

You Said, We Did: Learning from public consultation on the draft Lake District National Park Partnership Plan

April 2026

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1. Executive Summary

Public consultation on the draft Partnership Plan took place between late November 2025 and the end of January 2026, with an excellent response in terms of engagement with this process. The majority of responses were received via an on-line survey, which deliberately focused attention on the Objectives of the proposed 5-year Plan, but with opportunities for respondents to make comments on any other aspect of the Plan. Additional feedback was received through bespoke meetings for target audiences, through 4 drop-in events around the Park, via a tailor-made card game, and through written responses.

Very few comments were received on either the long-term Vision for the Lake District or the Partnership's Ambitions to 2051. Some minor comments were made on the Objectives to 2031, with more comments made on the Measures of Success for the same. The overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that the Plan's Objective themes were important providing the Partnership with a helpful steer that the Plan is on the right track in terms of public opinion. Some more detailed comments were received on the Plan's Policies, with more (but still minor) changes suggested to these than to any other elements of the Plan.

In all cases the Partnership has considered whether the public's suggestions make the Plan stronger and/or clearer, and whether the suggested changes are issues that the Partnership has the ability to deliver; some suggestions being central or regional government responsibilities or matters relating to planning/development issues that will be considered for the Lake District Local Plan.

The Partnership is very grateful for all those who took the time to give their feedback. While the amendments have been targeted to the aspects of the Plan most commented upon, overall the changes have not been substantive (some aspects of the Plan attracted no comment) but have certainly helped to improve and strengthen the final version.

2. Introduction

2.1. Background to the Partnership Plan

The Lake District National Park Partnership is a collaboration of 24 Partners from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors with the shared goal to look after and enhance the Lake District. One of the main ways the Partnership does this is writing and then delivering, with local communities and other delivery organisations, a Partnership Plan for the Lake District, setting out how we will respond to the area's challenges and opportunities over the next five years.

The Partnership Plan is a joint management plan for both the Lake District National Park and English Lake District World Heritage Site. The current Plan expires in 2026, with the new version –subject to this public consultation – live from 2026-2031. This Plan sets out the Vision and overarching strategy for managing the Lake District to 2051 and how the Partnership will work collaboratively to deliver the Plan.

2.2. Overview of consultation

To inform the development of the new Partnership Plan, two phases of consultation were delivered in 2025 and early 2026.

Informal consultation centred around targeted meetings with key stakeholders and the playing of the Otter Intelligence Game, an interactive bespoke board game designed in conjunction with the University of Edinburgh to help a wide range of people - Partners, stakeholders, young people, and staff - explore ideas, discuss priorities, and collectively shape policy for the Lake District. Informal consultation identified shared values for the future of the Lake District, the key challenges the Plan needed to address, and the priority actions required. Feedback from informal consultation helped to shape the long-term Vision and Ambitions, as well as the 5-year Objectives of the draft Partnership Plan for public consultation.

Formal consultation on the Partnership Plan began on the 24 November 2025 and ran until 30 January 2026. Formal consultation was structured around an online survey which asked a series of focused questions about the draft 5-year Objectives and priorities of the draft Partnership Plan. Four drop-in sessions were held in the

north, centre, south-west and south-east of the Lake District to allow members of the public to come and talk about their concerns and issues. To ensure additional reach to target audiences, a series of bespoke meetings were also held and a revised version of the Otter Intelligence game, reflecting the consultation draft Plan, was played. Individuals, organisations and groups who wished to submit responses beyond the scope of the online survey were also able to do so via a dedicated email address or by post.

2.3. How the consultation was promoted

The consultation was widely promoted by Partners, through a variety of means. A dedicated webpage on the Lake District National Park Authority website, entitled 'Have your say on the future of the Lake District', was the main mechanism for providing information about the consultation, and this was also promoted through social media, via face-to-face engagement with stakeholders and via press articles. Focused advertising through social media promoted the consultation to young people.

Cumbria Association of Local Councils (a Partner) sent a mailing to all parish councils and parish meetings. Flyers were widely distributed across the Lake District and, to ensure that those who did not have access to the webpage or could not respond through digital means, copies of the draft plan were placed in all Lake District Tourist Information Centres and libraries.

A competition to win a £100 voucher from one of four Lake District businesses (Coniston Boating Centre, Hawkshead Relish, Honister Slate Mine and Keswick Brewing Company including options to select either an experience or produce) was used to encourage people to respond to the questionnaire. The winning entry was drawn at random, and the winner has been contacted and has selected a voucher from Hawkshead Relish.

2.4. Consultation in numbers

Figure 1 below sums up the consultation in numbers:



Figure 1: public consultation in numbers



Figure 2: demonstrates how the consultation was promoted and reach

2.5. On-line questionnaire

This was the principal method used to seek responses from the public with an impressive 1,666 responses submitted. The survey deliberately focused its questions on the draft Plan Objectives, while providing opportunities for people to comment on any other aspect of the Plan. The consultation webpage also provided contact details to allow people to make more fulsome written responses than the questionnaire would allow (see 2.8 below).

2.6. Bespoke meetings

A programme of targeted meetings was undertaken to support engagement with groups less likely to respond through open consultation channels. 21 meetings were held with a range of groups, including 6 with Partnership groups, with particular effort made to engage with the farming community as a harder-to-reach audience and one of the Partnership's priority groups for engagement. These included meetings with the Farmer Network, the Tenant Farmers Association, the Federation of Cumbria Commoners and Lake District National Park Authority commons graziers. All sessions focused on the priority issues and challenges facing each group, and explored the draft Vision, Objectives and Targets. Discussions highlighted areas of support for the Plan as well as opportunities to strengthen and improve its content.

2.7. Otter Intelligence game

A card game, designed with the University of Edinburgh, was used as an alternative approach to public consultation. It was particularly used to target young people, as an audience less likely to engage with more conventional methods of engagement, but was also used with a farming group (also a target audience). Eleven games were played, engaging 57 players.

2.8. Written responses

We received 36 written responses outside of the questionnaire. These can broadly be grouped into the following categories: Partner organisations (who had been involved in the consultation Plan drafting; 8, circa 22%); Businesses (4, 11%); Town or parish councils (3, 8%); Sheep breeders association (3, 8%); Landowners/land managers (3, 8%); Local Nature groups (3, 8%) and other (12, 33%). These responses ranged from single issue concerns or suggestions to detailed comments on the whole Plan. All have been reviewed to inform the final Plan.

3. Demographic information

3.1. Demographics of questionnaire respondents

Respondents, of which there were 1,666 in total, were asked to provide demographic data so that we could understand who had engaged with the survey. Respondents were asked to provide their age, ethnic background and to explain their relationship with the Lake District (for instance, whether they were a resident, they worked in the Lake District, they were a visitor etc). The full range of categories and responses can be found in Appendix 2.

Age

All 1,666 respondents chose to answer this question. Data shows that survey responses are strongly skewed toward older age groups, particularly people aged 55-75, with limited participation from younger people (although a targeted campaign did increase such participation). 61% of respondents were aged 55 and over.

Ethnic Background

1,542 respondents (93%) chose to disclose their ethnic background. Data demonstrates the 89.5% of respondents identify as White.

Relationship to the Lake District

All 1,666 respondents answered this question. Overall, the respondent group is dominated by people who live in or near the Lake District, alongside a number of visitors (17%). This suggests that engagement with the survey primarily reflects the perspectives of those with a direct, ongoing relationship with the Lake District

How people heard about the questionnaire

We also asked how people heard about the questionnaire. 1659 respondents (99.6%) chose to answer this question. The largest group of respondents (630; 37.8%) heard about the questionnaire through social media (Facebook, Instagram etc).

Organisations

We also asked whether people had heard about the survey through an organisation that they were a member of. 203 respondents (12%) answered 'yes' to this question with the largest number being from Friends of the Lake District (31; a Partner) followed by the University of Cumbria (15; a Partner) and the Farmer Network (7; a delivery partner).

3.2 Demographics of Otter Intelligence game players

57 people played the Otter Intelligence game at formal consultation stage concentrating on two of the Partnership's target audiences of the farming community and young people. Three demographic questions were asked of this group, age, sex and ethnicity, using a University of Edinburgh-designed form. However, relationship to the Lake District is also known, given the audiences targeted.

Age

48 Participants were aged 11-12 (school year 7; in the under 18 age bracket). The farmer game players included one player in the 25-24 age bracket, and the other eight in the 35-64 range.

Sex

The young people were divided into 25 girls and 23 boys. The remaining farmer game players (9) were female.

Ethnicity

All game players gave their ethnic background as White.

Relationship to the Lake District

The young people who played the game all attend secondary school in the Lake District with approximately 50% living just outside the Lake District national park boundary in the south-west of Cumbria. 100% of the adult game players live and/or work in the Lake District.

3.3 Demographics of other respondents

Demographic information was not collected for drop-in event attendees, participants of bespoke meetings or those submitting written responses.

4. Overview of responses

4.1 Approach to responses

Given the large number of responses to the public consultation the Partnership has not been able to accommodate every view and some responses were contradictory. For example, some respondents called for greater ambition on nature recovery, while others felt the Partnership was already too ambitious. The Partnership has therefore considered whether each comment: a) makes the Plan clearer; b) strengthens the Plan and the Partnership's commitments; or c) represents a sensible addition to the consultation draft that the Partnership can deliver.

4.2 Suggestions which the Partnership is unable to accommodate

Some respondents also made suggestions which are out of scope for the Partnership Plan, for instance where the Partnership does not have the power to deliver. These include, for example: matters relating to the planning system in the Lake District (such suggestions have been passed to the Lake District National Park Authority's Local Plan Review team for its consideration); the potential for raising a visitor levy to raise funds for the benefit of the area (Government consultation suggests that this will likely be a devolved power to the Mayor of Cumbria, once elected), and the introduction of a registration scheme to manage second homes and holiday lets (such a scheme would need to be introduced by central Government, and the Partnership has long lobbied for this).

5. Vision to 2051

5.1. Number and type of response

From the 1,720 total number of responses (both questionnaire and written responses) 21 (1.2%) referenced the Vision. (Bespoke meeting participants did not comment on the Vision and this was not a component part of the Otter Intelligence Game. We also did not receive any comments on the Vision through the four drop-in sessions.) This low figure was anticipated prior to consultation as:

- the Vision had been discussed and crafted collaboratively by the Partnership
- the questionnaire focused on the 5-year Plan Objectives rather than the longer-term Vision, although respondents had the opportunity to make comments about the Plan overall.
- the Vision is long-term, to 2051, which for many is a very distant concept, rather than the more 'real' 5-year Plan objectives.

5.2. Summary of responses

Survey Feedback

- Across the 16 questionnaire responses that commented on the Vision, three respondents (19%) expressed general support, noting that the Vision felt clear and measured.
- Five respondents (31%) called for a more ambitious and inspiring Vision seeking a stronger emphasis on nature recovery and biodiversity.
- Three respondents (19%) raised transport-specific concerns, requesting a world-class sustainable travel Vision, clearer commitments to reducing car dependency, and improved public transport options.
- Two respondents (13%) felt the Vision lacked a collaborative approach, suggesting it did not fully reflect the perspectives of Partners, residents or visitors and should adopt a more inclusive tone.
- Three respondents (19%) felt the Plan lacked detail on how the Vision will be delivered.

Written Feedback

- Three Partners commented on the Vision, all of whom had fed into the Vision drafting process. One welcomed the addition of ‘economy’ to the Vision (but asked for stronger emphasis throughout the plan to reinforce the value of the economy – this has been added, see below). Another suggested that the Plan’s wording should be more inclusive and globally oriented. They felt that references to the Lake District being ‘valued by the nation’ should instead reflect its international significance as part of a World Heritage Site. A third emphasised the need for more decisive action on transport, arguing that significantly reducing car dependency is essential to delivering the National Park’s statutory purposes and Vision.
- One written response cautioned that the Vision for ‘thriving communities and a regenerative economy’ should not place excessive reliance on tourism as the primary economic driver.
- A further written response, from a group of 6 businesses, raised wider concerns that the draft Vision does not adequately reflect local community needs or the importance of a strong economy in achieving the Plan’s objectives.

5.3. Analysis

Some respondents sought a more ambitious and inspiring Vision, particularly with a stronger emphasis on nature recovery and biodiversity.

Transport emerged as a concern, with calls for a world-class sustainable travel Vision, clearer commitment to reducing car dependency, and improved public transport.

A smaller number felt the Vision should better reflect a collaborative tone that includes Partners, residents and visitors, and some wanted clearer signposting on how the Vision will be delivered.

Written responses echoed these themes and additionally highlighted the need to reflect the Lake District’s international significance as a World Heritage Site and to position the economy as central but not overly reliant on tourism.

5.4. Conclusion

The Partnership carefully considered the comments received but were satisfied that the wording adequately reflected the Partnership's shared vision and provided 'hooks' for all of the areas of concern expressed through public consultation. The Partnership also wanted to stress that the Vision is not a standalone statement but is supported by the rest of the Plan. This includes - in response to respondents – challenging ambitions for nature's recovery, for transport and active travel, and for communities and the economy.

The Plan also explains how the Partnership intends to deliver the Vision, starting with the first 5-years of activity as summed up by the Objectives, Measures of Success and associated Action Plan.

However, feedback on specific aspects of the Vision has helped inform refinements to the supporting Ambitions and Objectives. For example, 'enhancing connectivity' of habitats has been incorporated into the Nature Recovery Objective, and Measures of Success have been developed and agreed to provide a clear framework for monitoring progress in delivering the Plan.

Further changes to the Ambitions and Objectives are discussed below.

6. Nature Recovery

6.1. Number and type of response

Nature recovery was rated by questionnaire respondents as very important, important or moderately important by 96.3% of survey respondents as shown in figure 3 below, showing strong support for the Nature Recovery Objective. When survey respondents were asked to identify the three Objectives they believed the Partnership should prioritise, nature recovery ranked third, with 15% of respondents

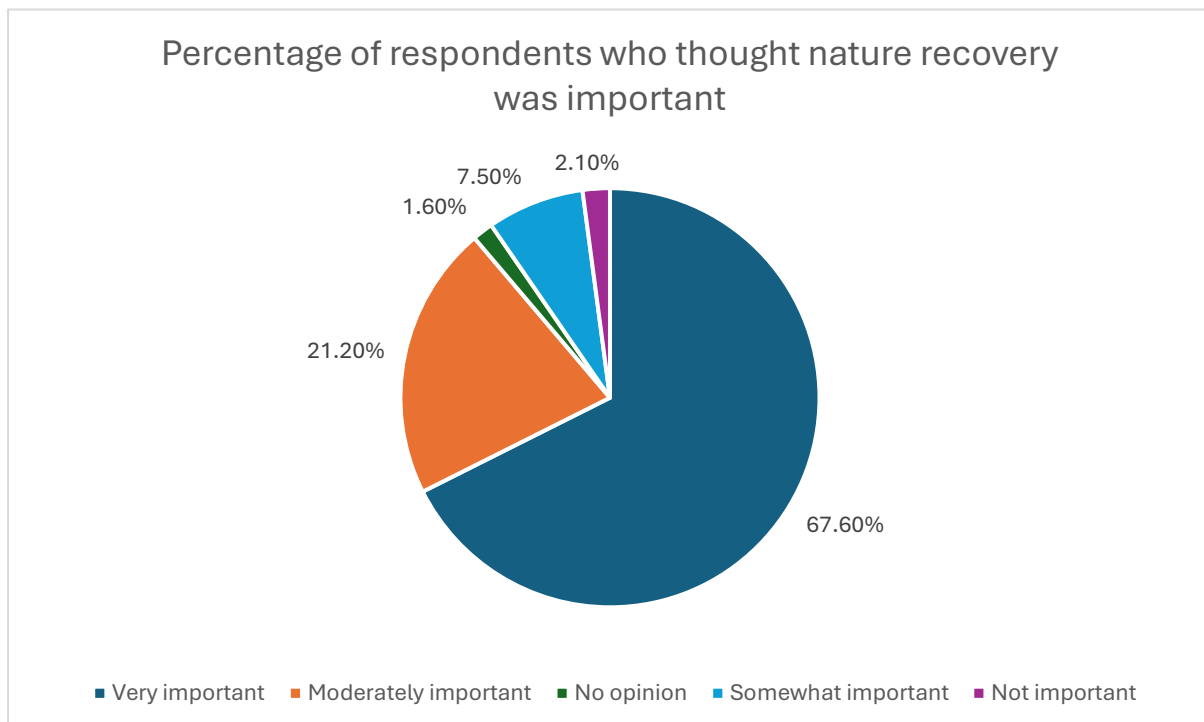


Figure 3: percentage of respondents who thought nature recovery was important selecting it as one of their priorities.

Otter Game players mentioned nature and wildlife, but the recordings cannot quantify the number of players that this was important to. The issues raised are summarised below. However, nature was the joint highest-scoring theme in terms of the game score board at the end of the game.

2 bespoke meetings focused on this theme, with discussion on nature-friendly farming and the actions Lake District farmers are already taking to contribute to this Objective.

13 people provided feedback on nature recovery at drop-in events. Feedback included a desire for better support and protection for swifts and the planting of more trees.

11 written responses mentioned this theme, these ranged from comments on individual concerns, to the conservation and management of specific habitat types, to broader feedback about the need to balance nature's recovery with food production and a viable farming economy.

