop schemes which are delivering for nature, climate change, water quality, soil health, heritage and culture. The additional agreement added 435.5 ha to the total land in Agri-environment schemes in the Lake District, meaning the land area in schemes continues to sit at 55%.

One such example is Crag Farm where a newly agreed agri-environment agreement is supporting the recovery of Cropple How Mire SSSI and other areas of the farm. Wood pasture is being created, and the area of regenerating woodland is being expanded. This will link up other areas in the landscape and is being informed by historic maps. Veteran crab apple trees provide a useful food source for invertebrates and other wildlife and will slow the flow of water, providing shelter from climate extremes for the grazing stock. Working in partnership with a local expert group, the farmer will be restoratively pruning a separate traditional orchard and planting new fruit trees to enhance this habitat.

Work will also be undertaken to support the recovery and expansion of dry heath, blanket bog and upland flushes. Traditional hay-making practices, hedgerow management and restoration of drystone walls and traditional farm buildings, using a local skilled workforce, will all support the landscape character of the area, and a flock of Herdwick sheep remain at the farm as part of the grazing management of the land.

Through suitable management of the Cropple How Mire SSSI, including the blocking of drainage ditches with the support of Cumbria Wildlife Trust, the amount of water that it will be capable of retaining will increase, which in turn will reduce the peak flow of water in the river in the valley bottom.

Action 1e – Blended Finance Projects

There are now 16 Blended Finance projects in the Lake District. Blended finance projects are those which combine private finance with public funding to achieve various environmental targets.

Action 2: Supporting the emerging Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) by delivering the Lake District National Park Nature Recovery Plan, championing and resourcing the recovery of priority and protected habitats and species.

Action 2a Partnership LNRS advocacy

The LNRS team delivered 16 engagement sessions or activities to raise awareness of the LNRS with potential farmer audiences.

The LNRS public consultation was held in May 2025, and although events were not farmer-specific, farmers and landowners were able to feed into the consultation and give their views on the draft strategy. The responsible authority held 8 drop-in sessions across Cumbria, either in council offices or libraries, plus 6 online drop-in sessions. The sessions were open to anyone interested in the LNRS and were advertised through various communication streams such as social media, website updates and posters.

Following publication and feedback, the LNRS team produced an executive summary, which is a streamlined overview of the priorities and measures within the LNRS with the aim of supporting stakeholders to use the LNRS in planning and delivery of nature recovery.

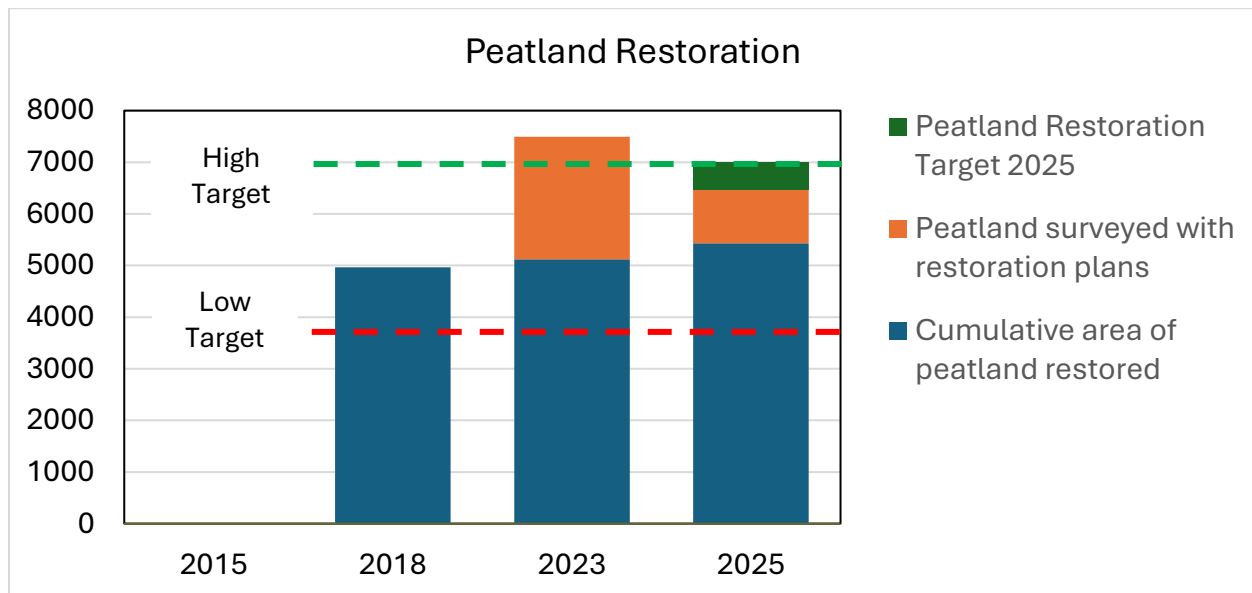
From January 2026 to March 2026, the responsible authority continued its close partnership with the Cumbria Local Nature Partnership (CLNP) to move the LNRS into the 'transition to delivery' phase. The CLNP is using or establishing its thematic groups, including Nature Recovery and Data and Evidence, to give clear leadership to oversee long-term nature recovery initiatives, identify diverse funding streams, and develop a pipeline of projects for nature recovery across Cumbria. Work is ongoing to help shape this in line with DEFRA's four functions: governance and partnerships; finance and investment; delivery mechanisms; monitoring and reporting.

Other partners of the CLNP are working with farmers and landowners to embed the LNRS where possible, such as Natural England and the Environment Agency when discussing agri-environment options with land owners and managers.

Action 2b Woodland Cover and Creation

The current area of woodland in the Lake District is 29,072ha (2024). This represents 12.7% of the area.

Action 2c Peatland Restoration



During the last year, another 310 hectares of peat were restored. This is an additional carbon storage of 649 tonnes of CO₂e, which cumulatively makes 7,349 tonnes of CO₂e every year in the Lake District. This is equivalent to the electricity demand for 4,777 homes a year or 27% of the World Heritage Site. Work continues to restore peatland with another 1,031 ha planned, which should add over another 2,000 tonnes CO₂e to our carbon storage capacity.

As time goes by the rate of peatland restored slows because more complex and difficult areas of terrain are surveyed for restoration work. This can be due to topography, access challenges or complicated land ownership. Targets will be reviewed for the next Lake District 2026-2031 Partnership Plan.

Action 2d Species Recovery Projects

- *Research Projects* – no new ones this year
- *Translocations or releases* – no new ones this year
- *Engagement with Game Keepers* – 14 (against a high target of 10)
- *Captive Breeding programmes* – Freshwater Pearl Mussel project continues.

Action 2e - Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

The Cumbria LNRS was published in November 2025, which includes the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities and the Local Habitat Map, making them 'live' from this date

forwards. As per DEFRA regulations, the Local Habitat Map must remain static for the duration of this iteration of the LNRS, thus it can only be updated once the next LNRS has been developed and published in 3-10 years' time.

The Local Habitat Map is hosted on Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre's (CBDC) website and is open access, with the ability for it to be downloaded to be used on independent systems such as desktop GIS. CBDC developed the Cumbria Habitat Base Map and although it does not include condition data, it collates all the habitat data for Cumbria, underpins the LNRS map, and is part of the Cumbria Biodiversity Evidence Base data that many organisations use from CBDC.

Additionally, the Cumbria Local Nature Partnership has a thematic sub-group for 'Data and Evidence'. The work of this group and partners is to work closely with CBDC as the single point of contact for biodiversity-related data in Cumbria to develop data standards for experts and non-experts to report data to CBDC. This will enable data to be collected in a standardised and reliable format, collated in one single location, and analysed by those who need it to inform future decision-making in further iterations of the LNRS.

2f – Wild Deer Management Strategy

Action completed in 2024-2025. Please see 2024-25 Annual Report for details.

Action 3: Reduce the contributions farming and land management make to greenhouse gas emissions in line with the National Farmers Union net zero goal and support farmers and land managers on adaptation

Action 3a Farm Business Carbon Audits – Unfortunately, the number of farm carbon audits completed across the Lake District is not known. We know that no carbon audits were funded through the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme in 2025-26. Discussions are ongoing with the Zero Carbon Cumbria Farming & Other Land Use group on how to measure/capture the total number of farm carbon audits completed in Cumbria (and the Lake District). This will help us establish coverage and establish a baseline. It is hoped that this work will be completed in time for the next Partnership Annual Report.

Action 3b Farm business carbon reduction

The Lake District Partnership is working with Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership (ZCCP) to better understand how carbon audits translate into action on farms. Information about this will be available for the next Partnership Plan.

Action 3c Climate Adaptation & Resilience

Case Study 1: Natural Flood Management

Over the past year, partners have been working in a range of ways to encourage and enable natural flood management (NFM) interventions to be delivered across the National Park.

In November 2024, the West Cumbria Catchment Partnership hosted a conference on the evidence base behind Natural Flood Management with presentations by a range of practitioners and researchers. This was attended by three land managers, the NFU, many land management advisors/agents as well as staff with farmer-facing roles including the Rivers Trust and Environment Agency.

Additionally, in the development stage of the Resilient Glenderamackin Landscape Recovery project, the project has worked with 52 land managers to produce individual holding delivery plans including a wide range of potential NFM interventions. The project has also hosted farmer group meetings including support around NFM interventions. Working with Cumberland Council to plan NFM delivery, West Cumbria Rivers Trust has also conducted walkover surveys across Croasdale Beck to identify NFM opportunities and discuss these with land managers.

Throughout 2024-25 South Cumbria Rivers Trust (SCRT) has continued to encourage and enable appropriate Natural Flood Management (NFM) interventions across several of their catchment areas. SCRT have engaged with numerous farmers and land managers across the River Kent catchment through the LIFE R4ever Kent project; introducing and explaining the value of NFM and discussing how a range of example interventions can deliver benefits for the environment while contributing to a sustainable farm business.

In the River Duddon catchment, SCRT has continued to work in partnership through the Upper Duddon Landscape Recovery project, including on several interventions related to NFM. SCRT has engaged with and supported farmers and land managers through the stages of scoping, design and planning over the 2024-25 period, with several interventions including floodplain reconnection and leaky dams planned for delivery in 2025.

SCRT has continued to collaborate with partners including Natural England to scope and design NFM interventions through Countryside Stewardship where appropriate, using their experience and expertise to support farmers and land managers throughout the process. Finally, SCRT has continued to monitor and maintain past NFM interventions, as part of its commitment to support farmers and land managers as well as collecting further evidence to justify and encourage new interventions to be delivered.

Additionally, the Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR) project is a collaborative initiative delivered by a dedicated Farming and Community Officer from Natural England,

administered by Westmorland & Furness Council and supported by the Environment Agency, Lancaster University and Cumbria Voluntary Service. It involves the delivery of targeted Natural Flood Management in Rothery, Tom Rudd Beck and Bitter Beck catchments with the aim of reducing the risk of flooding in the downstream communities of Grasmere and Cockermouth. Over the course of the last year, the project has undertaken one-to-one visits to farmers and land managers to highlight the benefits of NFM and look at the opportunities on the ground whilst providing continuing support to ensure all issues and any concerns regarding the agreed NFM interventions are addressed before NFM work commences. This is provided in a coordinated way with other farm advice Natural England offers. Promotional work has also included talks to farmer groups about climate change and natural flood management with follow-up support as required.

Finally, RSPB held several Open Days in Swindale Valley during 2024, hosting a total of 173 professionals to learn more about work undertaken there including river restoration, tree planting and sward enhancements which contribute to natural flood management.

Case Study 2: Soil Health plans

Two hundred and ninety-six soil management plans are live supported through the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) Agreements in the Lake District National Park.

Whilst a useful metric to measure, DEFRA has decided to remove this action from the SFI in early 2026. This means that this metric of those in current SFI agreements ends by 2028.

Another example of the effectiveness of soil health management can be seen through the work of Bryan Fell at Chapel Farm where he is taking a proactive step towards healthier livestock and soils, supported by a Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grant.

The Fell family farm 320 acres, scattered across varying altitudes. They have 100 Limousin-cross cattle and 600 Texel/Beltex ewes producing quality export specification prime lambs. Flock health is central to their business and monitoring parasite levels through faecal egg count (FEC) testing is key to understanding how well worming treatments are working. It helps ensure anthelmintics (drugs used to counter the effects of parasitic worms) are used responsibly and only when needed. By introducing pre- and Post-treatment testing Bryan also hopes to eliminate dosing resistance.

The FiPL grant enabled Bryan to purchase FECPAK, an on-farm parasite monitoring system that uses a portable digital microscope and cloud-based AI to deliver fast, accurate FEC results. At Chapel Farm, testing for fluke and roundworm is important, with fluke posing a particular risk on wetter ground. The four-step FECPAK process requires no specialist facilities, and each test is backed by an independent animal medicines advisor. 'Regular

FEC testing with FECPAK will ensure we're treating the right animals at the right time' he adds.

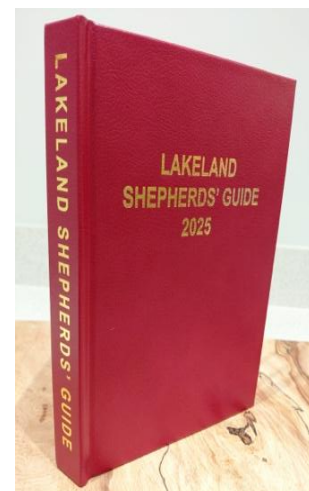
The benefits go beyond livestock. Awareness is growing around the impact some wormers can have on dung beetles and other soil organisms essential for nutrient cycling and pasture health. *'We want healthy sheep, but we also want healthy soil'* Bryan says. *'If we can cut down on treatments we don't need, that's good for dung beetles, good for the pasture, and good for the farm's long-term sustainability.'*

Bryan sees FECPAK becoming a routine part of farm management. It will help track emerging resistance, protect the effectiveness of treatments, and support ongoing monitoring of soil health. With FiPL support, Chapel Farm is adopting a more sustainable method of parasite control—benefiting livestock, biodiversity and underpinning resilient farm ecosystems. *'Ultimately, it's about farming smarter, not harder'* Bryan says. *'This kit helps us do exactly that.'*

Action 4 - Maintain, celebrate and strengthen traditional Lake District farming systems

Action 4a. Production of the Shepherds Guide

The Guide has been completed, and copies have been circulated to all farms with flock entries in the Lake District National Park. In terms of outreach activity, illustrated walks (focusing on farming heritage features close to Public Rights of Way) have been completed and final leaflets will be shared soon in PDF form. A significant number of educational materials have been printed for use by schools through national and regional programmes and will be shared with farms providing educational access visits in the Lake District, to help raise understanding of hefting and commoning. The FiPL project for the Shepherd's Guide has now ended, but legacy work carries on.



Photos: The Lakeland Shepherds' Guide online and published hard copy

Action 4b. Fell-going Flock Index

With the completion of the Shepherds Guide, work can now commence to repeat a survey, with the help of commoners associations, to develop a fell-going flock index to monitor change in hefts in the Lake District. Previously, we know there was a decline between 2017 and 2022 by 8.6%. At the same time the remaining flocks became more concentrated onto fewer fells.

Action 4c Common land and Agri-Environment Schemes

- *Proportion of Common land in AES – 100%*
- *Proportion supporting cultural fabric – 100%*

Natural England does not currently analyse components of agreements in a way that this data can be provided. Our figure here is therefore based on the process which Natural England has followed since the inception of the World Heritage Site to develop agri-environment schemes. Natural England makes recommendations which balance nature conservation with the World Heritage Site designation, and all the agreements it recommends within the Lake District National Park undergo a Heritage Impact Assessment. The new scheme development process includes consultation with the local Historic Environment Records and Historic England.

Advice for agreements ensures they deliver on multiple objectives: nature; climate change; water quality; soil health; heritage and culture. Relevant actions would include such things as: maintenance of drystone walls and traditional farm buildings; hedgerow, orchard, and in-field trees management; management for traditional low-input hay meadows, and suitable management of Scheduled Monuments or other historic features.

Action 5: Improve the water environment of Windermere through the Love Windermere Partnership and programme.

Following the publication of the Changing Windermere report in March 2025, the Love Windermere Partnership launched its first Action Plan in November 2025. The Partnership has committed to delivering 33 actions by November 2027, with 29 already underway in the first quarter demonstrating strong collaborative progress across all nine partner organisations.