6.2. Summary of responses

6.2.1. Ambition

There were only two comments which referenced the Ambition, both from Partners who had been involved in the drafting process. Both comments related to the term 'joined-up landscape' not being well understood, with one suggesting the word 'connected' would be better.

6.2.2. Objective

Survey Responses

- Many respondents want the objective to move beyond 'management' and 'species rich habitats' into active rewilding and broad restoration.
- Survey feedback repeatedly mentions that references to specific species - including Red Squirrels, Fell Ponies, endangered or lost species and non-native species management - are missing from the Plan.
- Some respondents commented that Objective A does not address how farming practices affect nature recovery and asked for clarity on how nature recovery relates to grazing, farming, the cultural landscape and land-use change.
- Respondents asked for the Plan to include explicit reference to ecological connectivity, catchments, soil health, and ecosystem processes and recognition of the wider functions of nature beyond habitat quality.

Bespoke Meetings

- Feedback from a bespoke Partnership Plan meeting with a group of Common Graziers suggests that nature recovery should focus on habitats and species that are still present but struggling, e.g. Curlew.

Drop-in Events

- Feedback from in-person consultation events shows strong support for species protection and biodiversity enhancement, in particular support for Swifts.
- Feedback also shows that respondents want a shift toward more natural habitats, reduced grazing pressure, and landscape-scale recovery.

Otter Game Play

- Otter Game players across both school-age and farmer group players frequently mentioned nature and wildlife as being important to them. A desire to introduce more wildlife demonstrated a particular interest in the biodiversity of the Lake District and the opinion that more needs to be done to support nature's recovery.
- Players highlighted the importance of adopting nature-friendly farming practices, improving the condition of protected sites, and delivering nature's recovery to address the current national nature crisis. However, the farmer group pointed to the gap between the demonstrable need for more action and the government-backed schemes (or alternative sources of funding) to support this.
- The focus on restoring wildlife habitats and supporting particular species reflected a proactive approach to biodiversity conservation, aiming not only to halt decline but, where possible, to reverse damage.
- Of the 11 games played, nature recovery scored 26% in terms of priority for players on the game score board; the joint-highest score (with Inspiring people to value and care for the Lake District).

Written Responses

- Partners and respondents emphasised that nature recovery should be ambitious but balanced, safeguarding the Lake District's farming heritage, food production and cultural landscape while restoring nature.
- Several responses called for a more holistic and landscape-scale approach to Objective A, including stronger action on nature recovery, better management of existing woodlands, and clearer links between individual initiatives.
- A recurring theme was the need to explicitly promote habitat connectivity, with wildlife corridors and a connected ecological network identified as essential to delivering nature recovery, alongside action on threats such as invasive species, particularly in lake and river ecosystems.
- Respondents also highlighted that the Plan should recognise the need for the Lake District to continue adapting to emerging pressures, including climate change, as part of a long-term approach to nature recovery.
- It was also suggested that the Plan should reference the opportunities for nature in the built environment.

Measures of Success

- Only two comments were received about the Measures of Success (formerly 'Targets'), both from Partners who had been involved in the drafting process. One asked for alignment of the Measures of Success with the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the other requesting that increased habitat connectivity should be referenced.

6.3. Analysis of responses

Feedback shows general support for Objective A, alongside calls for a more ambitious, holistic and landscape-scale approach to nature recovery. Respondents emphasised the importance of species recovery, ecological connectivity, and clearer links between nature recovery, farming practices and long-term landscape management. While there was strong appetite for action, some respondents also

highlighted concerns about funding and delivery mechanisms, suggesting that the Objective might be ambitious to deliver.

6.4. Conclusion

Following consultation, minor changes have been made to the Nature Recovery Ambition. To improve clarity, the phrase ‘a more joined-up landscape’ has been replaced with ‘a better-connected landscape’.

In response to consultation feedback, the Nature Recovery Objective now explicitly includes ‘enhance connectivity’. The Measures of Success used to monitor progress against the Nature Recovery Objective have also been expanded to include support for farm wildlife and to support important Lake District species. A reference has also been added to stress that improved management for nature can also include the important sites for wildlife provided by the built and historic environment.

Other Plan themes are also delivering for nature’s recovery, including: Water, Climate Resilience and Farming. These include provision for, for example, greater tree planting, peat restoration and nature-friendly farming.

In response to comments about species, the associated Action Plan has also identified the importance of targeting 6 priority Lake District species that require concerted action (including the Red Squirrel) and a focus on grasslands, a habitat under threat, in the first two years of delivery.

7. Water Quality

7.1. Number and type of response

Water quality was rated by questionnaire respondents as very important, important and moderately important by 98.9% of survey respondents as shown in the figure 4 below, showing strong support for the water quality Objective. When survey respondents were asked to identify the three Objectives they believed the Partnership should prioritise, water quality was ranked first, with 22% of respondents selecting it as one of their priorities.

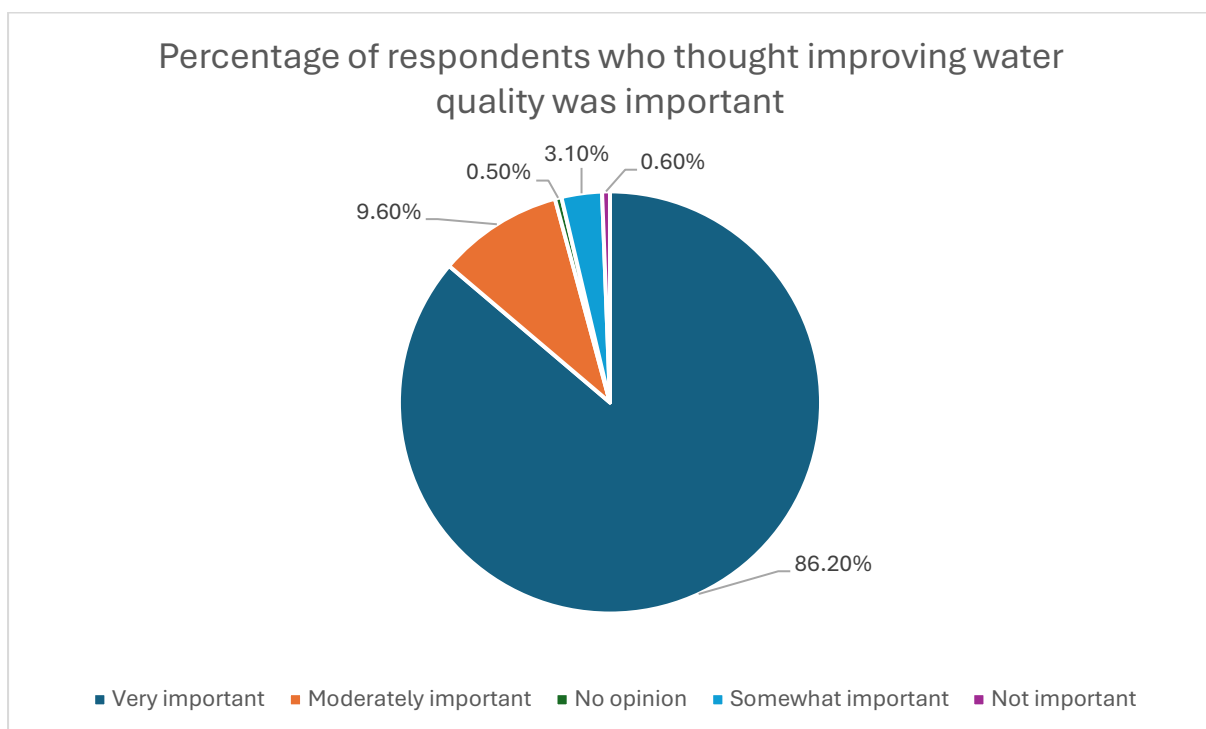


Figure 4: percentage of respondents who thought improving water quality was important

This theme was of considerable concern to school-age Otter Game players (the largest proportion of players) but was not explicitly mentioned by the farmer game-players.

Bespoke meetings did not discuss this theme.

Eight people provided feedback on water quality at drop-in events. Comments focused on improving lakes and rivers.

Nine written responses mentioned this theme.

Summary of responses

7.1.1. Ambition

There was only one consultation comment that mentioned the water quality Ambition, from a Partner that had been involved in the drafting process. They proposed an amendment to the wording to: 'Water is truly valued, clean and plentiful for people and nature through restoring natural processes and reducing pollution.'

7.1.2. Objectives

Survey Responses

- Water quality emerged as a dominant theme, with respondents calling for stronger action to address a wide range of pollutants, including agricultural run-off, fuel leaks and microplastics, and emphasising that improvements require a catchment-wide, landscape-scale approach rather than focusing solely on lakes and rivers.
- Consultees also asked for greater clarity in the Plan on what is meant by 'freshwater habitats', highlighting the impacts of pollution on fish, aquatic invertebrates, plants and other freshwater species.

Drop-in Events

- Feedback from drop-in events consistently highlighted water pollution and sewage discharges as a major public concern, with many attendees calling for visibly cleaner rivers and lakes.
- Consultees also stressed that improving water quality requires a catchment-wide, landscape-scale approach, recognising that pollution, flooding, soil health and land management are interconnected and cannot be addressed by focusing on waterbodies alone.

Otter Game Play

- Discussions around improving water quality for both people and nature was of considerable importance to school-age players. Players expressed concerns about water pollution and that it was imperative to improve water quality for the health of both humans and wildlife. The importance of clean water was underscored by the mention of its use for both drinking and recreation, and the implication that current conditions may not be safe for both people and wildlife, indicating an understanding of the interconnectedness of ecosystem health and human well-being.
- There was a call for the delivery of more engagement programs aimed at increasing awareness about the significance of the Lake District's water and promoting actions to better protect its natural resources.
- The discussion among the game players highlights a shared concern over water issues in the Lake District, particularly focusing on the aspects of water pollution and the need for cleaner water. This concern is not just for the aesthetic or recreational value of the water but also for its safety for both people and wildlife, indicating an understanding of the interconnectedness of ecosystem health and human well-being.
- The farmer group of players did not explicitly highlight this topic as being of concern, but a wide-ranging conversation about broader environmental concerns likely implicitly included issues related to water, particularly given the significance of the resource for farming.
- Of the 11 games played, 10.5% selected water as the highest scoring theme on the score board in terms of priority for players; that is in joint third place (with Farming).

Written Responses

- Feedback suggested that the water objective is too narrow and should explicitly include the coast and estuaries and add water resource efficiency alongside quality and ecology.
- Partners, who were involved in the drafting process, have asked for the Objective to give more prominence to managing the threat of invasive non-

native species and strengthening biosecurity measures and encourage the Plan to highlight catchment-scale collaboration.

- Written responses want the Objective to acknowledge that a high-quality water environment is intrinsically valuable and fundamental to residents' wellbeing and the local economy.

7.1.3. Measures of Success

- Three responses were received from Partners, who had already been involved in the drafting of the Measures of Success. One recommended introducing a specific target to increase farmer engagement in water-friendly land management, recognising the role of farm practices in reducing nutrient and sediment run-off. Another highlighted that achieving 100% of designated bathing waters at “good” or better status will require the Partnership to take action beyond statutory requirements, particularly through joint work with delivery bodies. Finally, a Partner noted that delivering the actions within Diffuse Wate Pollution Plans will require significant resource and land use change at landscape scale in some sub-catchments.
- One written response asked that the Plan incorporate data from national sources to ensure that baselines, measures and reporting are robust, consistent and aligned with national monitoring frameworks.

7.2. Analysis of responses

Consultation feedback demonstrated strong and consistent concern about water quality across all engagement channels. While the Water Quality Ambition itself attracted limited comment, respondents called for more ambitious and holistic action within the Objective, to address a wide range of pollutants and improve the water quality of rivers and lakes.

Consultees emphasised the need for a catchment-wide, landscape-scale approach that recognises the links between water quality, land management, flooding, soil health and ecosystem processes. Written and event feedback also highlighted the importance of clearer definitions of freshwater habitats, stronger action on invasive

non-native species and biosecurity, and recognition of the intrinsic value of high-quality water for people, nature, wellbeing and the local economy. Partners further noted that delivery will require collaboration beyond statutory duties, increased engagement with farmers and land managers, and robust, nationally-aligned monitoring and reporting frameworks.

7.3. Conclusion

Consultation responses demonstrated strong and consistent concern about water quality and provided helpful reinforcement of the importance of an integrated approach to protecting and improving rivers and lakes. While respondents called for more ambition, the issues raised - including landscape scale management, land use and invasive species - are already captured within the existing Water Ambition and Objective. However, the Objective has been enhanced with the addition of a commitment to restore natural processes.

It is noted that the Objective is purposely strategic to allow delivery through partnership working, and will be supported by the Measures of Success and detailed actions that will accompany this Objective. This approach ensures flexibility to respond to evolving evidence while maintaining a strong ambition for improving water quality.

In response to public consultation comments, freshwater habitats have now been defined in the Plan. With reference to the coast, it is correct that this is not referenced in the 5-year Objectives as the Partnership identified the need to focus action on inland waterbodies in the first instance. However, the longer-term Ambition for water is more holistic and includes marine and coastal waters.

In terms of the Measures of Success for water, these have been expanded from the public consultation draft, enhancing the Partnership's commitment to improving water quality. This is further supported by the associated Action Plan which includes a strategic review of the risks facing all our lakes, meres and tarns, and the delivery of a communication and engagement campaign to encourage people to take positive action for water within the first two years of the Plan life-cycle.

8. Reduce Carbon Emissions

8.1. Number and type of responses

Reducing carbon emissions was rated by questionnaire respondents as very important, important or moderately important by 85.6% of survey respondents as shown in figure 5 below, showing strong support for the reducing carbon emissions Objective. When survey respondents were asked to identify the three Objectives they believed the Partnership should prioritise, 3% of survey respondents prioritised

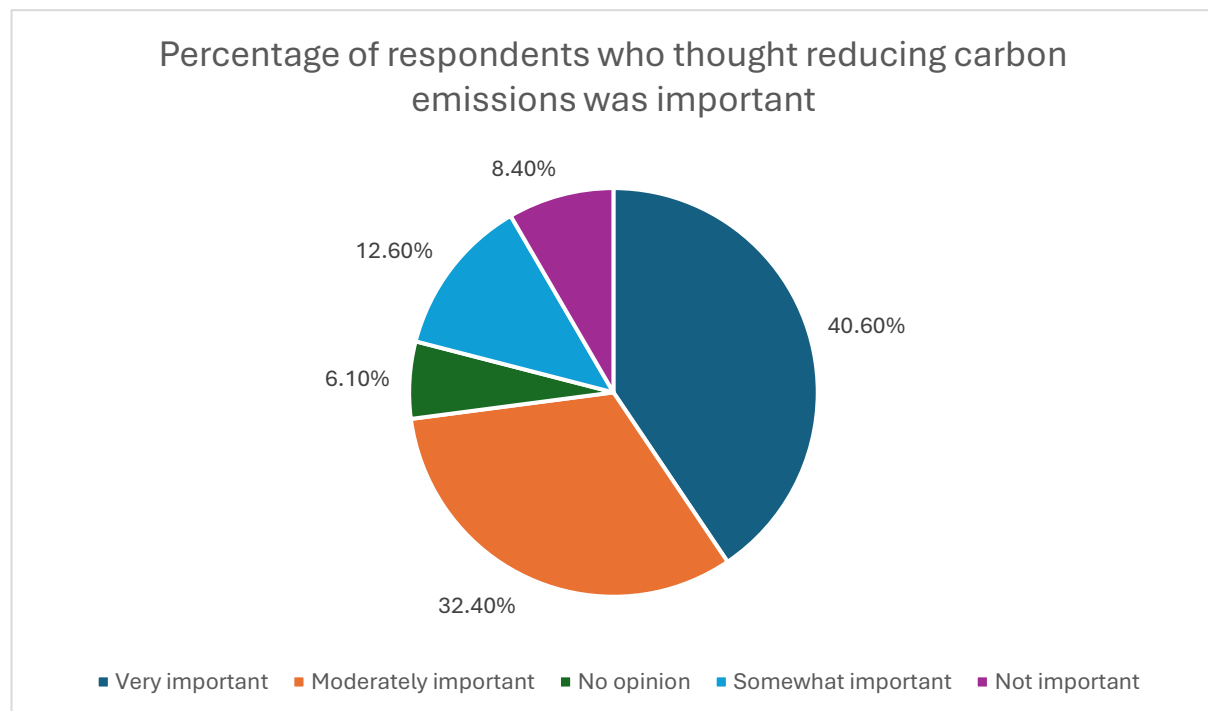


Figure 5: percentage of respondents who thought reducing carbon emissions was important reducing carbon emissions.

Otter Game players from the farmer group indicated a real concern about environmental sustainability in general. They particularly highlighted the importance of reducing emissions. This was not an issue discussed by school-age players.

Bespoke meetings did not discuss this theme.

No feedback was received on carbon emissions at drop-in events.

Four written responses mentioned this theme.

8.2. Summary of responses

8.2.1. Ambition

A Partner noted that achieving net-zero on a consumption basis could require major land-use changes and instead suggested focusing on reducing carbon emissions and enhancing carbon sinks wherever possible.