Key actions to tackle sewage and nutrient inputs include:

- Advice to over 350 septic tank owners
- Greener Boating messaging to 3,600 boat owners
- Pilot projects supporting first-time sewerage connections

- Guidance on fats, oils and grease to reduce blockages
- Sediment fingerprinting to track nutrient pathways
- A Local Development Order to simplify sewage treatment upgrades
- Progressing the 'Wonderful Windermere' initiative
- Farm visits to identify barriers to improved practices
- Identifying washdown sites to prevent invasive species spread
- Developing integrated flood risk and water quality schemes
- Expanding the 'Hello Lamppost' citizen science tool
- Public engagement through wastewater treatment works tours
- Training for frontline staff
- Six community drop-in sessions across the catchment
- Delivery of a primary school education pilot

Partnership approach and resourcing

Love Windermere brings together nine organisations, including Lake District National Park Partnership partners, each contributing staff time, expertise and resources to deliver shared outcomes. Core funding remains limited but includes support for a Partnership Manager (Environment Agency), a small council grant, and contributions to communications capacity (United Utilities and the Lake District National Park Authority).

Looking ahead

Evidence from the Environment Agency and leading scientists from UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and Lancaster University highlights the ongoing need to reduce nutrient inputs. Continued collaboration, including support from Lake District National Park Partnership partners, will be critical to sustaining progress and protecting Windermere for the future.



A Lake District for Everyone

What is it?

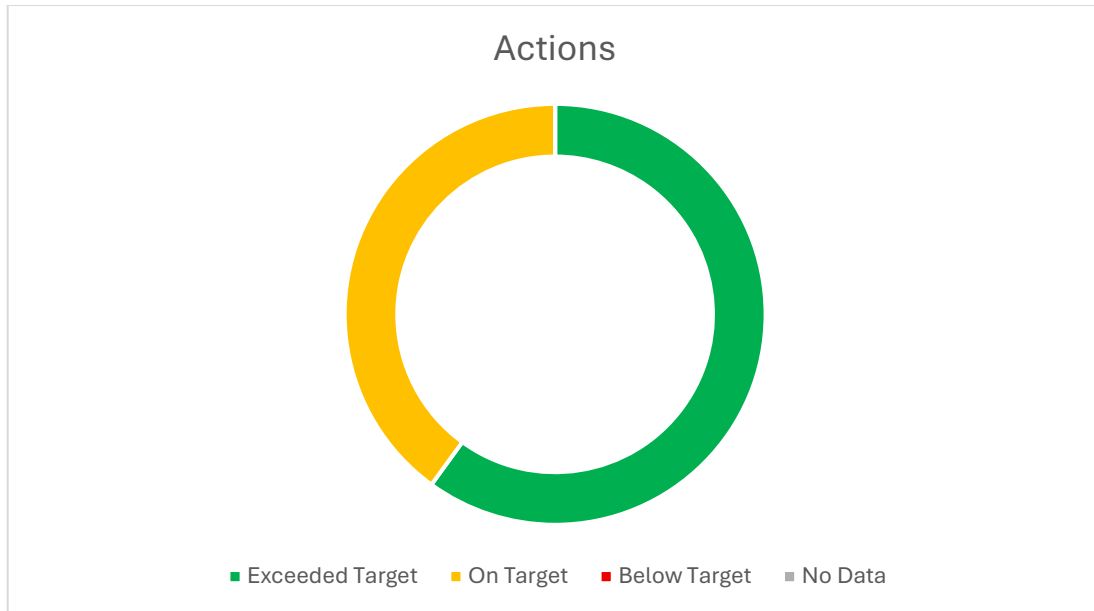
National Parks contain the most beautiful, spectacular and dramatic areas of countryside in England. The government's 2019 Landscapes Review: National Parks and AONBs (known as the 'Glover Review') rightly highlights that these places are national assets supported in part through state funding and therefore are available for everyone to enjoy and support the nation's health and wellbeing. However, Glover highlighted that visitors are not always representative of the full spectrum of British society.

The time is right to begin addressing the disconnect of some groups, and help the nation's recovery from the global pandemic, by supporting people's health and wellbeing through access to the outdoors.

Through our work on the Lake District for Everyone Key Outcome, we aim to increase our awareness of the needs of a diverse audience of people, to increase support to underserved groups to access the outdoors to benefit from the Lake District's inspiring landscape, and to improve the representation of voices in developing projects going forward.

Update Targets 2025-26

The chart below summarises our delivery against all our 'Lake District for Everyone' targets.



Action 1: Identify priority activity and seek investment to ensure the Lake District is a place for everyone and where all are welcome, with particular focus on the identified key audiences of: black, brown and racially minoritised; people with disabilities, and people from underserved/deprived areas of Cumbria, all with a particular focus on young people

Action 1a Seeking resource, delivering and sharing learning from the Journeys Project.

Action successfully completed 2024-25. For information, please see previous Annual Report.

Action 1b Supporting the Black Nature in Residence residency.

Action successfully completed 2024-25. For information, please see previous Annual Report.

Action 1c Developing joint ways of working to support the Accessible Cumbria Partnership

Action successfully completed 2024-25. For information, please see previous Annual Report.

Action 1d – Collaboration Hub

Case Study: Wasdale Citizens Panel

‘How do we get the best out of our visitors in Wasdale, so we thrive as a community?’

Following the Citizens Panel reported in the 2024-25 Annual Review, ten recommendations were agreed by the community:

- to provide public toilets at Wasdale head
- to be actively involved in the development of the Area Action Plan
- to work with others in this small community to ensure everyone has a voice in matters that affect them
- to be confident that action will be taken by the relevant authorities on illegal camping
- to support the Wasdale Shuttle Bus so that it offers a service which meets visitor needs.
- to improve the clarity and quality of information presented to visitors when they arrive in the valley
- to make important information available widely to people before they arrive via several identified channels.

Further discussions took place regarding:

- the pros and cons of a pre-booked car parking system like the one at Loch Lomond
- to explore existing examples of a visitor levy to understand the pros and cons and mechanisms, for collection, holding and spending any funds.

In the last six months, the Wasdale community have set up a constituted group and are being pro-active on several local initiatives in pursuit of their aims. Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT) continues to support them as required, and to work collaboratively with other stakeholders. The Lake District National Park Authority hopes to build on this positive experience of working with Wasdale community, to see how it might inform our approach in other communities.

The full report, with comments from panel members on each recommendation can be viewed here: [Wasdale](#)

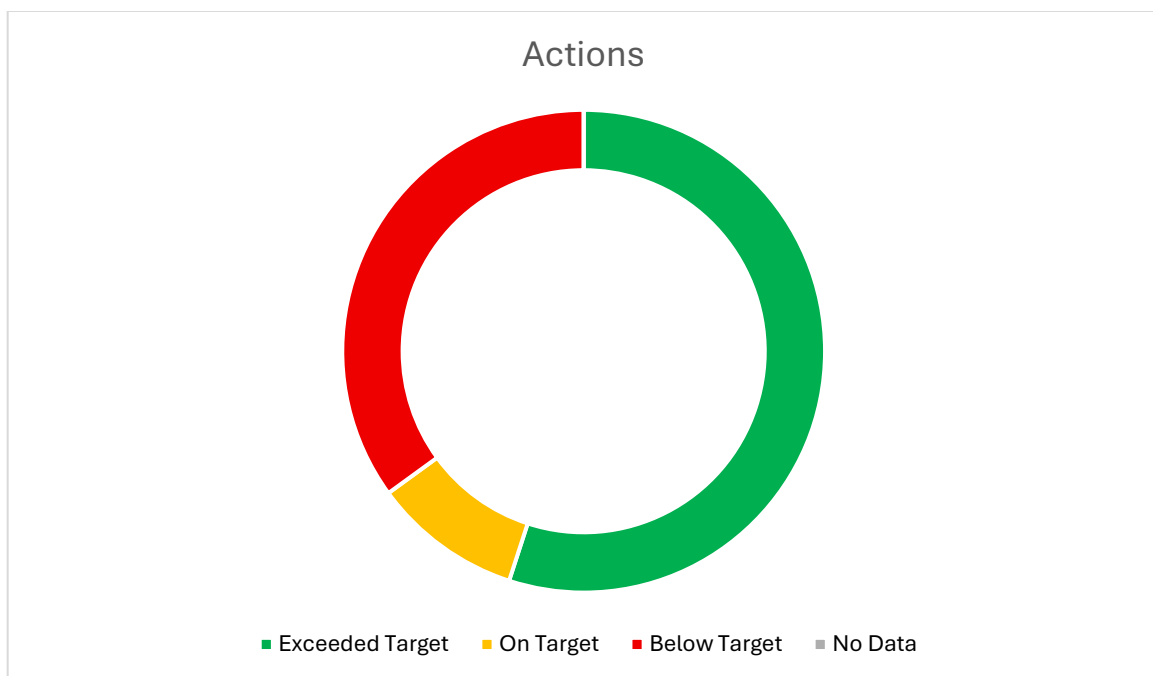
Sustainable Travel and Transport

What is it?