8.2.2. Objective

Survey Responses

- Consultees felt that the current emissions objective is not strong enough, noting that “reducing carbon from travel” is too vague and that the retrofit ambition is “too small and passive.” They expressed a clear desire for a comprehensive sustainable transport strategy and much stronger, more directive retrofit commitments.
- Respondents also stressed that climate adaptation must be included within this objective.

Drop-in Events

- Consultation responses contained no explicit carbon-emissions comments, but around one-third indirectly related to carbon, highlighting concerns about car-dependent visitor travel, land-use change, nature-based climate solutions, flood and water management, and tourism pressures.

Otter Game Play

- Farmer game-players discussed the need to reduce emissions and mentioned poor air quality from transport emissions in some areas. This was linked to conversations around alternative measures of fuelling public transport, such as electric vehicles. Healthy soils were also mentioned in this context, indicating an understanding of the role they play in storing carbon. As for nature, this group again highlighted the importance of adequate funding to

support successful delivery. Engagement with this topic was high amongst this group, including offering practical solutions for emission reduction.

- School-age players did not discuss this issue. However, they did frequently discuss the importance of people valuing and caring for the Lake District, which demonstrates a broader environmental awareness that could include carbon reduction measures.
- Of the 11 games played, carbon reduction was not a top scoring theme on the game scoreboard for any games.

Written Responses

- Consultees, including a Partner, suggested that Objective C should include reference to the Zero Carbon Cumbria Emissions Reduction Pathways and their associated Emissions Reduction Action Plans to ensure the Objective is aligned with an established and evidence-based route to decarbonisation.
- Respondents also requested a clearer and stronger connection between Objective C (Carbon Emissions Reduction) and Objective I (Transport), emphasising that transport is a major emissions source and that the Plan must demonstrate how both Objectives work together to deliver meaningful carbon reductions.

7.2.3. Measures of Success

- Consultees commented that the Plan does not include measurable emissions targets or a timeline.

8.3. Analysis of responses

Consultation feedback indicated that the carbon emissions Objective would benefit from a stronger and more clearly articulated approach. Respondents felt that current references to reducing emissions, particularly from travel and retrofit, lacked clarity and ambition, and called for a comprehensive sustainable transport strategy, stronger retrofit commitments and the inclusion of climate adaptation.

While explicit emissions-focused comments were limited at in-person events, many responses indirectly related to carbon through concerns about car dependency, land-use change and nature-based solutions. Otter Game discussions with farmer participants, showed high engagement with emissions reduction, highlighting transport emissions, the role of healthy soils as carbon stores and the need for adequate funding.

Written responses emphasised the importance of aligning the Objective with the Zero Carbon Cumbria pathways, strengthening links with the transport objective, and introducing clearer, measurable targets and timelines to support delivery and monitoring.

8.4. Conclusion

Consultation feedback consistently highlighted the importance of reducing carbon emissions and called for the inclusion of transport, retrofit, land-use change and climate adaptation. Following consideration of consultation feedback, no changes have been made to the Reducing Carbon Emissions Ambition, which only received one comment, from a Partner. However, the Reducing Carbon Emissions Objective has been refined to respond to comments seeking a stronger and more enabling approach, with amended wording to both inspire and enable more people to retrofit buildings to improve energy efficiency. In addition, a new Measure of Success has been introduced to reduce carbon emissions from visitor travel, demonstrating a clear commitment to addressing emissions associated with transport. Wider consultation feedback relating to sustainable transport has been considered separately and is addressed below.

It is important to note that Partnership climate action is not confined within the Plan to the Reduce Carbon Emissions theme in isolation. The Climate Resilience theme (see below), also activity for nature's recovery, farming and transport, as examples, also contribute to this agenda, and proposed Partnership activity that will reduce emissions in the round needs to be taken into account.

It is also acknowledged that it is important that the Partnership should not duplicate activity happening elsewhere, and we will continue working closely with the Zero

Carbon Cumbria Partnership and support delivery of its sector action plans. This has been further drawn out in the associated Action Plan.

In terms of emissions and transport, for the first time the Partnership through this Plan has made a commitment to create and deliver a plan for Lake District-wide sustainable and active travel which, as well as reducing vehicle numbers, will have a significant impact on carbon emission reductions.

9. Climate Resilience

9.1. Number and type of response

Increasing the resilience of the landscape was rated by questionnaire respondents as very important, important or moderately important by 87.1% of survey respondents as shown in figure 6 below, showing strong support for landscape resilience. When survey respondents were asked to identify the three Objectives they believed the Partnership should prioritise, 6% of survey respondents prioritised climate resilience.

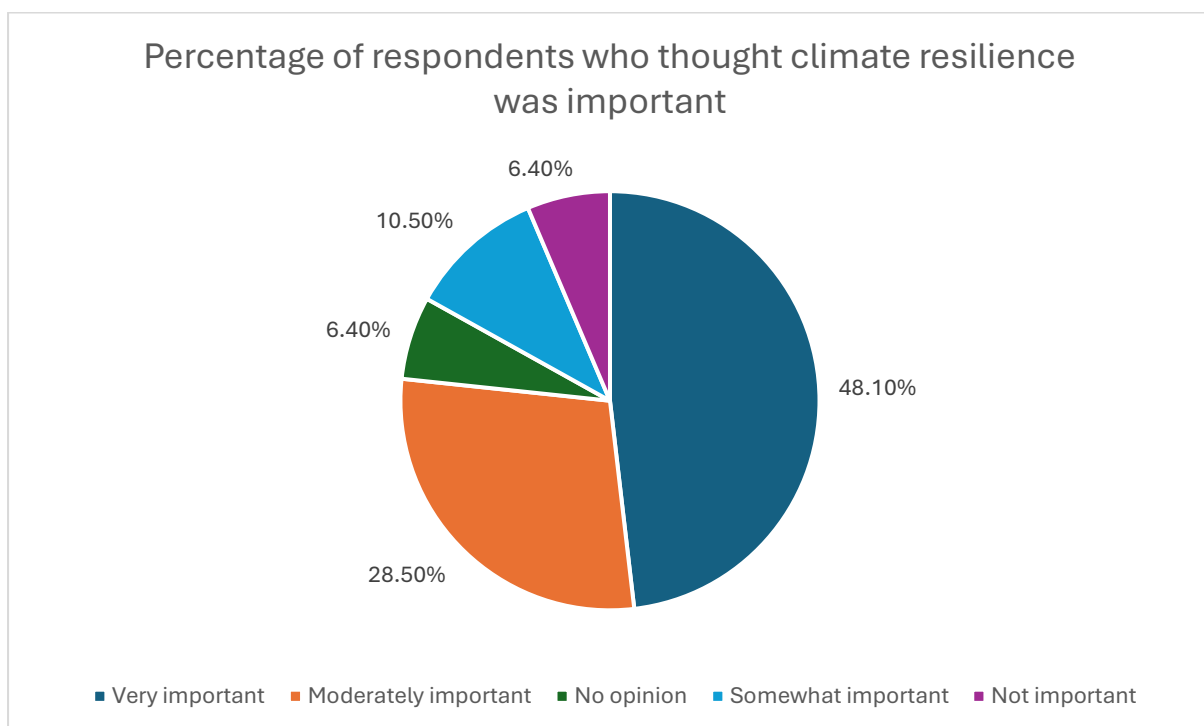


Figure 6: percentage of respondents who thought climate resilience was important

The importance of climate resilience, or the impact of the changing climate on the Lake District, was not a topic of discussion amongst Otter Game players.

Bespoke meetings did not discuss this theme.

Two people provided feedback on climate resilience at drop-in events with comments focusing on nature-based solutions to climate change and flood resilience.

Four written responses mentioned this theme.

9.2. Summary of responses

9.2.1. Ambition

Only one comment was received on the Ambition, from a Partner who had been involved in the drafting process. They proposed strengthening the Ambition to acknowledge that climate change is already occurring, and its impacts are already being felt, emphasising that the Ambition should address current as well as future climate realities.

9.2.2. Objective

Survey Responses

- Respondents called for a significantly bolder approach to landscape recovery, arguing that the Lake District should show national leadership in regenerative, large-scale restoration rather than incremental change, including for climate resilience benefits.
- Consultees emphasised that ‘catchment management’ is too vague, urging the Plan to commit to natural flood management, including “slow the flow” measures and integrated land-and-water interventions.
- Many respondents wanted far greater detail on soils, peat and carbon, noting that Objective D needs clearer commitments on soil health, peatland recovery and carbon storage.
- Consultees felt that the current reference to woodlands feels unambitious and unclear.
- One of the most dominant themes was the lack of integration between this objective and farming and land use.

Drop-in Events

- Respondents highlighted the need for climate adaptation measures to mitigate and reduce the risk of flooding.

- Consultees asked for upland woodland expansion, peat protection, natural flood management, and species-rich habitat restoration to be included in the Plan.

Otter Game Play

- This was not a topic of discussion among Otter game-players and therefore it is not surprising that, of the 11 games played, climate resilience was not a top scoring theme on the game scoreboard for any games.

Written Responses

- Consultation feedback highlighted an urgent need for stronger climate adaptation planning, with calls for the Plan to be more explicit, honest and proactive about the scale of climate risks facing the Lake District.
- A Partner stated that climate adaptation measures themselves can reshape the landscape, noting that they must be acknowledged as having significant landscape impacts. Similarly, a Partner highlighted that in some cases engineered or hybrid flood-risk measures will still be required in some locations, in addition to nature-based solutions.
- Several stakeholders highlighted that farming practices play a crucial role in landscape resilience, warning that under-grazing can increase wildfire risk and encouraging mitigation and adaptation measures that support water-holding landscapes, peatland restoration and resilient infrastructure.
- Consultees also noted that existing woodlands require greater focus, requesting clearer direction on their management and improvement, and a Partner emphasised that woodland expansion should respect cultural landscape character by being informed by environmental history.
- The importance of mitigating wildfires through forward-planning and risk management was also highlighted as an important component part of climate resilience activity given climate change.

9.2.3. Measures of Success

- Respondents noted that several Measures of Success in the draft Plan are set lower than those already adopted in existing strategies. Consultees

highlighted that the proposed peatland restoration rate of 500 ha per year is only half of that set out in the 2020–25 Plan and the Nature Recovery Delivery Plan, and recommended increasing this to around 1,000 ha per year to maintain momentum.

- Stakeholders also suggested that the woodland creation target should be expressed as a percentage, aligning it with the 3% woodland increase by 2030 already established in the Park's Nature Recovery Plan.
- Consultees recommended broadening the woodland target to explicitly include scrub and wood-pasture habitats, ensuring the Plan supports a wider range of semi-natural habitats rather than focusing solely on closed-canopy woodland.

9.3. Analysis of responses

Consultation feedback on climate resilience highlighted strong expectations for a more explicit, ambitious and integrated approach to adaptation. While only one Partner commented on the Ambition, suggesting it should more clearly acknowledge that climate change is already occurring and that impacts are already being felt, feedback on the Objective was extensive.

Respondents consistently called for a bolder, landscape-scale approach to recovery, with many urging the Lake District to demonstrate national leadership in regenerative restoration rather than incremental change. Consultees felt that references to catchment management were too vague and sought clearer commitments to natural flood management, including 'slow the flow' measures.

A recurring theme was the need for much stronger focus on soils, peat and carbon, alongside clearer and more ambitious commitments on woodland management and expansion. Many respondents also highlighted a lack of integration between climate resilience, farming and land-use practices, emphasising the role of grazing management, peatland restoration and water-holding landscapes in reducing climate risks.

Written responses reinforced the need for more honest and proactive adaptation planning, noting that climate adaptation measures can themselves have significant landscape impacts and that, in some locations, engineered or hybrid flood-risk solutions may still be required alongside nature-based approaches.

Feedback on the Measures of Success further indicated that some proposed targets were lower than those already established in existing strategies, with consultees calling for higher ambition on peatland restoration and woodland creation, and for woodland targets to better reflect a wider range of habitats, including scrub and wood-pasture.

9.4. Conclusion

Consultation feedback demonstrated strong support for an ambitious and integrated approach to climate resilience and adaptation. Following consideration of consultation feedback, no changes have been made to the Climate Resilience Ambition or Objective as the Ambition and Objective are deliberately strategic to enable delivery through the associated Measures of Success and detailed Actions. The Partnership considers that key issues raised through consultation, including catchment management, soil health and peatland recovery, are already strongly reflected within the existing Objective.

In response to concerns about clarity and delivery, several Measures of Success have been agreed to strengthen monitoring of progress, including measures to increase sustainable woodland management (and an explanation as to what is meant by the same), addressing feedback on woodland creation and targets, and measures aligned with River Basin Management Plans to provide greater specificity on catchment-scale action. It is worth noting that the targets for woodland creation and peat restoration are the Lake District's allocations from the Government's Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework. In addition, and for the first time in a Partnership Plan, in acknowledgment of the risks faced wildfire planning and management has been added.

As was the case for Reducing Carbon Emissions above, it is important to note that there are a number of themes within the Plan that will contribute to Climate

Resilience and, as such, the Plan's commitments need to be considered in the round. For instance, Partnership activity for nature's recovery, water and farming are all likely to have positive outcomes for climate resilience. This has been further drawn out in the associated Action Plan, which highlights how the various actions proposed in the first two years of delivery will be able to contribute positively to multiple objectives.

10. Communities and Economy

10.1. Number and type of response

Thriving communities was rated by questionnaire respondents as very important, important or moderately important by 95.9% of survey respondents as shown in figure 7 below, showing strong support for the communities Objective. When survey respondents were asked to identify the three Objectives they believed the Partnership should prioritise, thriving communities ranked second, with 18% of respondents selecting it as a priority.

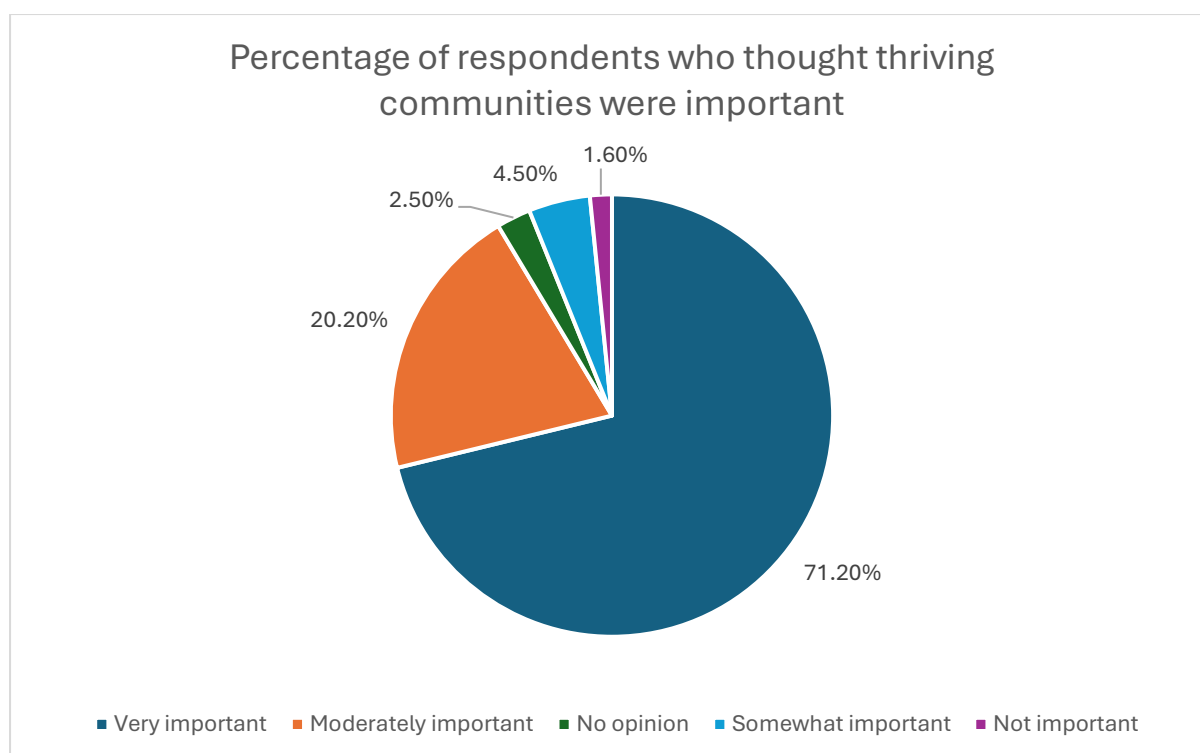


Figure 7: percentage of respondents who thought thriving communities were important

Sustainable and thriving communities was an important topic for Otter Game players, understanding their importance for the Lake District's future.

Bespoke meetings did not discuss this theme.

15 people provided feedback on communities at drop-in events. Comments focused on affordable housing, house prices and improved visitor facilities such as bins and toilets.

16 written responses mentioned this theme.

10.2. Summary of responses

10.2.1. Ambition

- A Partner highlighted that the communities Ambition should emphasise a mutually beneficial relationship between the landscape, communities and the economy where tourism not only relies on communities but actively supports them and contributes to a more diverse, resilient local economy.

10.2.2. Objectives

Survey Feedback

- One of the strongest themes in the consultation was the call for firm, enforceable action on second homes and holiday lets, with many respondents wanting restrictions on short-term let companies and clear targets for affordable and local-needs housing.
- Respondents emphasised the need for sector-specific skills programmes, stronger pathways into training, and measures to improve job quality and workforce retention across the National Park.
- Many consultees felt the Plan does not sufficiently address community infrastructure and essential services, highlighting persistent gaps in facilities and support that affect rural communities.
- There was strong support for economic diversification, with respondents wanting a local economy that is not overly dependent on tourism and that supports a wider range of employment opportunities.
- Feedback made clear that reducing visitor pressures must go further, calling for tools such as carrying capacities, stronger enforcement of anti-social

behaviour, and options such as a tourist tax to help manage the impacts of high visitor numbers.

Drop-in Events

- Housing and affordability pressures are one of the most prominent concerns, particularly the dominance of second homes and holiday lets. Comments highlighted that locals, especially young people, are being priced out.
- Economic diversification is widely supported, with calls for more year-round employment and diverse employment opportunities.
- Tourism pressures including traffic, parking, overcrowding and behaviour are viewed as harming communities, respondents want tourism to be more responsibly managed.
- Local infrastructure and services (toilets, signage, buses) are seen as essential for both residents and visitors.

Otter Game Players

- Players acknowledged the importance of sustainable Lake District communities, the need for a balance of age groups, adequate local services (mention of schools and shops specifically) and employment opportunities to ensure the future viability of the area. Players recognised that the absence of any of these could lead to depopulation and destabilisation of communities.
- The farming players linked this to the importance of the area's cultural heritage, and the need to ensure that traditional skills and crafts were retained to look after the Lake District's special character, which in turn attracts tourists and supports the local economy.
- Housing concerns were not specifically mentioned by either group.
- Of the 11 games played, 21% selected sustainable communities as the highest scoring theme on the score board in terms of priority for players; that is in second place behind the joint-highest scorers (Nature and Inspiring People)

Written Responses

- A Partner stressed the need for stronger action to bring second homes and holiday lets back into year-round occupation for local people, supported by enforceable occupancy conditions for new housing. They also highlighted the essential role that local residents play in sustaining the Park's special qualities.
- Stakeholders identified the 2027 Tour de France Grand Départ as a major opportunity for economic, cultural and health benefits, recommending that the Plan include a specific action to secure a lasting cycling and visitor-economy legacy through improved infrastructure and promotion.
- Some consultees called for new revenue-raising mechanisms, such as an overnight visitor levy, park entrance fee or seasonal congestion charge, to generate funding for community and environmental projects.
- Feedback emphasised that tourism and hospitality are vital to rural livelihoods, and the Plan should more clearly support economic growth, business innovation and alignment with wider economic strategies.
- Concerns were raised about workforce constraints, with hospitality workers often unable to access local-occupancy housing; consultees suggested widening eligibility so that people relocating for essential jobs can live locally.
- One respondent (a Partner) was strongly supportive of the valley-by-valley approach to visitor management.
- Finally, several respondents cautioned that the vision for a 'regenerative economy' must not rely too heavily on tourism and should instead reflect a more diversified rural economy.

10.2.3. Measures of Success

- Respondents recommended tightening the Plan's housing Measures of Success to avoid unintended loopholes. They advised setting clearer commitments to increase the proportion of homes that are affordable or subject to local-occupancy restrictions, alongside achieving an actual reduction in the number of properties used as second homes or short-term lets, rather than simply preventing any further increase.

10.3. Analysis of responses

Consultation feedback strongly highlighted concerns about the impacts of second homes and holiday lets on local communities. The Partnership has already taken action in this area, including securing council tax premiums on second homes, supporting the introduction of a national statutory holiday-let register, and advocating for a dedicated planning use class, although further progress is currently limited by national legislation.

The Partnership also recognises the need to address wider visitor pressures, in response, the Plan includes a dedicated sub-objective focused on reducing impacts on communities, landscapes and the environment, supported by targeted valley-based actions and ongoing work through the Strategic Visitor Management Group. Commitments within the Plan to support workforce development and sustainable economic growth are being progressed through existing programmes, while additional feedback on community facilities and affordable housing has been noted and will be considered through the forthcoming Local Plan review.

10.4. Conclusion

In response to consultation feedback, the Communities and Economy Ambition has been amended to place greater emphasis on the mutual relationship between local businesses and communities. To address concerns raised about the impacts of second homes and holiday lets, Measures of Success have been introduced to monitor the proportion of homes in non-permanent occupation. In addition, new Measures of Success have been defined to track growth in the Lake District economy, reflecting the importance of a resilient and diverse local economy in supporting sustainable places.

As mentioned in section 4.2 above, respondents on this theme did propose suggestions that could not be accommodated by the Partnership Plan, including those relating to a visitor levy (a likely future devolved responsibility to the Mayor of

Cumbria), Government policy on short-term and holiday lets and planning issues (which have been passed to the Local Plan Review team to consider). However, the Partnership Plan has further strengthened its strong commitment to both the economy and communities following public consultation through its revised Measures of Success and detailed Action Plan with a focus on housing, digital connectivity, skills, and visitor management.

11.Farming

11.1.Number and type of response

Farming was rated by questionnaire respondents as very important, important or moderately important by 91.8% of survey respondents as shown in figure 8 below, showing strong support for the farming Objective. When survey respondents were asked to identify the three Objectives they believed the Partnership should prioritise 10% of respondents selected farming as a priority.

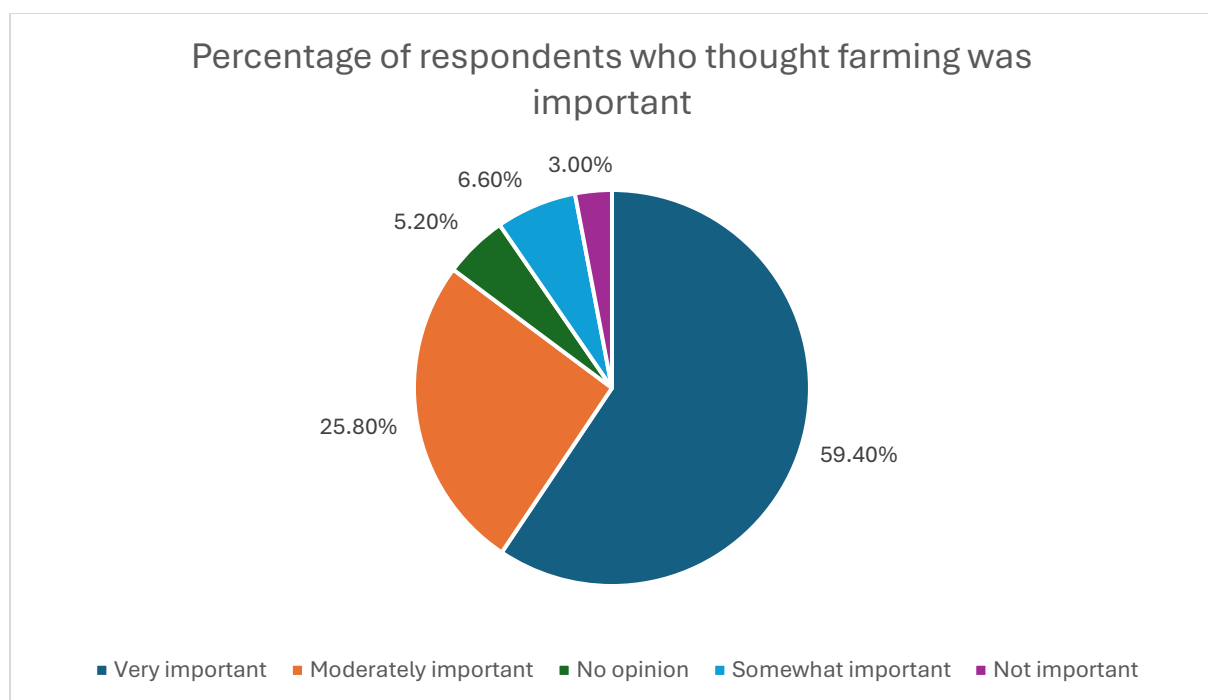


Figure 8: percentage of respondents who thought farming was important

Unsurprisingly this theme was a significant topic of conversation and concern for farmer Otter game-players. However, it was not specifically discussed by school-age players, while they did talk more broadly about environmental concerns.

4 bespoke meetings focused on this theme. Participants were broadly supportive of the intent of the farming vision and objectives, while highlighting the need for greater emphasis on ensuring environmental schemes are appropriate for Lake District farming systems, and for clearer recognition and promotion of the importance of hefting and commoning.

5 people provided feedback on farming at drop-in events. Comments focused on ensuring farming is profitable and the need for more farms to be available to rent or buy.

10 written responses mentioned this theme.

11.2. Summary of responses

11.2.1. Ambition

A Partner proposed minor amendments to the Farming Ambition to better reflect the value of farming to the Lake District. They emphasised the need to maintain an appropriate balance between nature recovery, food production and economic development. Feedback also highlighted that the term ‘nature-friendly farming’ is understood differently by different stakeholders and would benefit from clearer definition within the Plan.

11.2.2. Objectives

Survey responses

- Consultees expressed that the objective does not adequately recognise or address the core tension between farming practices and nature recovery, and they emphasised the need for the Plan to clearly set out how these competing interests will be balanced in practice.
- Consultees also felt that the term ‘nature-friendly farming’ is too vague and requires clearer definition to ensure shared understanding across stakeholders.
- Concern was raised about the absence of concrete measures to protect Herdwick sheep, Fell ponies, hefting and commoning systems, and the broader cultural heritage of upland farming.
- While diversification is referenced, respondents highlighted that the Plan lacks practical support including funding mechanisms, training, business support and pathways into new land-based enterprises.
- Consultees also stressed that farm advisory support must be co-designed with farmers, with greater clarity needed on who will deliver advice and how

top-down approaches will be avoided. Finally, they identified a gap in support for new entrants, succession planning and maintaining viable farm businesses, all of which they consider essential for the long-term resilience of farming in the Lake District.

Bespoke Meetings

- Across the bespoke meetings, farming groups expressed strong support for the overall intent and wording of the farming vision and objectives, welcoming the inclusion of a dedicated farming section that recognises the sector's importance to the Lake District.
- A consistent message was that fixed targets are not appropriate for farming. Stakeholders preferred an approach based on monitoring progress rather than imposing rigid numerical targets that may not suit diverse farming systems.
- Respondents highlighted the need for greater clarity around 'nature-friendly farming', noting that many Lake District farms already deliver environmental benefits, particularly those operating within High Nature Value systems. Tenant farmers raised concerns that the Plan gives insufficient recognition to their specific circumstances and challenges.
- Stakeholders stressed that environmental schemes must be genuinely workable for upland, hill and commoning systems unique to the National Park. While the inclusion of an objective for hefting and commoning was welcomed, consultees felt the Plan currently lacks sufficient detail on how these systems will be supported and protected in practice.
- There was a strong call for clear, trustworthy and impartial farm advice, ideally free or low-cost, and delivered in partnership with farmer-led networks to ensure it remains relevant and credible.
- Commoners and graziers conveyed a sense of 'managed decline', reflecting broader concerns about the future of upland farming in the face of negative rhetoric. They emphasised the importance of focusing nature recovery on species that are present but declining, rather than on high-profile reintroductions, and stressed that they are willing to do more for nature, but only with reliable, practical and affordable support.

Drop-in Events

- Attendees emphasised the importance of viable, culturally-rooted farming systems, expressing strong support for hefting, hill-farming heritage, and farm profitability.
- Feedback highlights environmental concerns in some quarters, calling for fewer sheep on the fells to reduce grazing pressure and support species-rich habitats. There were also calls for improved farm access and continuity, including opportunities such as rent-to-buy farm models.
- Comments further stressed the need to protect livestock and iconic breeds, with one respondent emphasising road safety for Fell ponies and livestock. Overall, the feedback underscores a desire for farming that is economically sustainable, environmentally responsible, and firmly connected to the Lake District's cultural identity.

Otter Game Play

- Not unsurprisingly, farming was a major topic of conversation for the farming players, with key challenges including maintaining soil health, balancing farming and nature recovery and responding to climate change issues. Conversations highlighted the multi-faceted nature of farming business challenges, but also how farmers intersect with other Plan topics including environmental conservation, economic sustainability and community engagement. There was a desire for a better understanding and appreciation by the wider public of the role farmers play in shaping the landscape and environmental stewardship.
- Farming was not discussed as a topic of particular concern by the school-age players, although wider environmental concerns were an important component of the conversations.
- Of the 11 games played, 10.5% selected farming as the highest scoring theme on the score board in terms of priority for players; that is in joint third place (with Water).

Written Responses

- Stakeholders agreed that the farming objective should promote both viable farm businesses and environmental sustainability. They supported a flexible, evidence-based approach that enables farming to evolve while protecting the Lake District's cultural landscape.
- Consultees encouraged the Plan to support a transition toward more sustainable mixed farming systems where these align with the Park's Special Qualities. Contributors also stressed that farm diversification should remain appropriate to the landscape and explicitly value non-food products and services such as wool, heritage skills, and educational or wellbeing activities.
- Farming organisations strongly welcomed the proposal for a joined-up, impartial farm-advice service, stressing the need for an accessible 'second opinion' alongside Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) advice and calling for collaboration with existing farmer-led networks. They also argued that many Lake District farms already operate in environmentally-sensitive ways and proposed defining High Nature Value farming to evidence the benefits of practices such as commoning, mixed grazing and hay meadows.
- Finally, respondents emphasised the importance of safeguarding Herdwick sheep and other native breeds, which are uniquely adapted to the fells and central to both cultural heritage and the functioning of hefted farming systems.

11.2.3. Measures of Success

- Feedback highlighted mixed views on the proposed target for '65% of land managers adopting nature-friendly farming on at least 10% of their land' and instead suggested that measuring progress through participation in agri-environment schemes would be a more meaningful and flexible indicator.
- Consultees supported incorporating Measures of Success or monitoring indicators linked to agri-environment scheme uptake, emphasising that increasing participation is a practical route to achieving nature recovery.

11.3. Analysis of responses

Consultation feedback on farming highlighted strong support for the overall intent of the Farming Ambition and Objectives, alongside calls for greater clarity, balance and practical delivery. Consultees suggested minor amendments to the Ambition to better reflect the value of farming to the Lake District and the need to balance nature recovery, food production and economic viability. Across consultation responses, a consistent theme was that the term ‘nature-friendly farming’ is interpreted differently by stakeholders and would benefit from clearer definition. Survey and written responses emphasised that the Objective does not sufficiently address the core tension between farming and nature recovery, with consultees seeking clearer explanation of how these interests will be balanced in practice. Respondents also raised concerns about the lack of explicit measures to protect Herdwick sheep, Fell ponies, hefting and commoning systems, and the wider cultural heritage of upland farming. While diversification was broadly supported, consultees felt the Plan lacked detail on practical support, including funding, training, business advice and routes into new land-based enterprises, as well as support for new entrants and succession planning. In-person events, written submissions and bespoke meetings reinforced the importance of economically viable, culturally rooted farming systems, alongside environmental improvements such as reduced grazing pressure where appropriate. Stakeholders consistently stressed the need for trusted, impartial and co-designed farm advice, noting that many Lake District farms already operate within High Nature Value systems and that progress should be monitored flexibly rather than through rigid targets. Feedback on the Measures of Success reflected this preference, with consultees favouring indicators based on participation in agri-environment schemes over fixed percentage targets, as a more meaningful way to reflect progress towards sustainable farming and nature recovery.

11.4. Conclusion

In response to consultation feedback, minor amendments have been made to the Farming Ambition to more clearly demonstrate the importance of sustainability and to better reflect the value of farming to the Lake District. The Farming Objective has also been amended to acknowledge the importance of the tenant farming sector.

Further clarity has been provided on what is meant by 'nature-friendly farming', with a definition also added to the glossary. Definitions have also been provided for clarity to better explain 'hefting', 'commoning' and what is meant by a 'vibrant tenant farming sector'. While consultees highlighted differing interpretations of the term 'nature-friendly farming', the Partnership has not adopted a single prescriptive definition; instead, an explanation has been added to the glossary to support shared understanding.

The Measure of Success around nature-friendly farming (responding to the need for a clear link between farming and nature recovery) remains in the Plan as Natural England is providing further advice on the best measure for this activity (which is a Government target under the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework). In addition, a Measure of Success has been included for the creation of a joined-up, integrated farm-advice network, reflecting positive consultation feedback on the need for practical, coordinated support for diversification, skills development, new entrants and long-term farm resilience. The Partnership sees this commitment as being critical to supporting the Lake District farming community over the next five years. Measures of Success have also now been developed for hefting, commoning and tenant farming with the associated Action Plan focusing on the farm advice network and a better understanding of the tenant farming sector in the first two years of activity.

12. Historic Environment

12.1. Number and type of response

The historic environment was rated by questionnaire respondents as very important, important or moderately important by 91.8% of survey respondents as shown in figure 9 below, showing strong support for the Historic Environment Objective. When survey respondents were asked to identify the three Objectives they believed the Partnership should prioritise, 3% of respondents selected the historic environment as a priority.