Most visitors continue to arrive in the Lake District by private motor vehicle. The challenge for the Lake District is to be a place where everyone, regardless of wealth or ability, can access the National Park sustainably via different modes of transport. Low carbon travel needs to be the obvious and most attractive choice for essential and leisure travel. The nation's mental and physical health-benefits from active travel in an inspirational landscape need to be secured.

Update on Our Sustainable Travel and Transport Targets 2025-26

The chart below summarises our delivery against all our 'Sustainable Travel and Transport' targets.



Action 1 – Multimodal ticketing and Connectivity

- *Multi-modal tickets*: 1 set up (target 3 per year).

Case Study

Organisations involved: Stagecoach, Avanti, Community Rail Cumbria, Cumbria Tourism

In 2024 Stagecoach and Avanti worked together to trial an integrated through ticket covering trains from anywhere in the network to Keswick, utilising the regular bus link from Penrith to Keswick. This was initiated following discussions at the Partnership's Sustainable Travel and Transport Key Outcome Group and Community Rail Cumbria bringing together the key partners, which was then promoted by Cumbria Tourism through their Go Car Free campaign. Thanks to the success of the pilot Avanti and Stagecoach have now re-launched it as a year-round ticket. Thanks to this and other initiatives there has been healthy growth in public transport use in this corridor over the past 3 years:

- In 2025, Avanti West Coast recorded 205,000 journeys to or from Penrith between mid-June and mid-September, up 17% year-on-year and 48% on 2019.
- TransPennine Express saw 115,000 journeys to or from Penrith, up 11% year-on-year and 58% on 2019.
- Stagecoach carried nearly 442,000 passengers between April and November, a 14% increase on 2023.
- Research from Cumbria Tourism shows rail's share of visitors rose from 7% in 2022 to 12% in 2025.

Potential passengers search 'Keswick Bus' on their journey planner and the full journey will appear seamlessly, with a ticket for the whole journey and all connections shown – see sample below from www.avantiwestcoast.co.uk

Leaving from
London Euston (EUS)

Going to
Keswick Bus (KWK)

Journey type
Return

Adult
1

Child
0

Edit journey

Show only:

Avanti trains

Direct trains

Some refund rules have now changed

Buying flexible train tickets? Refund conditions for some ticket types changed on 1 April 2026. [Click here to find out more.](#)

Out: Wed, 01 Jul 2026

London Euston (EUS) to Keswick Bus (KWK)

Edit journey

See earlier trains

2 Singles from £76.00

Return from £146.50

Operator	Departure → Arrival	Duration, Changes	Price		
AVANTI WEST COAST	12:30 → 16:30	4h 0m, 1 change	£44.00	FASTEST	Select ticket type ▼
AVANTI WEST COAST	13:30 → 18:07	4h 37m, 2 changes	£41.00	CHEAPEST	Select ticket type ▼

Total price

£ 76.00

Continue

Go to checkout

Go to checkout skips the extras and gives our recommended ticket delivery option.

1 Adult

- **Bus service improvements**

Two additional routes were added in 25/26 including the X7 Whitehaven to Millom and the Little Langdale Shuttle. This takes the total number of new routes over the life of the plan to five, our target.

The Little Langdale Shuttle runs between Ambleside and Dungeon Ghyll at the head of Great Langdale every day of the week in doing so it helps reduce traffic and carbon emissions. The bus calls at Skelwith Bridge, Elterwater, New Dungeon Ghyll and Old Dungeon Ghyll and all stops in between.

Action 2 – Rail upgrades including improvements in station accessibility and mainline station stopping frequencies

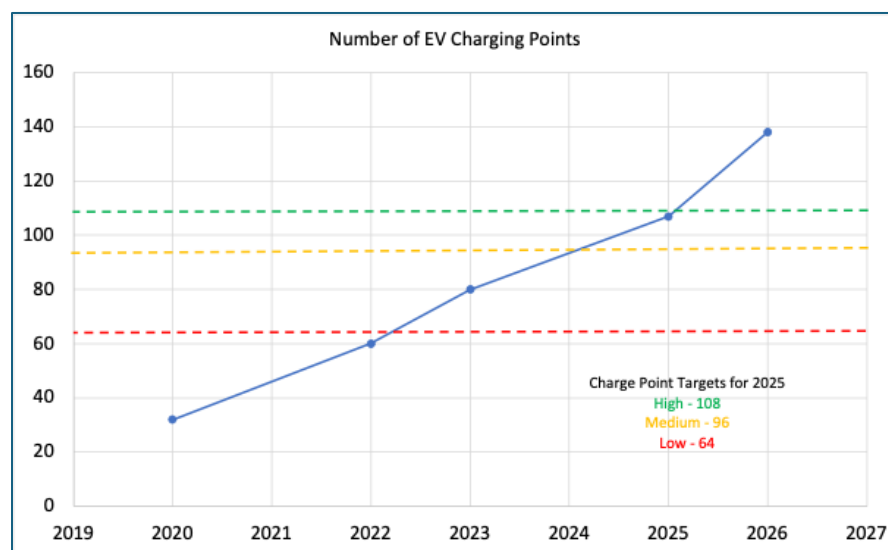
The Lakes Line Investment Business Case is currently with the Government for consideration.

Action 3 – Marketing Initiatives for sustainable travel

Four new marketing initiatives were created by Cumbria Tourism, Cumberland Council, National Trust and the Park Authority.

Action 4 – Decarbonising transport

Target 4a. Public EV Charging points – there are now 138 EV charging points in the Lake District as of March 2026. This is an increase of 29% since last year exceeding our high target of 108. Over the period of the Plan, we have increased the number of charge points from 34 to 138, roughly 400%.



Target 4b. Percentage of visitors using EV charging points –

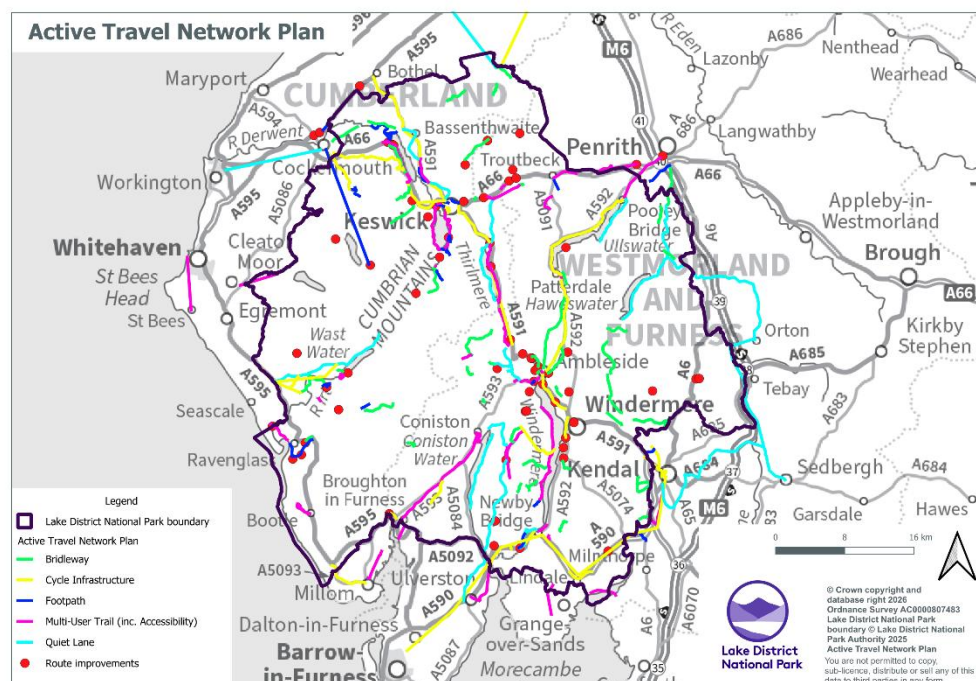
In 2025-26, the Cumbria Visitor Survey reported 14.7% of visitors travel to the Lake District by EV, whilst 15.1% travel around the area in this way.