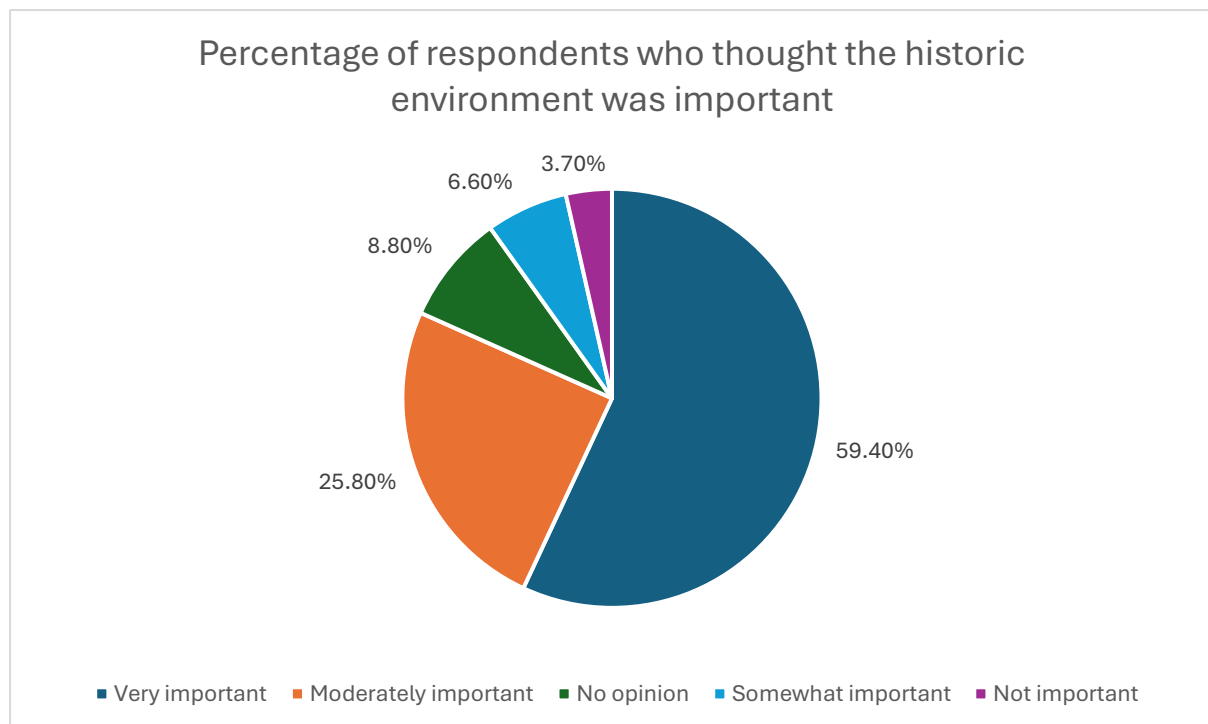


Figure 9: percentage of respondents who thought the historic environment was important

Farmer Otter Game players mentioned this theme, but it was not a priority for them; School-age players did not discuss it.

Bespoke meeting participants did not discuss this theme.

2 Drop-in event attendees mentioned this theme.

There were 12 written responses which, on first glance, referred to this theme, but when reviewed approximately half made comments on aspects of the cultural landscape and world heritage site rather than the historic environment (some using the terms 'historic environment', 'cultural landscape' and 'world heritage' interchangeably). Those which are directly relevant to the historic environment have been included in the summary below.

12.2. Summary of responses

12.2.1. Ambition

Only one comment referenced the Ambition, from a Partner who had been involved in the drafting process, suggesting that the language should be broadened to include the landscape.

12.2.2. Objectives

Survey Responses

- Survey respondents who mentioned the historic environment were not numerous (12.96%) but this included those using the term interchangeably to refer to the World Heritage Site and its cultural landscape. The latter are not included in the commentary below.
- Feedback included requests for tighter control of development, better planning decisions, and active safeguarding of historic buildings and landscapes to prevent erosion of the Lake District's distinctive character.
- Some respondents identified a need for policies that support heritage-compatible land management.
- Some respondents expressed concern about irresponsible visitor behaviour damaging historic assets.

Drop-in Events

- There was limited feedback on historic environment topics from the drop-in events, with only two for this theme. One expressed concern about

inappropriate barn conversions eroding their character and a second person expressed their desire for a well-resourced Historic Environment Team.

Otter Game Play

- While the historic environment was discussed by farmer game players, it was not a significant area of concern in the context of issues that players felt were more challenging, such as farming and nature's recovery, although it was acknowledged that a balance needed to be struck between all. While the historic environment and heritage were valued to some extent, they were not the driving force behind priority-setting and the final outcome of the game, suggesting that this theme was not seen as a significant concern for players. This topic was not discussed by school-age players although wider environmental concerns and the importance of looking after the Lake District in more general terms was frequently discussed.
- Of the 11 games played, 5.3% selected the historic environment as the highest scoring theme on the score board in terms of priority for players.

Written Responses

- One respondent stressed the importance of heritage conservation, asking for more buildings to be listed and better training in traditional skills/heritage conservation, including for architects. Another respondent made a similar, related point, expressing the view that it was important to be able to source local stone and slate to appropriately repair the Lake District's rich heritage.
- One respondent acknowledged the significance of the historic landscape but expressed the view that adaptation of it was necessary.
- Finally, another expressed an aspiration for a network of heritage centres across the Lake District and suggested this should be included in the Plan.

12.2.3. Measures of Success

- Only one comment was received about the Measures of Success, from a Partner who had been involved in the drafting process. While supporting the aspiration to increase the Level 1 Archaeological Survey area, the Partner

suggested that this was not as important as gaining an understanding of the condition of, for instance, field boundary walls, barns and other agricultural buildings and objects, and that the Partnership should consider how best to use funds for the protection of the historic environment.

12.3. Analysis of responses

Consultation feedback on the historic environment was limited but highlighted a number of recurring issues. Comments on the Ambition suggested broadening the language to explicitly reference the landscape.

Feedback highlighted concerns about inappropriate development, the need for stronger planning decisions, and more active safeguarding of historic buildings and landscapes to prevent erosion of the Lake District's character. Some respondents also identified a need for policies that support heritage-compatible land management and expressed concern about irresponsible visitor behaviour damaging historic assets.

Respondents also highlighted the importance of access to traditional skills and materials, and adequate resourcing for heritage protection. Feedback on the Measures of Success was minimal, focusing on the need to prioritise understanding and maintaining the condition of existing historic features.

12.4. Conclusion

Comments received through consultation that requested stronger planning controls and the active safeguarding of historic buildings and landscapes will be considered through the forthcoming Local Plan review. Concerns about the condition and protection of heritage assets are reflected in a Measure of Success focused on reducing the number of heritage assets at risk. Feedback regarding irresponsible visitor behaviour impacting historic assets is addressed through the Communities Objective that addresses visitor pressures on communities, landscapes and the environment, supported by the work of the Cumbria-wide Strategic Visitor Management Group.

Respondents also highlighted the importance of heritage-compatible land management which is addressed in the Farming Objective through Measures of Success around commoning and hefting. Comments were also made that there was a need for access to traditional skills and materials, and adequate resourcing for heritage protection; in response, the Plan now includes a Measure of Success to publish a heritage crafts and traditional skills register, and to deliver heritage skills training, supporting the long-term conservation of the Lake District's historic environment.

13. Inspiring People

13.1. Number and type of response

Inspiring people to enjoy, understand and care for the Lake District was rated by questionnaire respondents as very important, important or moderately important by 86.6% of survey respondents as shown in figure 10 below, showing strong support for the inspiring people Objective. When survey respondents were asked to identify the three Objectives they believed the Partnership should prioritise, 9% of respondents selected inspiring people as a priority.

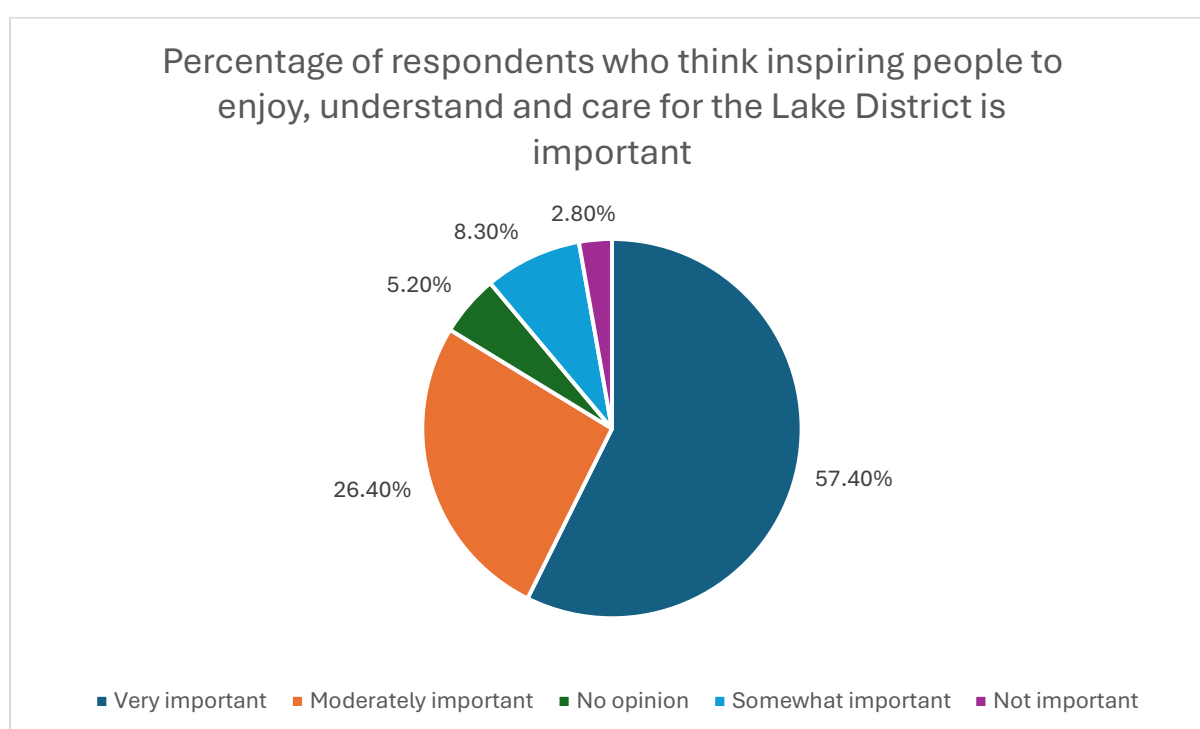


Figure 10: percentage of respondents who thought inspiring people to enjoy, understand and care for the Lake District is important

This was a very important theme for Otter Game players across both groups (school-age and farmer players).

1 bespoke meeting discussed this theme in relation to education around farming and food production.

13 people provided feedback on this theme at drop-in events. Comments focused on rights of way maintenance and highlighted the need for visitor education.

8 written responses mentioned this theme.

13.2. Summary of responses

13.2.1. Ambition

No comments were received about the Inspiring People Ambition.

13.2.2. Objectives

Survey Responses

- Respondents highlighted the importance of educating visitors before, during, and after their visit to support responsible behaviour in the Lake District. One of the strongest themes across the consultation was the need for improved visitor behaviour management, including clearer enforcement and strengthened visitor management measures.
- Consultees also emphasised the importance of creating inclusive and accessible spaces, with more facilities that meet the needs of disabled people and marginalised groups. Feedback further indicated strong support for investment in infrastructure that enables responsible enjoyment, such as well-maintained paths and appropriate facilities.
- Respondents stressed that volunteering and engagement opportunities should be meaningful, well-supported and contribute positively to both participants and the landscape.

Bespoke Meetings

- The one meeting that discussed this theme highlighted the importance of engagement and education programmes to reconnect local communities with farming and improve understanding of where food comes from.

Drop-in Events

- There was limited feedback provided on the Inspiring People Objective. Four responses were received relating to this Objective. Comments centred around support for education to reduce visitor pressures on landscapes and communities.

Otter Game Play

- Both groups of game players engaged in conversations about valuing and caring for the Lake District, as well as inspiring people to appreciate and protect the area. These themes were intertwined with broader environmental concerns, including wildlife conservation, sustainable community initiatives, and educational engagement.
- School-age players felt that it was important that people valued and cared for the Lake District, with specific mention of how this could lead to a better understanding and appreciation of the area, fostering a desire to protect it. Players particularly felt that for the landscape and nature to be protected in the future people had to connect with and value it.
- The farmer group had a clear focus on education as a tool for inspiration, suggesting engagement programmes to help both residents and visitors to understand the Lake District's importance and how to look after it, wanting both groups to take an active role in the area's stewardship
- While not at the forefront of discussions, the historic environment was also recognised by the farmer group as being important in this context.
- Of the 11 games played, inspiring people to value and care for the Lake District scored 26% in terms of priority for players on the game score board; the joint-highest score (with Nature Recovery).

Written Feedback

- Respondents welcomed the objective to foster enjoyment and understanding of the Lake District but stressed that this must be paired with a strong emphasis on responsible enjoyment. They argued that welcoming 'everyone' should go hand-in-hand with setting expectations that visitors care for the landscape and respect it.

- Several consultees felt the Plan underplays the practical steps needed to tackle anti-social behaviour, including illegal wild camping, littering and misuse of green lanes. They asked for stronger commitments to visitor education and more effective, targeted enforcement.
- At the same time, consultees emphasised the need for positive engagement: welcoming visitors, helping them understand the significance of the landscape, and turning them into long-term advocates for its care.
- Clarification was sought on the health and wellbeing sub-objective, with calls for more detail on how the Plan will translate the recognised benefits of outdoor activity into practical programmes or initiatives.
- Feedback from a disabled resident highlighted the importance of accessible outdoor experiences, praising 'Miles Without Stiles' routes as essential for wheelchair users.
- Some stakeholders suggested that the Plan should be careful with terms like 'visitor management', which may appear unwelcoming, and instead focus on facilitating enjoyable and responsible experiences. They stressed that promotion should prioritise audiences who respect the area's Special Qualities rather than appeal to those seeking activities incompatible with the Lake District National Park and World Heritage Site.
- Finally, consultees supported the Plan's focus on educational initiatives but asked that it be more explicit. They proposed that improvements to access or infrastructure should always be paired with messaging that fosters environmental understanding and positive behaviours.

13.2.3. Measures of Success

Several respondents suggested that the target for maintaining high-quality footpaths should be more ambitious. They felt the Plan should aim for a higher proportion of rights of way to be easy to use than currently proposed and should commit to improving and extending the path network where needed, including addressing missing links and creating new multi-user routes to support sustainable access.

13.3. Analysis of responses

Across survey, written and participatory feedback, a strong and recurring theme was the importance of education and engagement to support responsible behaviour by visitors before, during and after their visit. Consultees consistently linked inspiration with responsibility, emphasising that enjoyment of the Lake District must be accompanied by clearer expectations, stronger visitor education and, where necessary, more effective enforcement to address issues such as anti-social behaviour, illegal wild camping and misuse of green lanes.

Consultees emphasised the importance of inclusive and accessible experiences, highlighting the need for facilities, paths and programmes that meet the needs of disabled people, with strong support for initiatives such as Miles Without Stiles. Feedback from in-person events and Otter Game discussions reinforced the role of education in fostering long-term care for the Lake District, with participants noting that people are more likely to protect what they understand and value. Written responses also called for clearer delivery of health and wellbeing benefits in practice, alongside a welcoming but firm approach to visitor engagement that sets clear expectations for responsible behaviour. Respondents further suggested the Objective could be strengthened through more challenging targets for maintaining and improving rights of way and path networks to support safe, inclusive and sustainable access.

13.4. Conclusion

No comments were received on the Inspiring People Ambition and, as a result, no changes have been made to the Ambition.

In response to consultation feedback seeking clearer delivery of health and wellbeing benefits, the Objective has been amended to focus on using the Partnership's understanding of the health and wellbeing benefits of being active outdoors, rather than solely improving understanding. In addition, a new Measure of Success has been introduced to establish a joined-up, collaborative network to increase the number and range of volunteering and engagement programmes to 'inspire', responding to calls for more practical delivery of health, wellbeing and caring for the

Lake District outcomes. In addition, an action that seizes the opportunity presented by the Tour de France 2027 in terms of both promoting the National Park and World Heritage Site, and creating a legacy of healthy, active travel has been identified for the first two years of delivery.

To reflect feedback on the importance of maintaining and improving the rights of way network, including Miles Without Stiles routes, explicit reference to maintenance has been added to the Objective. The Measures of Success set out how this will be delivered, including a commitment to increasing the percentage of the Public Rights of Way network and Miles without Stiles routes that are of a good, useable standard and condition. These targets are considered to already be ambitious and without additional sources of funding the Partnership does not consider that it can do more over five years.

Consultation comments relating to visitor behaviour and visitor management have been captured and addressed through the Communities Objective, which focuses on reducing visitor pressures on communities, landscapes and the environment, supported by the work of the Cumbria-wide Strategic Visitor Management Group.

14.Sustainable Travel

14.1.Number and type of response

Sustainable travel was rated by questionnaire respondents as very important, important or moderately important by 87.4% of survey respondents as shown in figure 11 below, showing strong support for the Sustainable Travel Objective. When survey respondents were asked to identify the three Objectives they believed the Partnership should prioritise, 12% of respondents selected sustainable travel as a priority.

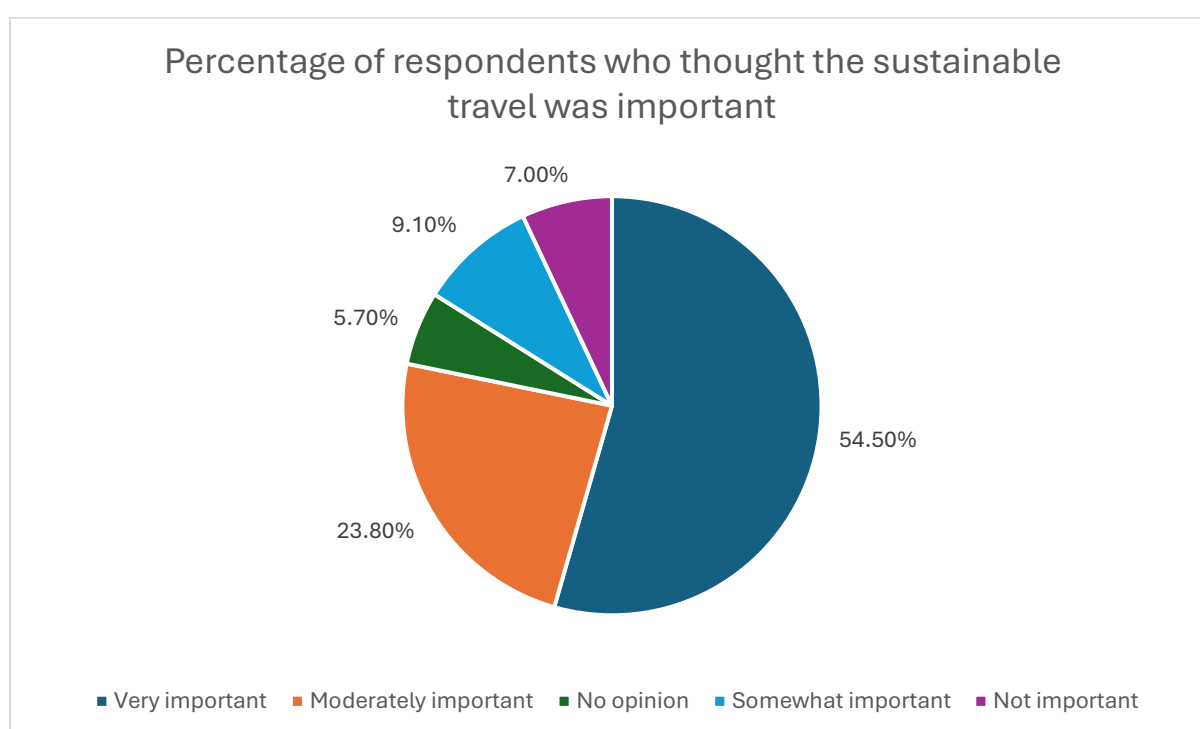


Figure 11: percentage of respondents who thought sustainable travel was important

Transport was discussed across both groups of Otter game players but was not a priority for either group.

Bespoke meetings did not discuss this theme.

6 people provided feedback on sustainable travel at drop-in events. Comments focused on the need for more buses and a park and ride facility.

11 written responses mentioned this theme.

14.2. Summary of responses

14.2.1. Ambition

Respondents called for a clearer and more ambitious vision for sustainable travel, they felt the current draft lacks the radical, transformative measures required to enable a meaningful shift from private vehicle use to more sustainable modes of travel and urged the Partnership to strengthen this aspect of the Plan.

14.2.2. Objectives

Survey responses

- Consultation feedback highlighted a need for a more ambitious and credible sustainable travel vision for the Lake District, with respondents emphasising the need for a world-class transport system supported by clear goals to reduce car dependency. Consultees stressed that achieving this requires reliable, affordable and frequent public transport, repeatedly requesting better bus services and later, better-connected trains. They also underlined the importance of accessibility and inclusion, noting that sustainable travel must work for disabled visitors through genuinely wheelchair-accessible routes rather than minimal or symbolic provision.
- Concerns about parking pressures and congestion were frequently raised, underpinning the need for coordinated approaches to managing vehicle use alongside improvements in sustainable alternatives.

Drop-in sessions

- Feedback highlighted several issues related to sustainable transport, including calls for more reliable, frequent and affordable bus services, improved park-and-ride options, and better public transport to support activities such as linear walks.
- Attendees raised strong concerns about parking availability and cost, congestion, unsafe road conditions and the need for clearer signage.

- There was also emphasis on encouraging modal shift away from private vehicles, with suggestions ranging from motorhome management to potential permit systems.
- Comments also highlighted the need for visitor dispersal and improved active-travel infrastructure, including rights-of-way maintenance and safer fell-road conditions.

Otter Game Play

- Transport was discussed by both groups, although with different degrees of emphasis. Conversations revealed a nuanced view of the importance of transport for community sustainability and broader environmental and societal issues.
- School-age players were less concerned about transport accessibility for themselves, likely reflecting the ages of players and that lifts from parents or school buses are their main methods of travelling around.
- The farmer group particularly expressed concern about the impact of public transport on the environment and would like to see more electric buses.
- Transport was not a key focus in terms of prioritisation for either group of players.
- Sustainable travel was not identified as a top priority in terms of the end of game scoreboard across any of the 11 games played.

Written Feedback

- Consultation feedback on the Sustainable Transport Objective highlighted a strong call for greater clarity, ambition and commitment. Several respondents felt the draft objective was unambitious, noting that language suggesting car use could reduce represents a backwards step compared to the previous management plan. Consultees argued that meeting the National Park's statutory purposes requires a decisive shift in travel patterns, with clear commitments to reducing reliance on private cars and delivering world-class, integrated sustainable transport. Consultees urged the Partnership to include concrete measures and targets to drive this modal shift, building on the Lake District National Park Authority's existing Smarter Travel strategy and actively

lobbying for innovative and transformative solutions. They also noted that transport and emissions objectives are inseparable and should interrelated.

- At the same time, respondents emphasised the need for a balanced and realistic approach. While many welcomed the Plan's focus on public transport and active travel, they felt the draft lacked the radical or practical actions needed to deliver real change. Accessibility emerged as a key theme: disabled respondents stressed that private vehicles remain essential for many people and must be factored into any sustainable transport solution. Tourism stakeholders supported the ambition but warned that overly idealistic assumptions about reducing car use could negatively affect the visitor economy without viable alternatives in place particularly for early-morning and late-evening travel that current public transport does not serve. Some members of the Business Task Force (a Partner) echoed the need for improvements to longstanding transport issues.

14.3. Analysis of responses

Consultation feedback consistently called for a more ambitious and credible approach to sustainable travel, with respondents urging stronger action to reduce car dependency and deliver a world-class, integrated transport system. Consultees emphasised the need for reliable, affordable and frequent public transport, particularly improved bus services, alongside better rail connectivity, safer roads and clearer signage.

Accessibility was a recurring theme, with respondents stressing that sustainable travel must work for disabled users and others who rely on private vehicles.

Parking pressures, congestion and visitor management were frequently raised, reinforcing the need for coordinated demand-management measures alongside improvements to sustainable alternatives.

Written and survey feedback highlighted the importance of clear commitments, measurable targets and alignment with carbon-reduction objectives, balanced by a realistic approach that avoids unintended impacts on accessibility and the visitor economy.

14.4. Conclusion

Consultation feedback showed strong and consistent support for a more ambitious and credible approach to sustainable travel. However, following consideration of the feedback, no change has been made to the Ambition which the Partnership has framed at a deliberately high and strategic level and believes is already highly ambitious for a 25-year target given the complexity of the transport landscape and geography of the Lake District.

However, the Objective has been amended, both to reorder the wording to place greater emphasis on a Lake District travel plan (see below) and to ‘improve integrated sustainable travel for everyone’, emphasising that sustainable travel solutions must work for all users, including residents, visitors and other groups including disabled people.

In response to calls for greater ambition for transport in the Plan, a move towards a more sustainable, integrated transport system, reduce reliance on private cars and improve accessibility are already embedded within the existing Objective wording. It was also noted that the feedback received primarily related to the scale, pace and delivery of change, rather than the overall ‘direction of travel’ set out in the Plan. Indeed, for the first time as a Partnership there is a clear commitment to a Lake District sustainable and active travel plan, something that has never been attempted before.

In addition, a set of new Measures of Success has been introduced. These include measures to increase the proportion of visitors arriving in the Lake District by train, bus or coach, reduce the percentage of visitors arriving by private vehicle, increase the proportion of vehicles which are hybrid or electric, and increase the proportion of visitors whose main mode of travel within the National Park is sustainable or active. These targets have been set to align with the already-agreed Cumbria Destination Management Plan. Together, these measures provide clearer accountability and demonstrate a strengthened commitment to delivering a meaningful shift towards sustainable and active travel.

15.Policies

15.1.Number and type of response

- 10 consultees provided feedback on Policies through the online survey.
- The Otter Game did not include the Policies.
- Bespoke meetings did not discuss the Policies.
- Policies were not mentioned by people attending the drop-in events.
- 8 written responses mentioned the Policies

15.2.Summary of responses

Comments below relate to the Policy numbers as set out in the consultation draft.

Questionnaire responses

The following policy comments were received from questionnaire respondents:

Policy 1 – Landscape, Nature and Cultural Heritage

Questionnaire respondents felt that Policy 1 does not sufficiently reflect the importance of restoring biodiversity, despite this being central to the Lake District's character and heritage. Stakeholders recommended adding a specific commitment to nature restoration and strengthening Policy 1b to reference the role of farmed landscapes in supporting biodiversity.

Policy 4 – Nature Recovery and Habitats

Respondents suggested Policy 4 should make clearer provision for land to be managed primarily for wildlife and biodiversity, emphasising habitat enhancement and species recovery as core outcomes.

Policy 6 – Farming, Land Management and Rural Economy

Stakeholders recommended reframing Policy 6 to emphasise sustainability rather than profitability, noting that sustainable, long-term land management is essential to the National Park's statutory purposes. Under Policy 6a, they proposed adapting the

language to ‘sustainable and viable’ to ensure decisions prioritise ecological and cultural outcomes alongside financial considerations.

Policy 7 – Visitor Economy and Tourism

Feedback on Policy 7 raised concern that a focus on growing the economy and promoting the Lake District to more visitors risks undermining the park’s Special Qualities in already pressured areas. Respondents felt the Plan should instead prioritise visitor dispersal and supporting neighbouring communities outside the National Park. They suggested removing elements such as 7d and ensuring Policy 7 aligns with a sustainable, responsible visitor economy rather than one dependent on continual growth.

Policy 10 – Housing

Consultees noted a need for affordable and local-occupancy housing, and the lack of a dedicated housing representative within the Partnership. They argued that housing should be more prominent in the vision and objectives, and that policies should prioritise approaches to reduce second homes and holiday lets, protect viable homes for residents and workers, and strengthen community sustainability.

Policy 11 – Water, Rivers and Flood Management

Some respondents emphasised that Natural Flood Management should be prioritised ahead of engineered or hard-defence solutions, given the ecological and landscape benefits of natural approaches.

Policy 12 – Major industries

A small number of consultees suggested that Policy 12 should not support nuclear development, recommending instead a more general commitment to low-carbon energy without specifying technologies.

Policy 14 – Transport and Movement

There was strong feedback that Policy 14 should explicitly include the goal of reducing private car use, identifying it as one of the biggest barriers to achieving the

National Park's Special Qualities. Consultees also suggested modernising references to communications infrastructure by focusing on 'mobile communication suitable for voice and web use' rather than specific technologies, reflecting the rise of satellite connectivity.

Policy 15 – An Inclusive Destination

Respondents stressed that tourism should be carefully controlled, citing its current impacts on tranquillity, landscape character and resident wellbeing. The Plan should adopt a more precautionary approach, ensuring tourism growth does not compromise the Lake District's long-term environmental and cultural resilience.

Written responses

Policy 1 – A world-class living cultural landscape of exceptional beauty

Two written responses commented on Policy 1. One consultee raised concerns about the use of the term 'traditional'.

Policy 3 – Well-considered tree and woodland establishment and improvement

Three written responses commented on Policy 3. Consultees requested reference to hedgerows, wood pasture, agro-forestry and the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

Consultees also sought a stronger commitment to the protection and management of ancient woodlands, including the remaining fragments of temperate rainforest, and to improving habitat connectivity.

Policy 4 – Resilient and well-functioning habitats and wildlife

Three written responses commented on Policy 4. One consultee considered that the policy did not go far enough.

A further consultee specifically requested reference to the Protected Landscapes Outcomes Targets Framework (PLTOF), which has been included.

Policy 5 – A source of artistic, literary and cultural inspiration

One respondent recommended that the Cumbrian dialect/language should be added to 5a).

Policy 6 – Viable farming, forestry and other land management

Two written responses commented on Policy 7, requesting that the policy better recognise the multiple public benefits provided by farming.

One consultee also requested that the policy state that 100% of farms should adopt nature-friendly and regenerative farming practices.

Policy 7 – A Responsible Lake District Visitor Economy

Five written responses commented on Policy 8. Consultees requested that the term 'regenerative' be added to the policy title and that references to development be removed from the opening section of the policy.

One consultee noted that the policy should recognise that visitors have a choice of destinations and that the Lake District must remain attractive to them.

One consultee raised concerns about the use of the term 'regenerative tourism' and how it is defined.

Under this policy, a consultee also suggested that the Lake District National Park adopt a 20% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) uplift.

Policy 8 – Access to Services

Two written responses provided feedback on Policy 9. Consultees suggested that the policy should recognise innovative and imaginative approaches to accessing services that are compatible with landscape character.

One consultee highlighted that not all businesses can be located in rural service centres.

One consultee also raised the need for improvements to the Windermere Ferry and enhanced bus services to reduce reliance on private cars.

Policy 9 – Access to a range of employment opportunities

Four written responses provided feedback on Policy 9. Comments suggested that the policy should explicitly reference farming and land management.

Policy 10 – Availability and supply of a full range of housing types

Three written responses provided feedback on Policy 10, raising concerns that the policy does not sufficiently address the issue of second homes and holiday lets.

Consultees also requested that the policy explicitly reference the provision of high-quality housing for employees.

Policy 11 – Increased resilience to flooding

Three written responses provided feedback on Policy 12. Consultees highlighted the need to strengthen resilience to drought and to reference sustainable urban drainage systems and flood resilience measures.

One consultee also requested that the policy explicitly reference peat, to avoid potential misunderstanding in relation to better-aerated soils.

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

One written response provided feedback on Policy 13, seeking clarification on the phrase 'we will assist with the development of proposals for associated infrastructure'.

Policy 13 – Addressing workforce and skills gaps

Two written responses provided feedback on Policy 14, suggesting that the policy was overly generic and should reference specific rural skills.

One consultee also suggested that the policy should include support for the provision of housing for the labour force.

Policy 14 – An effective and integrated transport network

Two written responses provided feedback on Policy 15. Feedback suggested that the policy was not sufficiently ambitious.

Policy 15 – An inclusive destination

Three written responses provided feedback on Policy 16. Consultees suggested that the policy should provide greater clarity on responsible enjoyment of the Lake District.

15.3. Analysis of responses

Consultation feedback across the policies were generally targeted and constructive, with most comments seeking clarification, stronger emphasis, or better alignment with delivery frameworks rather than fundamental changes to policy direction. Of the 15 policies comment was received on all apart from Policy 2 (mineral extraction). The highest levels of interest related to nature recovery, land management, the visitor economy, transport and housing. Respondents frequently asked for greater specificity or ambition, particularly where policies were perceived as high-level, while also raising issues such as Biodiversity Net Gain and infrastructure that sit outside the scope of the Partnership Plan.

Following feedback policies have been/have not been amended as follows:

Policy 1 – the policy has been amended to reference environmentally-friendly farming and also reference to traditional breeds of cattle and Fell ponies in the context of upland grazing. It has not been further strengthened in terms of biodiversity as the focus of this policy is on the landscape and not nature recovery specifically, which is covered by other policies. The Partnership considers the use of the term ‘traditional’ in this context is appropriate and notes that it is used consistently throughout the Partnership Plan.

Policy 3 – references to hedgerows, woodland creation and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) have been added to the policy. Wood pasture has not been specifically mentioned as it is included in the Forestry Commission’s definition of woodland, which is used throughout this Plan. Reference to the importance of woodland management is already included in the policy. While specific reference to temperate rainforest has not been added, it is implicit as the policy now supports improved woodland management and connectivity through the LNRS.

Policy 4 – the policy is already clear about the importance of resilient and well-functioning habitats and wildlife which will be ‘bigger, better and more connected’ in line with the Lawton principles ([‘Making space for nature’: a review of England’s wildlife sites published today - GOV.UK](#)). The policy is also supported by long-term Ambitions and ambitious Objectives set out elsewhere in the Partnership Plan and therefore no changes have been made to the policy in response. However, a reference to the Government’s PLTOF targets has been added.

Policy 5 – ‘Language’, i.e. Cumbrian dialect, has been added to this policy in the context of cultural traditions.

Policy 6 – this policy has been amended to broaden it to include other forms of land management as well as referencing the importance of the tenant farming sector and land management skills development. The policy has also been amended to place greater emphasis on improving farm resilience through securing funding for the delivery of the full range of public goods.

Policy 7 – references to development have been removed from 7a). A query about the definition of regenerative tourism has not been addressed here as it is defined both earlier in the Plan and in the Plan’s glossary. The Plan also supports responsible visiting through Policy 16. Policy 7 is also already considered to support the growth of the visitor economy, through promoting the Lake District as a year-round destination to a range of audiences. A suggestion to add Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) standards has not been included as the Partnership Plan cannot set BNG standards, which are a matter for the Local Plan.