Action 5 – Active Travel Measures

An Active Travel Network plan was submitted and approved this year and will go forward to be part of the new 2026-2031 Partnership Plan for the Lake District. It is a strategic transport planning tool to plan and guide the development of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The plan outlines new walking, cycling and wheeling routes and priority areas for improvement to achieve the objectives of promoting active travel and creating safe, accessible and sustainable infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users and horse riders. It also serves as a tool for securing funding and to encourage collaboration between stakeholders.

Shown in the figure below, the plan categorises routes into strategic corridors, secondary links, routes into the Lake District National Park, local routes and additional active travel strategic corridors. Areas for improvement have also been identified where appropriate within the existing walking and cycling network. More can be found about the plan here:

[active-travel-network-plan](#)



Action 6 – Pilot Sustainable Travel improvements with communities

Ullswater continues to be successful in its sustainable travel improvements. The initiatives there are now used as a working example for other Lake District communities to consider for their own valleys, such as Wasdale, Keswick area and Hawkshead.

Action 7 – Research project:

After completion of the successful research project entitled '*Comparing Attitudes and Behaviour for Visitors and Residents in terms of how they would like to move around the Park*', a new Smart Travel Planner has been launched:

Cumbria Tourism launched a **new online travel planner** as part of a pilot project funded through the European Space Agency, to help visitors plan their trip in the most efficient way possible.

Using the latest technology powered by You.Smart.Thing, it enables businesses to send out personalised travel plans to customers before they visit and notifies them of travel updates – all with sustainable travel in mind. Visitors can search venues and places to visit across Cumbria and are given personalised journey routes to help them experience new places.

In turn, this is promoting and supporting sustainable and active travel, helping visitors choose the best low-carbon options by mixing travel by train, bus, car, cycle and walking. The planner also displays exactly how much carbon can be saved by travelling smart.

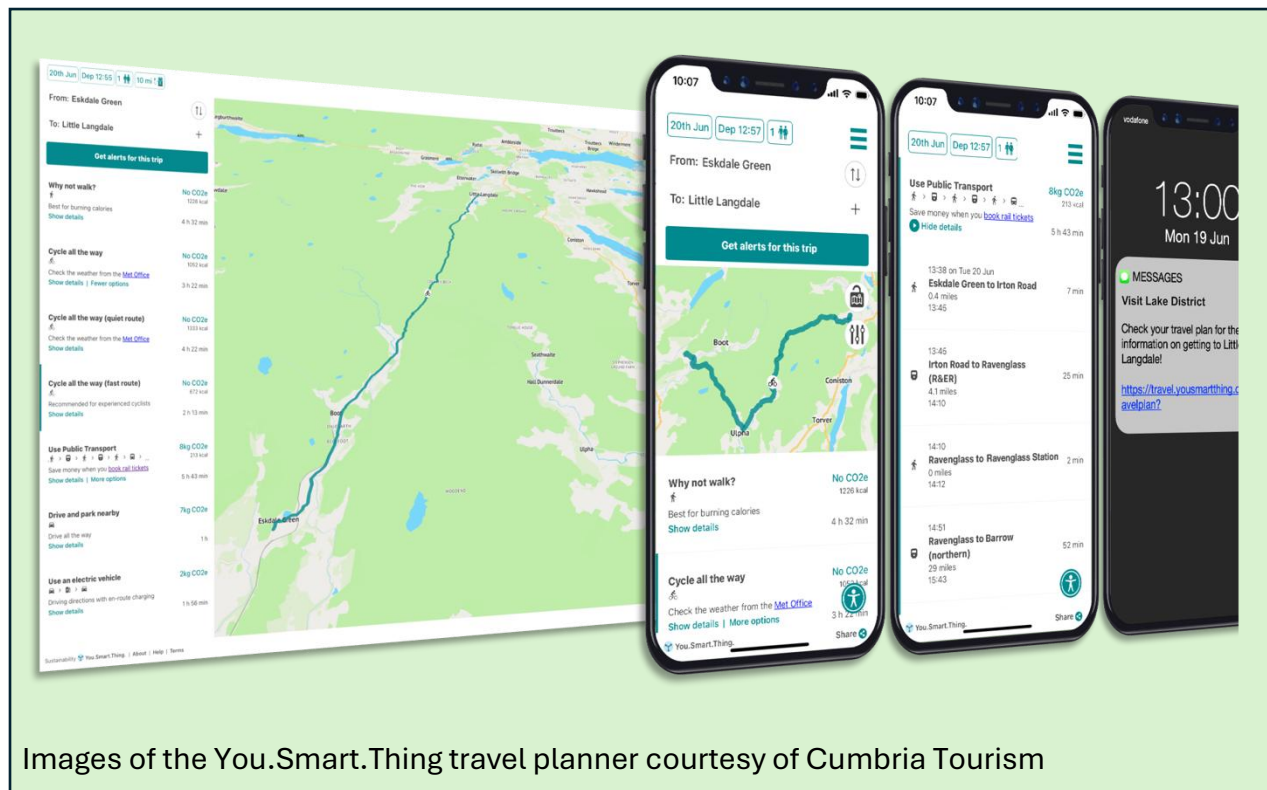
On a Cumbria-wide level, it means Cumbria Tourism is simultaneously gathering important data about user travel trends which will help shape future destination planning.

The travel planner is free to use and easy to embed on individual operators' websites.

Cumbria Tourism has created individual 'travel assistants' for all businesses listed on the county's official visitor facing website, visitolakedistrict.com. If businesses have chosen to embed the travel planner, visitors can then access the service via their websites too. Tourism operators can also add their EV charge points to the map and help increase the network.

So far, the Smart Travel Planner has seen over 34,000 travel plans made by visitors to the county. Talks are now taking place between stakeholders to secure long-term funding for the Smart Travel Planner and expand its use across multiple platforms.

Organisations involved: Cumbria Tourism, You.Smart.Thing, Geospatial Insight, European Space Agency.



Images of the You.Smart.Thing travel planner courtesy of Cumbria Tourism

Action 8 – Bus service improvements Target

There were no bus service improvements this year.

Action 9 – Additional facilities at key transport hubs

There were no additional facilities added this year.

Action 10 - Partners commit to decarbonising travel

Action 10a – Percentage of Partnership meetings which re hybrid or online. (Target: 100%)

In 2025/26 77% of partnership meetings were hybrid or online, a reduction of 10% on the previous year. However, it is noted that this was an atypical year for the Partnership as it worked to develop a new Partnership Plan for the Lake District, which necessitated more face-to-face workshops than would be necessary in an average year.

Action 10b – Number of Partnership meetings which are accessible and can be reached by public transport. (Target: 100%)

In 2025-26, 100% were physically accessible but only 80% of partnership meetings could be reached by public transport. This is a reflection of the Partnership's desire to move its

meetings around the National Park and use community and village halls as much as possible, many of which are not served by public transport.

Action 11- Partners promote public transport and active travel for meetings

The Accessible Cumbria Partnership is a group of organisations across Cumbria and the Lake District who are working in partnership to improve accessibility to the area by:

1. Improving access through information
2. Enabling through technology
3. Better Business Understanding
4. Accessible infrastructure

Action 11a – New of Improved Miles without Stiles routes

Five new routes (against our High Target of 3) were improved this year using DEFRA ‘Access for All’ Funding.

Action 11b – New Disabled Access equipment

A new central portal listing all tramper hire across the county has gone online and the number of trampers available has doubled, with more due. Partners have championed the expansion of Changing Places facilities, which has gone from 13 to 26 and *Outdoor Mobility* (see the 2024-25 Annual Report) has launched a new service at Lowther. New accessible itineraries have been created supported by the development of a central information resource on [visitlakedistrict.com](https://www.visitlakedistrict.com).

Action 11c – Promotional Activities

Six promotional schemes (against our target of 3) have taken place, including providing business case studies to inspire others as well as several conferences and workshops for better business understanding.

Organisations promoting sustainable and active travel – Cumberland Council, Cumbria Tourism, Friends of the Lake District, Lake District National Park Authority, National Trust and Westmorland & Furness Council.

Action 12 – Partners promoting public transport and active travel in their communications.

Number – 12 (target was 3)

Organisations promoting sustainable and active travel – Cumberland Council, Cumbria Tourism, Friends of the Lake District, Lake District National Park Authority, National Trust and Westmorland & Furness Council.

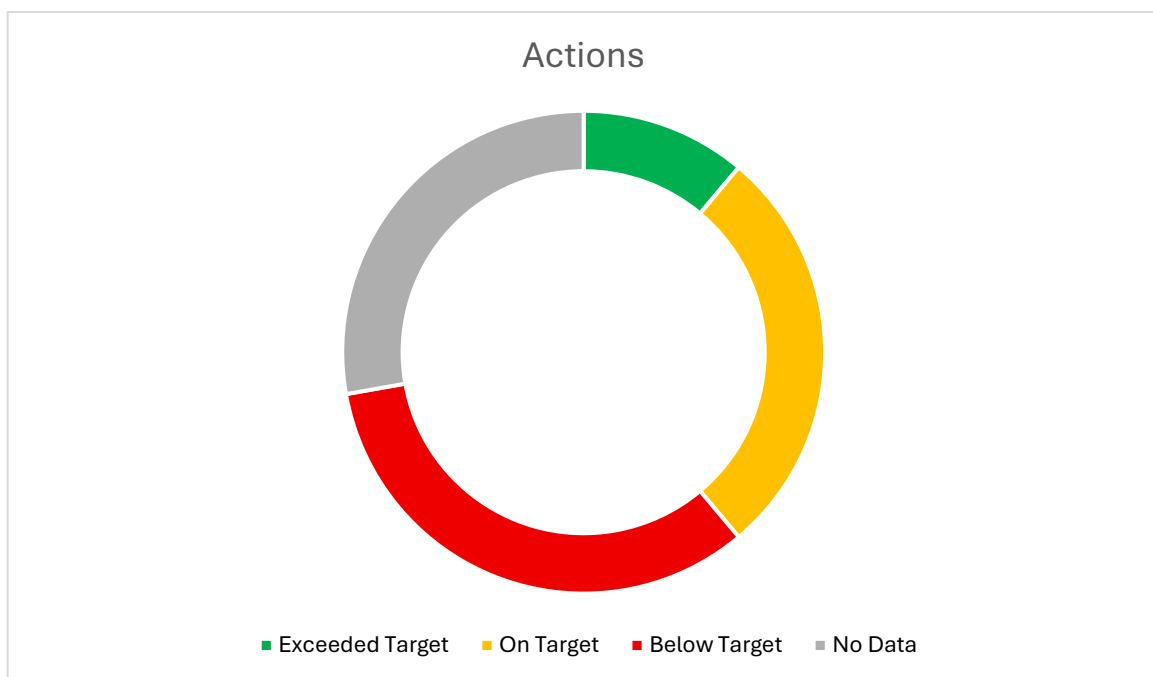
Vibrant Communities and A Prosperous Economy

What is it?

As well as building on a strong visitor economy, we need to enable a diverse range of employment opportunities, capitalising on Cumbria's attractiveness as a place to live and work. Our communities are ageing, and this will present pressure on rural services and the sustainability of our settlements. Across Cumbria there is an urgent need to attract and retain young people to visit, live and work. However, in some communities in the Lake District over half the housing stock is being used as second or holiday homes meaning many young people and working families cannot afford to buy open market homes.

Update on our Targets 2025-26

The chart below summarises our delivery against all our 'Vibrant Communities and A Prosperous Economy' targets.



Action 1: Manage the impact of second homes and short-term holiday lets in the Lake District

In February 2024 the Government announced changes in relation to short-term holiday let rules. These changes included a new planning 'use class' for short-term lets not used as a sole or main home. Existing dedicated short-term lets would automatically be reclassified

into the new use class and will not require a planning application. Government also intended to introduce associated permitted development rights, one allowing for a property to be changed from a short-term let to a standard residential dwelling, and a second that would allow a property to be changed to a short-term let.

The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) campaigned for the removal of these new permitted development rights for National Parks. LDNPA wrote to Steve Reed in October 2025 raising concerns about holiday lets and second homes. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) confirmed it is progressing work on a new national mandatory registration scheme for short-term lets. DCMS is currently developing this portal and testing the user experience. A pilot phase is underway elsewhere in England; it is unknown when the registration scheme will become mandatory.

Westmorland & Furness Council, and Cumberland Council have both introduced a Council Tax premium on second homes, and Parish Councils are being supported to campaign for greater controls for short-term lets and second homes.

The LDNPA publish figures about the estimated number of second homes and holiday lets in the Local Plan annual monitoring report.

Action 2: Secure the delivery of key projects within the Windermere Gateway area

In January 2026 Westmorland and Furness Council Leader Councillor Jonathan Brook updated Westmorland & Furness Council's Cabinet on developments regarding the Windermere Gateway project. Cllr Brook told the meeting that the housing scheme, including the anticipated outline planning application, cannot proceed to timetables set by Homes England in respect of the grant funding to enable the necessary highways infrastructure improvements. As a result, the grant agreement for the enabling highways infrastructure required to support the housing development will not be taken forward at this time.

All lead partners for the scheme remain committed to delivering much needed homes to meet affordable and local needs on the allocated site at Orrest Head Farm. Urban Splash, National Trust, Westmorland and Furness Council and the Lake District National Park Authority are exploring possible options.

Recognising Windermere Station's pivotal role, the team has commissioned the next phase of design development work to move the existing concept options (prepared in 2023) to a single preferred option, which could be delivered through a phased approach in line with potential future funding opportunities. Westmorland and Furness Council has appointed consultants Mott MacDonald to draw up a concept masterplan for the Windermere station area, to create a transformational welcome to the Lake District by improving the station, its surroundings and facilities. This work will build on the

Windermere Gateway Transport Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document adopted by the Lake District National Park Authority in 2021 and be used as a key focus for securing investment for the proposed upgrades. Meanwhile, plans have been submitted to government to fund the Lakes Line passing loop and platform, aiming to double train frequency and reduce road congestion, collisions, and emissions. The focus is now on securing government backing and the significant funding to progress the improvements.

Find out more about the project at <https://www.windermeregateway.co.uk/>

You can sign up for updates about the Windermere Gateway project at: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKWFC/subscriber/new> . Just enter your email address and tick the box marked "Windermere Gateway".

Action 3: By March 2025, agree a long-term plan for transformational change to visitor management in Wasdale and Ullswater Valleys.

Action 3a Wasdale Visitor Mobility Plan – agreed 2025

Action 3b Ullswater Visitor Mobility Plan – agreed 2025

Additional plans were agreed this year for Hawkshead and West of Windermere.

Action 4: Lobby transport operators and infrastructure providers to help connect people with jobs in rural areas through the provision an innovative rural bus service.

No data provided

Action 5: Maximise opportunities presented by Project Gigabit Cumbria pilot to connect gigabit capable broadband in hard-to-reach premises in the Lake District.

A substantial increase occurred this year in relation to Project Gigabit in the Lake District. An extra 22% of premises became gigabit capable helping us on our way to our final target of 95%.

We now have Gigabit coverage related to the following old Telephone Exchange Areas:

Ambleside	Caldbeck	Grayrigg	Lorton	Sedgewick
Aspatria	Cockermouth	Greenodd	Low Ireby	Selside
Bampton	Coniston	Greystoke	Lowick Bridge	Shap
Bassenthwaite Lake	Crosthwaite	Hackthorpe	Millom	Skelton
Beckermeth	Eskdale	Hawkshead	Newby Bridge	Staveley