Policy 8 – a comment that businesses cannot always be located in local service centres has not resulted in an amendment to the policy as this is addressed in the Local Plan. Similarly, commentary about improvements to the Windermere Ferry and bus services are matters addressed in Policy 14 as this already supports improvements to sustainable transport.

Policy 9 – the policy has been amended to explicitly reference farming, forestry and other land-management practices in the context of green growth.

Policy 10 – amendments have been made to further strengthen the policy on housing including reference to employer provision and Partner action. Within the scope of current legislation, the policy cannot go further with regard to controlling the impact of second homes and holiday lets at the present time.

Policy 11 – both Natural Flood Management and hard defence solutions are rightly mentioned in the policy as flood management has to be designed on a case-by-case, site-specific basis. It is not therefore considered appropriate to remove reference to hard defence options. However, reference to the park's Special Qualities and World Heritage Site Attributes of Outstanding Universal Value indicate that any scheme must be considered in that context. References to sustainable drainage solutions and peat have been added to the policy for clarity.

Policy 12 – no change has been made to this policy as it is felt to be sufficiently clear as written.

Policy 13 – references to specific rural skills have not been added to this policy; instead, these are addressed within the Historic Environment Objective, with traditional skills also referenced in Policy 6. Housing for the labour force has been addressed through amendments to Policy 11.

Policy 14 – the policy has been amended to better support improvements and innovation in sustainable transport.

Policy 15 – minor amendments have been made to this policy to clarify expectations around responsible visiting.

Additional policy - water quality and resources flowing to the coast and sea

In response to consultation comments highlighting the absence of reference to sea water, a new policy on improving water quality and water resources flowing to the coast and sea, has been added to the Plan.

Overall, the Partnership has taken a proportionate and joined-up approach to responding to feedback. Policies have been amended where they improved clarity, strength or alignment with frameworks such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy or the Government's Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework, while avoiding unnecessary duplication by addressing issues through related policies or objectives elsewhere in the Plan. Where terminology or policy intent was considered appropriate and consistent, no changes were made. This approach has helped strengthen the coherence of the Plan, ensuring consultation feedback is transparently reflected while maintaining a clear strategic focus.

15.4. Conclusion

Consultation feedback has resulted in a series of targeted and proportionate amendments to the Partnership Plan policies. Changes have focused on improving clarity, strengthening alignment with delivery frameworks, and ensuring policies better reflect consultees' priorities, particularly in relation to nature recovery, land management, housing, transport and responsible visiting. Amendments include the addition of a new policy on water quality flowing to the coast and sea, strengthened references to the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework, clearer support for sustainable drainage and flood resilience, and enhanced recognition of farming, forestry and land-based employment.

Where consultees raised issues that are governed by national legislation or the Local Plan, or where matters were already addressed elsewhere in the Plan, policies have not been amended. Instead, the Partnership has ensured clear signposting between policies and objectives to avoid duplication. In several cases, feedback has been addressed through changes to related policies rather than the policy originally commented on, reinforcing a joined-up approach. Taken together, these changes

strengthen the coherence and effectiveness of the Plan while remaining within the appropriate scope of the Partnership Plan.

16. Other aspects of the Plan

Most respondents had the opportunity to comment on other aspects of the Plan. This included those using the on-line survey as a free-text option was provided to enable this. The exception was the Otter game-players as the card game had been designed specifically to focus discussion on the Objectives.

16.1. Summary of Responses

- Some comments were received on the introductory sections to the Plan, pointing out that while the document focused on the National Park and World Heritage Site designations, the Lake District is a highly designated landscape and should reflect the same.
- In a similar vein, some correspondents suggested that the Lake District facts infographic should be expanded, particularly to balance the national and international historic environment designations with their natural environment equivalents, but also to reflect the importance of tenant farming and open access land in the area.
- Some additional strategies and policies that the Plan would deliver were also suggested by respondents for paragraph 39.
- Sustainable Development as a catalyst for growth: it was pointed out that we were missing some relevant sustainable development goals, and also the importance of water to the Lake District and the north-west needed stressing.
- Challenges and opportunities: a number of suggestions were made to better express the challenges and opportunities facing the Lake District. These included: the impact of climate change on the historic environment, the importance of connectivity between habitats, the housing challenge (particularly for the labour force), the importance of water efficiency measures, references to the importance of tenant farmers, and greater emphasis on both the transport and visitor management challenge in the Lake District.
- A number of respondents made comments about the terminology used, stating that they were unclear as to what the Partnership meant.
- As reported, above a number of respondents who sent in written responses also commented on the World Heritage Site/cultural landscape. These

include: suggestions that the traditional farming landscape of the Lake District should be given more prominence for its intrinsic value, as an essential component of world heritage status, including the role of farming and reference to traditional breeds as well as supportive comments stressing the importance of the World Heritage Site. Others commented on the importance of world heritage status for the Lake District for a variety of reasons, including for benefits it brought to the local economy and tourism (although conversely others felt it should be given less prominence in the Plan compared to national park status).

- Several comments were received about the removal of the weir at Crummock Water.
- Comments were also received asking how the Plan would be delivered including its funding.

16.2. Analysis of responses

Overall, these comments were primarily focused on improving the clarity and presentation of the Partnership Plan, rather than its overall direction.

A recurring theme was that the introductory sections placed too much emphasis on the National Park and World Heritage Site designations, without fully acknowledging the multiple designations across the Lake District. However, the purpose of the Partnership Plan is to act as the statutory management plan for both the National Park and World Heritage Site, and the emphasis on these designations reflects their central role in guiding the Plan. However, in response to these comments, a new introductory section titled 'Further Designations' has been included which explains the wider range of environmental and cultural designations that apply to the Lake District.

Some respondents suggested additional strategies and policies for inclusion, particularly in paragraph 39, alongside comments that certain Sustainable Development Goals were not adequately referenced. In response, relevant strategies and Sustainable Development Goals have been incorporated ensuring the Plan reflects a more comprehensive strategic context.

A substantial number of responses focussed on the need to better articulate the challenges and opportunities facing the Lake District. In response, the Challenges and Opportunities section has been expanded to more fully reflect these issues and address consultees' concerns.

Clarity of terminology was also identified as an issue, with respondents indicating uncertainty about what is meant by the 'Partnership'. This is a significant as unclear terminology can reduce accessibility and weaken understanding of the Plan. In response, the glossary has been updated, and the explanation of the Partnership (which is already included in the Plan) will be made more prominent when the Plan is displayed digitally.

Some comments, such as those relating to the weir removal at Crummock Water, fall outside the scope of the Partnership Plan and instead related to specific development management matters. These have been appropriately redirected to the Lake District National Park Authority Development Management Team.

A number of respondents highlighted the importance of the World Heritage Site, with some requesting that greater emphasis should be placed on the role of traditional farming (and key Lake District breeds) within the Plan as a key component of this designation. Conversely, others felt that too great a prominence had been given to world heritage. As, the Partnership Plan is a management plan for both the national park and world heritage site it is necessary that the management implications of both designations are clearly referenced. The text has been enhanced to enhance references to farming (including the importance of and challenge faced by tenant farmers), hefting and commoning.

Finally, respondents also highlighted specific concerns about how the Plan would be delivered which reinforces the importance of clearly setting out how delivery will be achieved in practice. The Partnership Plan addresses this through a delivery model based on joint working, with implementation driven by collaborative projects, shared funding bids and coordinated programmes. The combined expertise and capacity of Partner organisations enables resources to be pooled and external funding to be

leveraged, strengthening delivery at scale. The accompanying Action Plan will play a key role in translating strategic objectives into specific, deliverable actions.

14.3 Conclusion

Overall, these consultation responses were constructive and focused on improving the clarity, balance and presentation of the Partnership Plan rather than challenging its strategic direction. Key themes included the need for a more comprehensive reflection of the Lake District's multiple designations, clearer articulation of the strategic context, and a more developed explanation of the challenges and opportunities faced in the area.

In response, the Plan has been strengthened through the inclusion of additional introductory sections, such as the new 'Further Designations' section, the incorporation of relevant strategies and Sustainable Development Goals, and the expansion of the Challenges and Opportunities section. Improvements have also been made to accessibility through clearer terminology and updates to the glossary, alongside an enhanced explanation of the role of the Partnership.

Responses also reinforced the importance of clearly communicating delivery mechanisms. The Plan addresses this through a collaborative delivery model supported by an accompanying action plan which will translate strategic ambitions into deliverable actions.

A small number of comments fell outside the scope of the Plan and have been directed to the appropriate teams. Overall, the changes made in response to consultation improve the clarity, completeness and deliverability of the Plan, while maintaining its overarching vision and strategic intent.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire questions

The on-line questionnaire deliberately focused on the 5-year Objectives in the draft Partnership Plan, while offering free text opportunities for any other commentary. The following questions were asked about the Plan:

1. The Partnership has developed nine objectives to improve the Lake District over the next five years (to 2031).

The nine objectives are summarised below and can be read in full here:

www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/caringfor/lake-district-national-park-partnership/have-your-say-on-lake-district-national-parks-partnership-management-plan#Objective

Please rate how important each of these objectives are to you based on the following scale:

Not important, somewhat important, no opinion, moderately important, very important

By 2031 we will...

- Deliver nature recovery
- Improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns
- Reduce carbon emission and improve energy efficiency
- Increase the resilience to climate change of the landscape and its carbon storage potential
- Help rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and to have a thriving economy
- Improve the viability and resilience of farms
- Improve the management of the historic environment
- Inspire people to enjoy, understand and care for the Lake District
- Improve integrated sustainable travel and reduce dependency on private vehicles
- Improve integrated sustainable travel and reduce dependency on private vehicles

2. Is there anything missing from the objectives that needs to be included in the Partnership Plan? Please enter at most 1,000 characters.

3. Which **three** of the nine objectives do you think the Partnership should focus on? If you think there is a different objective the Partnership should be focusing on, please add this in the 'other' box.

- Deliver nature recovery
- Improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns
- Reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency
- Increase the resilience to climate change of the landscape and its carbon storage potential
- Help rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and to have a thriving economy
- Improve the viability and resilience of farms
- Improve the management of the historic environment
- Inspire people to enjoy, understand and care for the Lake District
- Improve integrated sustainable travel and reduce dependency on private vehicles
- Other...

4. Please use the text box below to provide any additional comments on the Partnership Plan. Please enter at most 1,500 characters.

The Partnership Plan can be read in full here:

<https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/PartnershipConsultation>

Additional demographic questions were also asked of respondents and are summarised in Appendix 2.

Appendix 2: Demographic data

The following demographic questions were asked of respondents through the on-line questionnaire:

- What is your age?
- Please select one option that best describes your ethnic group or background.
 - White
 - Asian/Asian British
 - Black/African/Caribbean/Black British
 - Multiple ethnic groups
 - Rather not say
 - Other
- We are interested to understand your interest in the Lake District. Please tick all that apply.
 - I live in the Lake District
 - I live and work in the Lake District
 - I work in the Lake District
 - I live outside the Lake District but I work in the Lake District
 - I live in Cumbria but not within the Lake District
 - I live outside the Lake District and Cumbria
 - I am a visitor or have visited the Lake District
 - Other

Age

All 1,666 respondents chose to answer this question. Respondents ages are shown in figure 12 below.

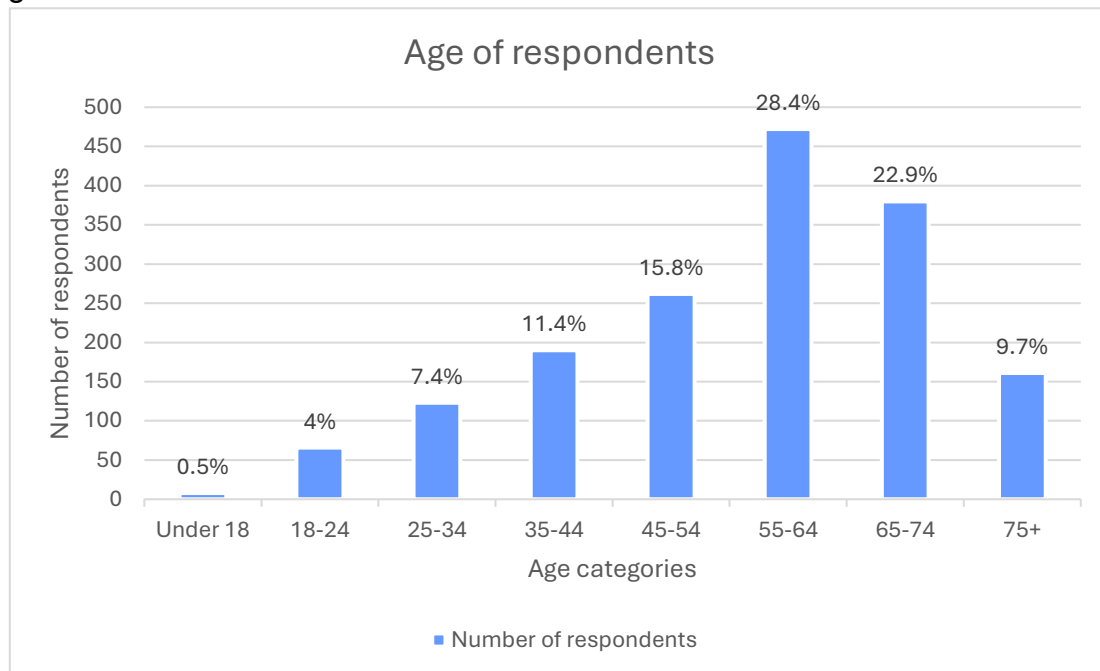


Figure 12: age of respondents

Population estimates report that 14% of the Lake District's population are under 18, 5.5% between 18-24, 9.1% between 25-34, 10.3% between 35-44, 12.4% between 45-54, 18.2% between 55-64, 15.2% between 65-74 and 15.4% aged 75+. In England, 17.4% of the population are under 15, 64% of the population are aged 15 to 64 and 18.6% of the population are over 65 years, and. Data in figure 12 shows that survey responses are strongly skewed toward older age groups, particularly people aged 55-75, with limited participation from younger people, highlighting the importance of targeted engagement with young people through the Otter Game.

Ethnic Background

1,539 respondents chose to disclose their ethnic background through the online survey. Respondents background is shown in figure 13 below.

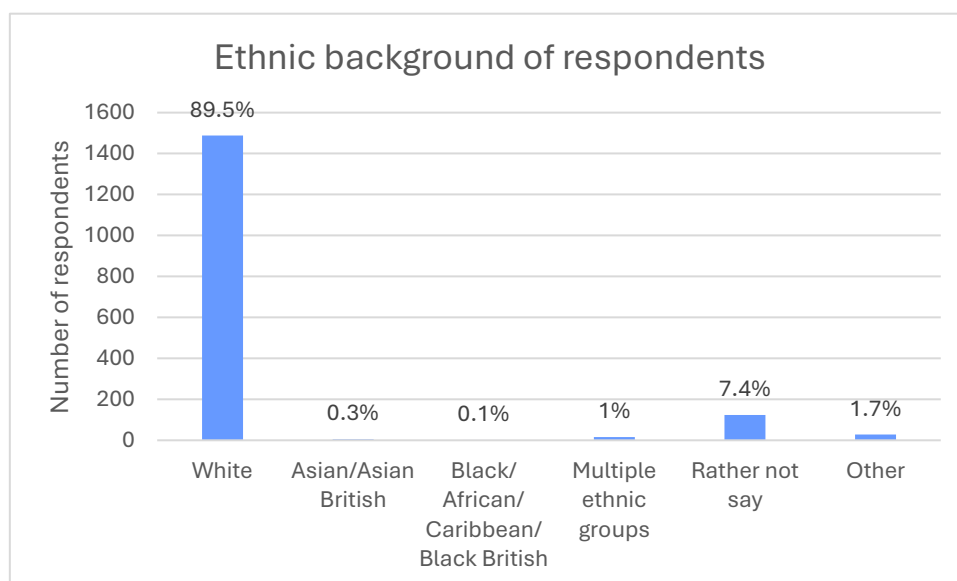


Figure 13: Ethnic background of respondents

The 2021 Census reported that 97.42% of the Lake District's population was White, 0.84% as Asian or Asian British, 0.26% as Black, Black British, African or Caribbean, 1.07% as multiple groups and 0.41% as other. In England and Wales, 81.7% of the population identified their ethnic group as White, 9.3% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh, 2.5% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African and 1.6% as any other ethnic group.

The survey response base lacks ethnic diversity, with participation dominated by White respondents and very low representation from minority ethnic groups. This suggests that future engagement efforts may need to specifically target under-represented communities to ensure the Partnership Plan reflects a wider range of perspectives. However, the Census data (above) indicates that the Lake District is not ethnically diverse, and it is also known that a significant proportion of respondents were from the Lake District or locale (see below).