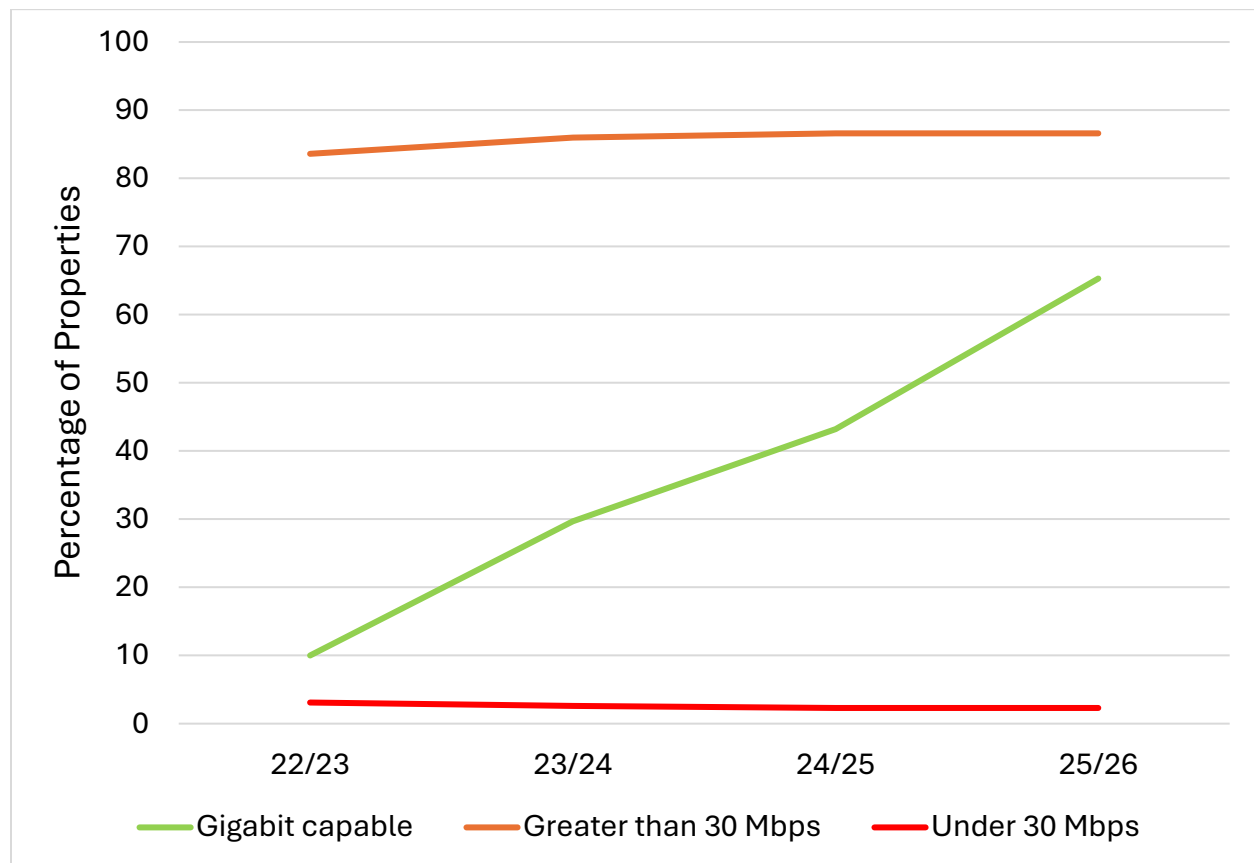
Bootle
Borrowdale
Braithwaite
Broughton-in-
Furness

Glenridding
Gosforth
Grange-Over-Sands
Grasmere

Kendal
Keswick
Kirby-in-Furness
Lamplugh

Orton
Pooley Bridge
Ravenglass
Satterthwaite

Threlkeld
Windermere
Witherslack



Moving Towards a Gigabit Lake District

Action 6: Work with suppliers, communities and the UK Government to improve broadband connectivity to ensure that no one and no place is left behind.

The target was set at 1% of the Lake District. In 2024-25 3.5% of properties fell into this category. Unfortunately, this has increased to 5%.

Action 7: Monitor 4G coverage in the National Park as the Shared Rural Network evolves so that no-one and no place is left behind.

In 2025-26, 88% of the Lake District was covered by at least one network provider, with 62% being covered by all four major ones (EE, O2, Vodafone and Three).

Action 8: Support local authorities in developing Cumbria's climate change adaption plan round four by September 2025.

No data provided

Action 9: Work with the Cumbria Rural Housing Enabler Service to bring forward Lake District National Park Authority site allocations by March 2026.

No data provided

Action 10: Proactively promote energy efficiency, sustainable building measures/ retrofit options for homeowners and businesses, with a particular focus on traditionally constructed buildings, including a presumption against demolition.

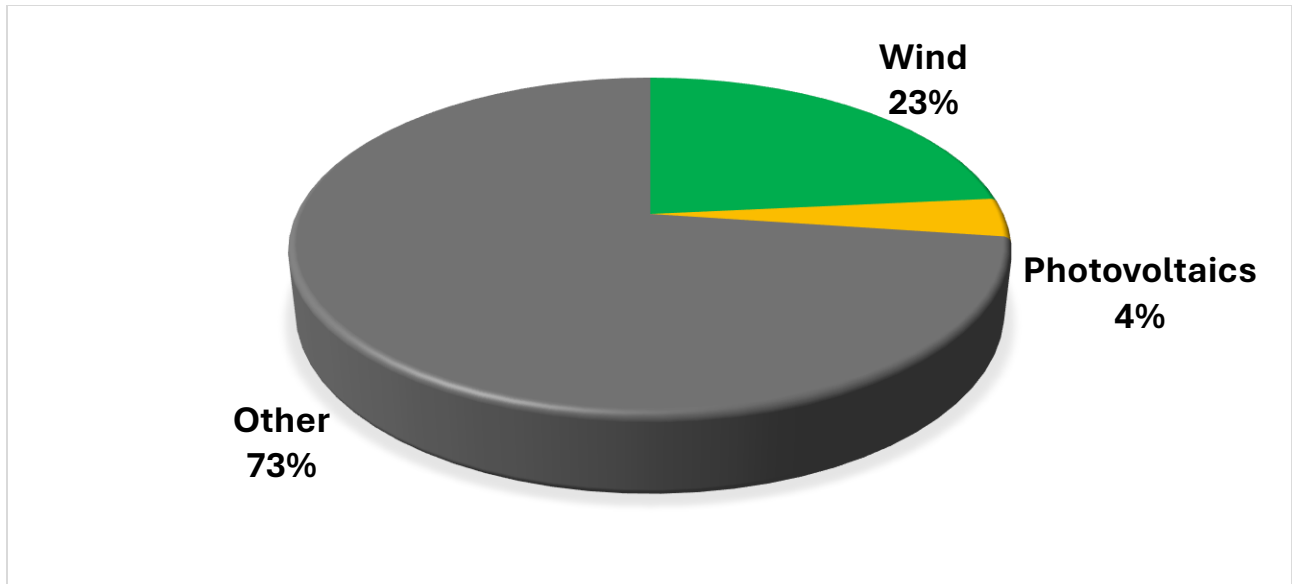
Action 10a: Reuse of existing buildings Supplementary Planning Document by March 2026.

In November 2025, the Government published new plan-making regulations which prevent the adoption of new Supplementary Planning Documents after 30 June 2026. As a result, this action will not be progressed. Instead, this action is likely to be delivered through the review of the Lake District Local Plan which will commence later in 2026.

Prior to the introduction of these regulations, officers had begun gathering evidence on the extent and impacts of demolition across the Lake District, drawing on data from planning consents. This work was intended to inform a future supplementary planning document focused on encouraging the reuse of existing buildings.

Action 10b: Energy Efficiency Upgrades

Energy demand in the Lake District was 89.2 Megawatts in 2024, of which just over a quarter was generated by renewable sources. Through the Warm Homes Plan, the current government aims to retrofit 5 million homes by 2030, mandated solar panel installation on all new builds and provide £7,500 grants for air source heat pumps. The government is also changing regulations to allow homeowners to install plug-in solar panel arrays directly into domestic sockets.