Connection to the National Park

All 1,666 respondents answered this question. Responses broke down as follows:

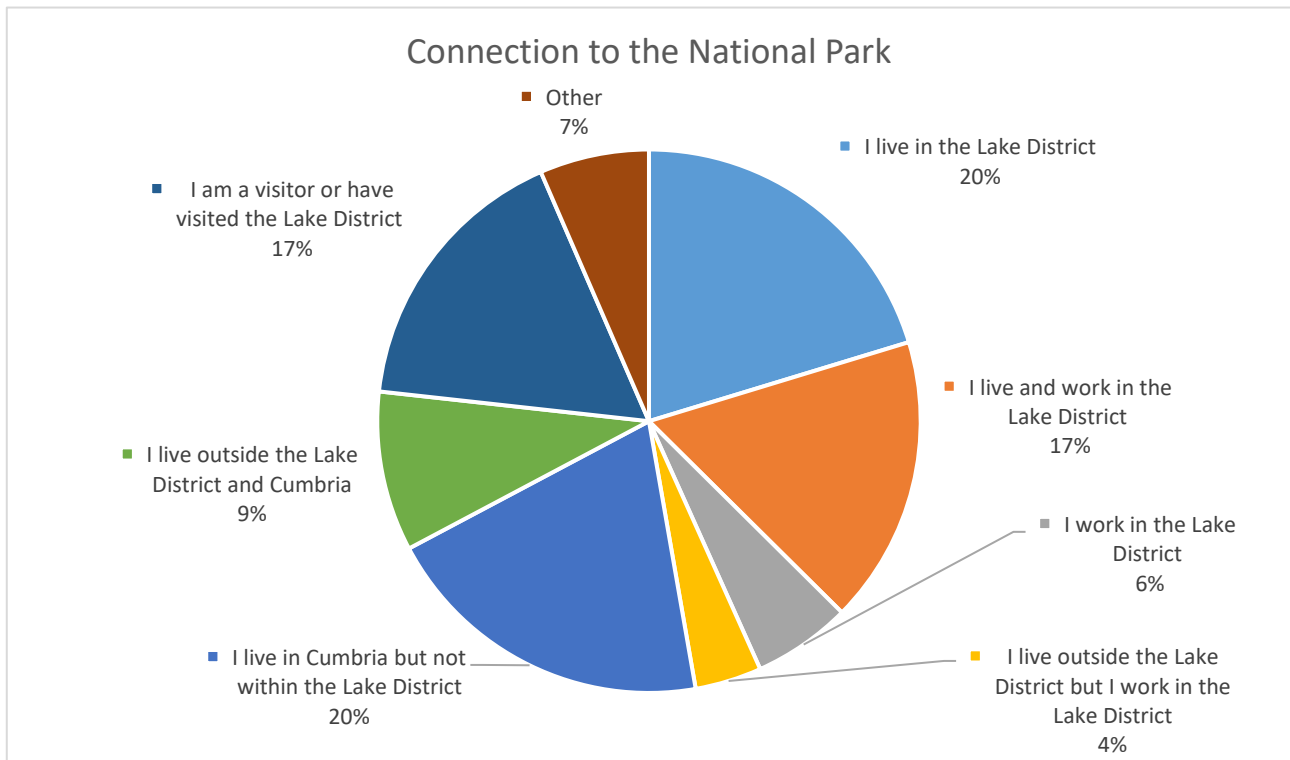


Figure 14: Connection to the National Park

The majority of respondents have a connection to the Lake District with 20% of respondents living in the Lake District and an additional 17% living and working in the Lake District, showing a strong base of respondents who directly experience day-to-day life within the Lake District. Visitors also make up a sizeable group of respondents, with 17% identifying as people who have visited the Lake District. The respondent group is dominated by people who live in or near the Lake District, alongside a number of visitors. This suggests that engagement with the survey primarily reflects the perspectives of those with a direct, ongoing relationship with the Lake District.

How people heard about the survey

99.5% of respondents answered this question. Responses broke down as follows:

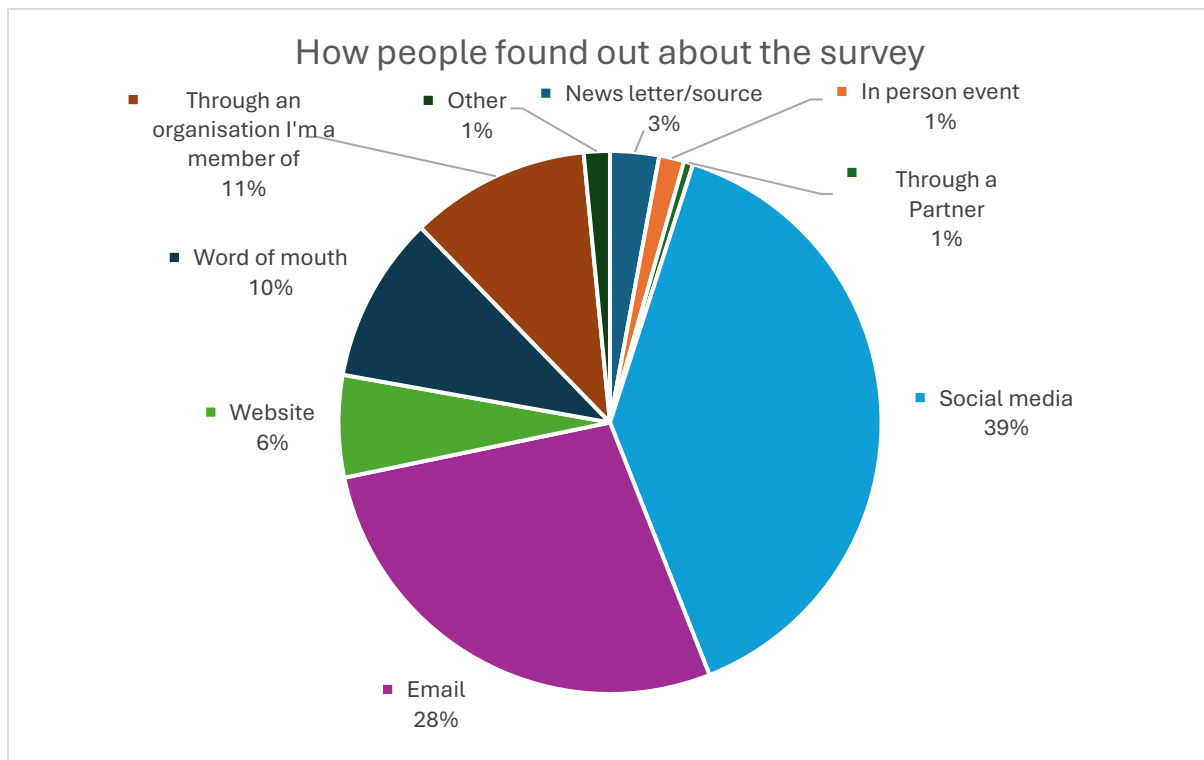


Figure 15: how respondents found out about the consultation

The majority of respondents found out about the survey through social media, which is to be expected; the Partnership Plan consultation was heavily publicised through social media channels. A large number of respondents heard about the survey through email, followed by organisations that respondents are members of, and word of mouth. An analysis of responses by organisation is shown in figure 16 below.

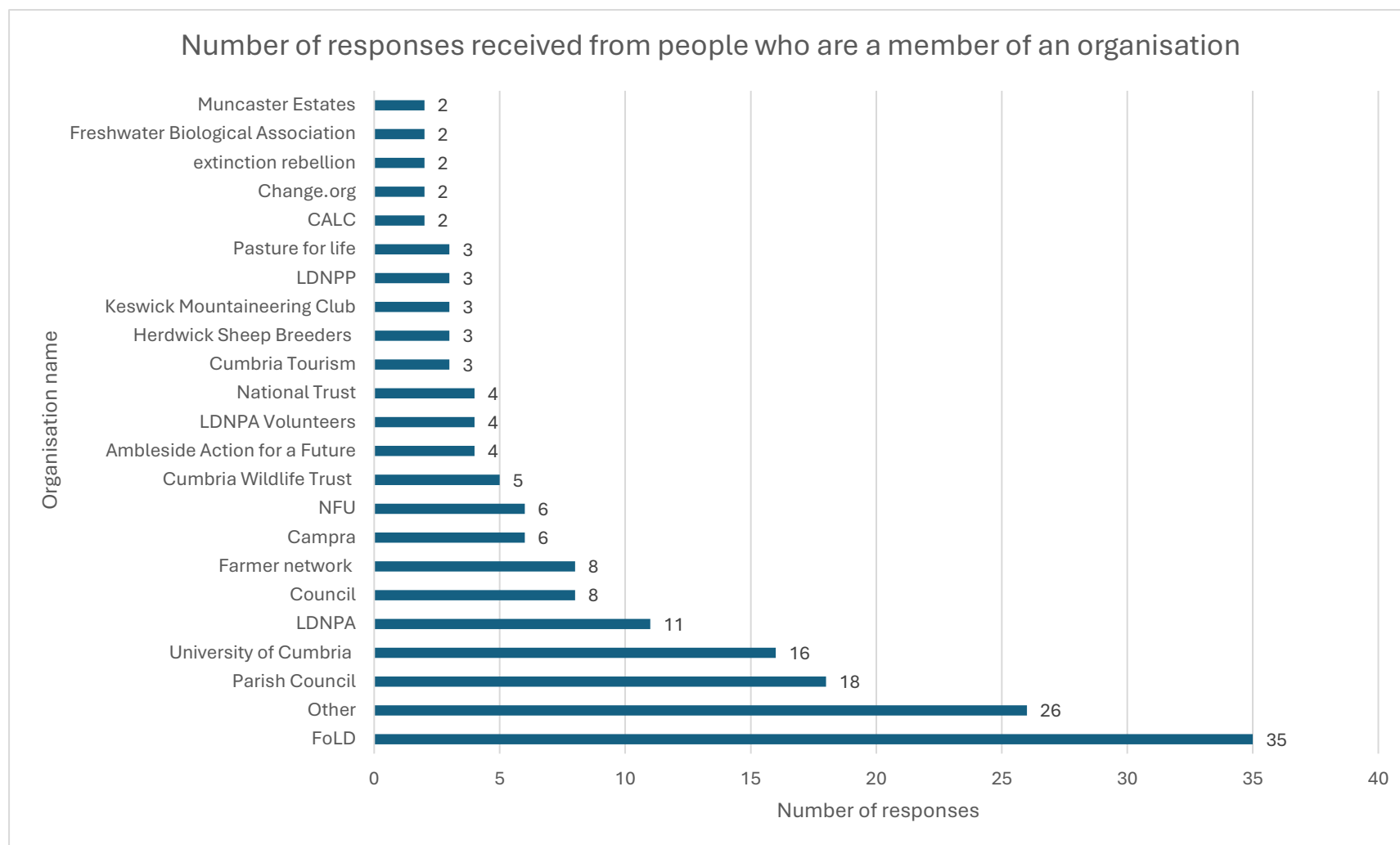


Figure 16: breakdown of responses by organisational membership

Appendix 3: Written responses received

Partners:

Cumbria and Lakes Local Access Forum

Cumbria Tourism

Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Environment Agency

Friends of the Lake District

Historic England

National Farmers Union

Natural England

Businesses:

Business Consortium (a group of X businesses from the Partnership's Business Task Force)

Burlington Stone

National Grid Electricity Transmission

Windermere Marina Village

Town or parish councils:

Above Derwent Parish Council

Claife Parish Council

Windermere & Bowness Town Council

Sheep Breeders Associations:

Herdwick Sheep Breeders Association

Rough Fell Sheep Breeders Association

Swaledale Sheep Breeders Association

Landowner/land manager:

Blawith & Subberthwaite Commoners Association

Dalemain Estate

Rayrigg Estate

Nature groups:

Cumbria Woodlands

Keswick Swifts (2 responses)

Other:

British Mountaineering Council

CAMPRA

Cumbria Wildfire Group

England

Love Windermere Partnership

Sustainable Keswick

Individual responses (x 6)

Appendix 4: Questionnaire responses by age

Figure 17 below shows the Objectives each age group prioritised. Across all age groups water quality was rated the most important objective, closely followed by nature recovery, communities and economy.

Under 18s

Only 0.5% of questionnaire responses came from people aged under 18. However, their feedback generally reflects overall response trends: younger respondents also prioritised delivering nature recovery, improving the condition of lakes, rivers and tarns, and helping rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and supported by a thriving economy.

18-24s

4% of questionnaire responses were from people aged 18-24. Similarly to the under 18s, 18–24-year-olds top three most popular objectives were improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns, help rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and to have a thriving economy and deliver nature recovery.

25–34s

25-34-year-olds make up 7.4% of all questionnaire respondents. Similarly to under 18s- and 18–24-year-olds the top three most popular objectives were improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns, help rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and to have a thriving economy and deliver nature recovery.

35-44s

35-44-year-olds make up 11.4% of all questionnaire respondents. Similarly to other age groups the top three most popular objectives were improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns, help rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and to have a thriving economy and deliver nature recovery.

45–54s

45–54-year-olds make up 15.8% of all questionnaire respondents. Similarly to other age groups the top three most popular objectives were improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns, deliver nature recovery and help rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and to have a thriving economy.

55-64s

55–64-year-olds make up 28.4% of all questionnaire respondents. Similarly to other age groups the top three most popular objectives were improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns, deliver nature recovery and help rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and to have a thriving economy. In this age group, improving the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns was rated as the most important objective by 37% of respondents in this age group, far more than any other age category.

65-74s

65-74-year-olds make up 22.9% of all questionnaire respondents. Similarly to other age groups the top three most popular objectives were: improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns; deliver nature recovery and 'help rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and to have a thriving economy. In this age group, sustainable transport, farming and nature recovery were rated similarly in importance by this age group.

75+

Over 75s make up 9.7% of all questionnaire respondents. The top three most popular objectives were: improve the condition of our lakes, rivers and tarns; help rural communities to be sustainable, vibrant and to have a thriving economy, and sustainable transport, closely followed by farming.

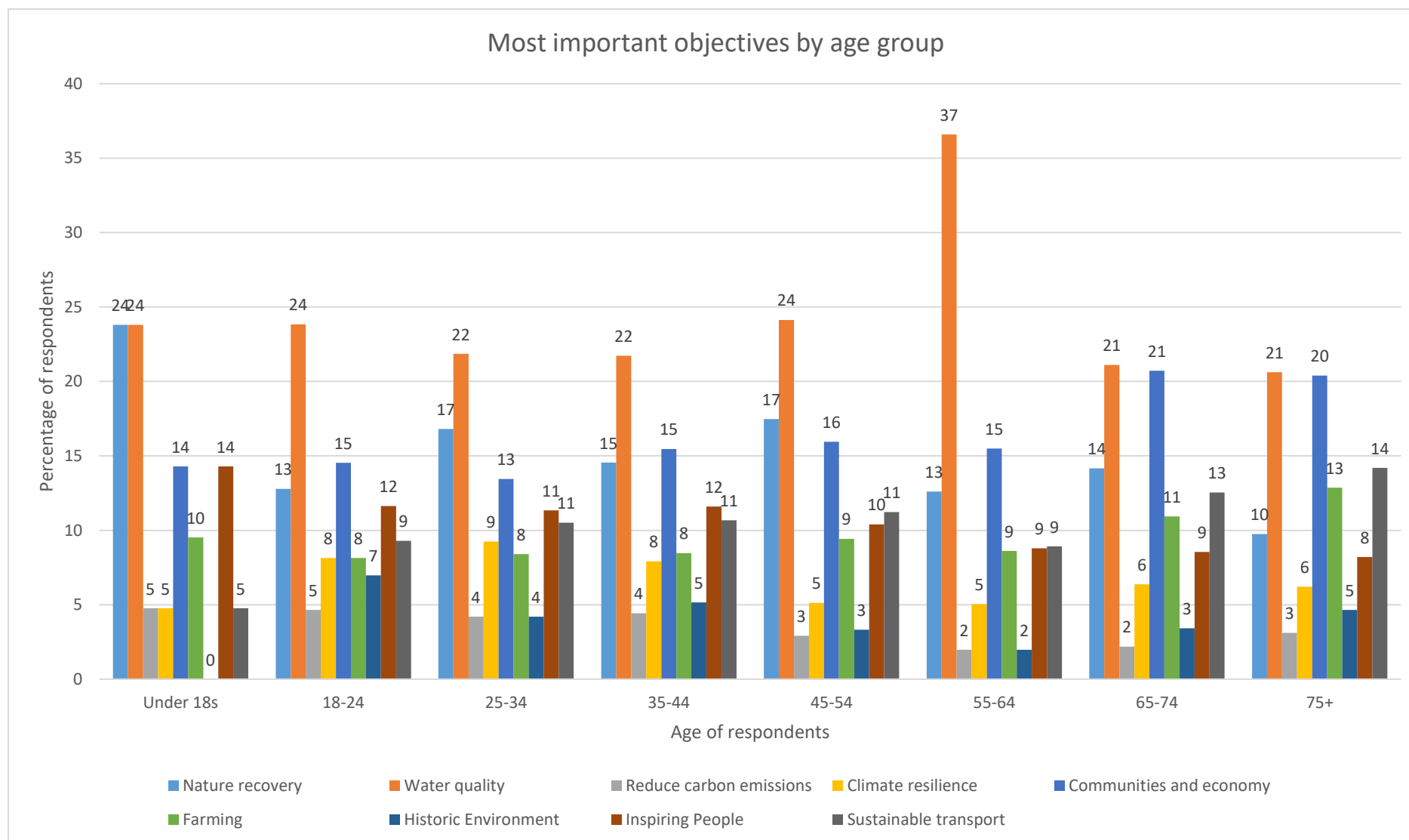


Figure 17: Most important objectives by age group