Generation of Energy in the Lake District 2024 (Source: Electricity North West '*Distribution Future Electricity Scenarios 2025 Data Workbook*'))

English Lake District World Heritage Site

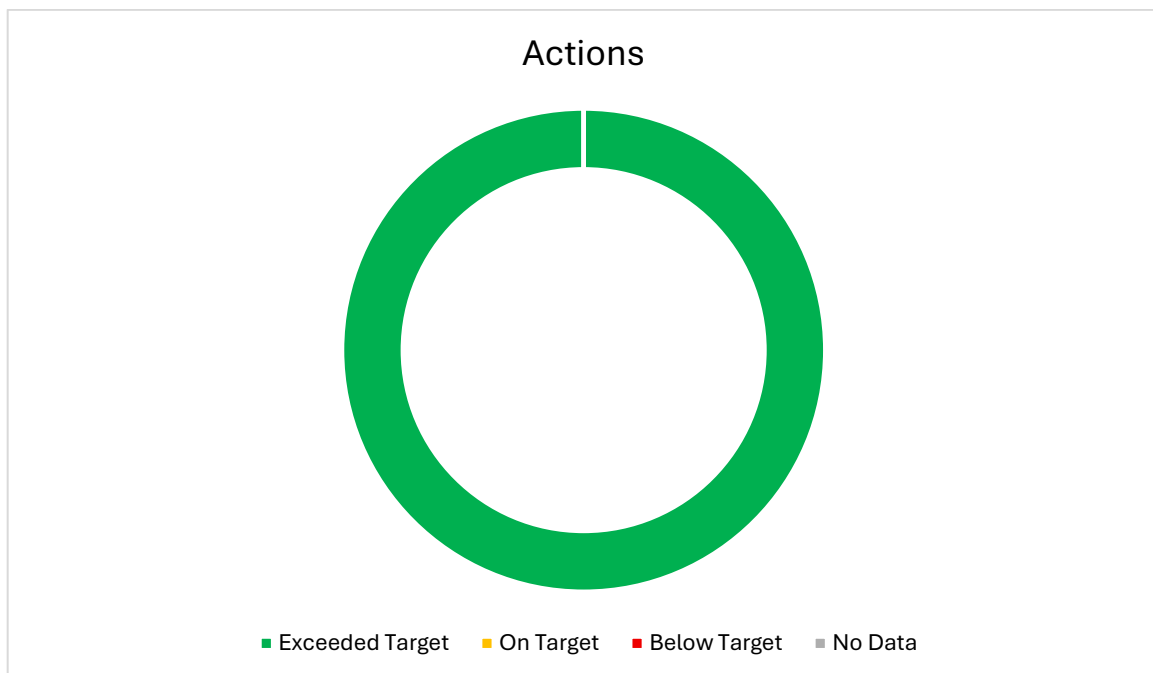
What is it?

To be part of the World Heritage Site family, sites must be of Outstanding Universal Value. The English Lake District became a World Heritage Site in 2017 under UNESCO's Cultural Landscape category, meaning that it is globally important for 'the combined works of nature and of man'. There are three themes which sum up why the Lake District is so important. They are all interlinked and helped to shape the Lake District both in terms of its land use and protection:

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

Update on World Heritage Site Targets

The chart below summarises our delivery against all our World Heritage Site targets.



Action 1: Prepare an interpretation strategy for the English Lake District World Heritage Site in 2024 and commence delivery of the associated action plan.

The World Heritage Site Interpretation Strategy was adopted by Lake District National Park Partnership in April 2025, with an associated Action Plan setting out how the Partnership, and its delivery partners, will take this forward over the next few years.

The Action Plan is arranged by theme, and for each element highlights the anticipated short term (1-2 years) and medium term (3-5 years) activity that is proposed.

An Interpretation Strategy Delivery Board was also established in 2025, with an independent chair, and which is made up of a range of Partners and delivery partners with an interest in, and expertise in, interpretation, communications and marketing. This includes members of the Lake District business community; an important mechanism for sharing world heritage messaging.

While delivery progress has been somewhat hampered in 2025-26 due to a lack of world heritage resources (now happily resolved in Spring 2026) good progress has been made in some areas. For instance, the Partnership has continued to promote significant anniversaries relating to the World Heritage Site, including World Heritage Day in April 2025, sharing interesting and lesser-known stories about the Lake District. One particularly exciting project is a collaboration with other northern and midland World Heritage Sites, Geoparks and World Heritage Cultural Cities, also the University of Leeds, to create an online digital trail promoting the fascinating and sometimes lesser-known industrial heritage of these sites. This includes the Lake District, which is perhaps less commonly associated with industry but has a long and important history of quarrying, mining and woodland industries, such as coppicing and charcoal burning, all of which has left its mark on the world heritage site landscape and national park. Work is well advanced and it is intended that the trail will launch this summer. More details about this exciting project can be found at: <https://worldheritageuk.org/industrial-heritage/trail/>



Action 2: Work with Partners to prepare a State of Conservation report for UNESCO by the end of 2024.

UNESCO, through the World Heritage Committee, takes a keen interest in the management of all World Heritage Sites and can request updates on issues that are of concern. Following our submission of the State of Conservation report in 2024, the UK Government has been asked to submit such an update in 2026. The Lake District National Park Partnership is currently supporting the Government in preparing this report.

This year, the World Heritage Committee has asked us to report on several issues, including: planning applications at Elterwater and Honister quarries, transport statistics, Natural Flood Management, Windermere water quality and the delivery of our World Heritage Interpretation Strategy. In addition, the Lake District National Park Authority has commissioned the monitoring of several unsealed roads (another area of interest for UNESCO) to explore how often they are being used and by what type of vehicle, and this information will feed into the report.



Photos: Elterwater Riving (processing) Sheds and the Quarry. © R Lord.

The Authority is also working with partner organisations and DEFRA to develop an agro-pastoral strategy for the Lake District, which was a further UNESCO request. The report also provides an opportunity to showcase the fantastic work and projects that the Partnership is delivering to better manage the World Heritage Site.

Built Environment Case study 1: Henry's Castle

Henry's Castle at Underbarrow has been assessed, recorded and repaired with Farming in Protected Landscapes programme (FiPL) funding and now a Grade II* Listed Building.

FiPL funding enabled the commission a conservation accredited architect, structural engineer and archaeologist to research, record and prepare a schedule of conservation led repairs. Further FiPL funding meant that repair works could be carried out and the building saved from imminent collapse.

Dating from the 14th century or earlier, the building was originally protected with limewash, a natural surface finish long used on solid stone walls. Reapplying limewash is not just about restoring historic character; it delivers clear climate and environmental benefits. Made from natural, low-carbon materials, limewash allows walls to sweat, letting moisture escape instead of trapping it within the stone. This helps reduce damp and decay, keeping the building sound for longer and cutting down on future repairs, materials and energy use. Limewash also acts as a protective layer, shielding masonry and mortar joints from driving rain and prolonged heat.

While the limewashed finish may look unfamiliar today, it is historically accurate and reflects how buildings like this appeared for centuries. Bare rubble walls (except for many barns) are a relatively modern expectation, and one that leaves masonry and mortar more exposed to decay. The renewed lime finish restores both weather protection and an authentic historic appearance, creating a more resilient and sustainable landmark.



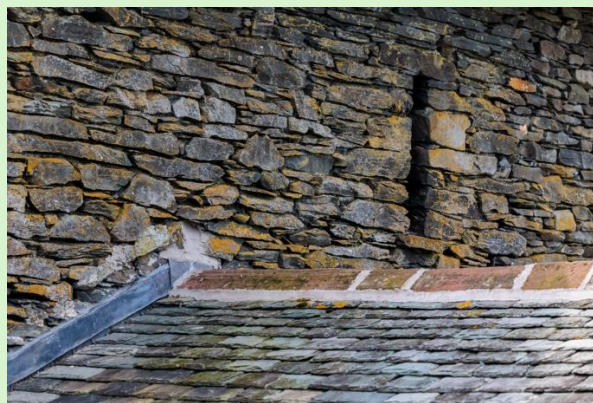
Photo: Henry's Castle post-restoration

Built Environment Case Study 2: Historic Buildings Grant Scheme

With funding through the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme (FiPL) and an additional ringfenced allocation from DEFRA specifically for buildings, 20 traditional farm buildings have been repaired across the Lake District National Park over the past year.

Working with partners from Historic England and the National Trust, the historic environment team at the Lake District National Park Authority has led on securing the funding to enable these traditional buildings to be sensitively repaired and continue in agricultural use. In almost all cases these buildings provide a habitat for wildlife, including barn owls and bats, which has posed challenges for timing the works within the grant deadlines, but the local contractors have been extremely flexible and committed to getting these projects completed to a very high standard.

The buildings repaired range in date from as early as the 1500s through to the mid-1800s. They also vary in size from simple hogg houses to multi-span bank barns. Grant-aided work to repair barns has numerous benefits for the National Park, supporting farm businesses, conserving the historic environment, World Heritage Site and wildlife habitats, as well as supporting local contractors and supply chains. A previous pilot project for traditional barn repairs found that for every £1 spent the predicted return on investment was £4.55 over 5 years and rising to £6.07 for every £1 spent over 10 years.



Photos: Hall Farm Rusland; main barn, and close up of roof restoration

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