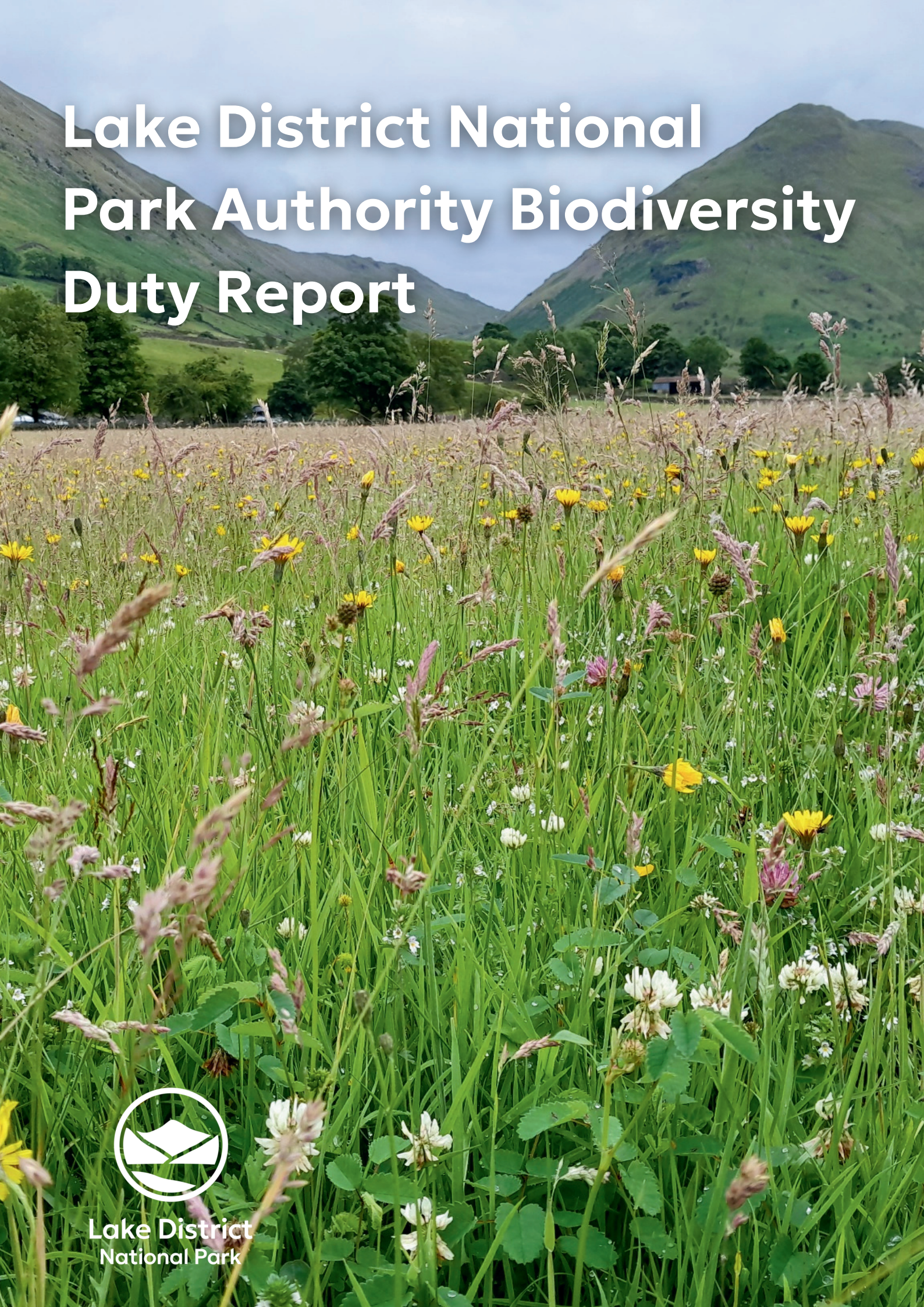
Lake District National Park Authority Biodiversity Duty Report



Lake District National Park

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1 Introduction

1.1 Our biodiversity duty

As a public authority, under the terms of the Environment Act 2021, the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) must:

a. Consider what we can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
b. Agree policies and specific objectives based on our consideration.
c. Act to deliver our policies and achieve our objectives.

In this 5-yearly report, we provide a summary of what we are doing in the Lake District National Park to improve the environment. We outline:

- some top achievements from the past 5 years (January 2021- December 2025)
- the action we have taken to comply with the biodiversity duty
- how we plan to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period
- the actions we've carried out as a planning authority to meet biodiversity net gain (BNG) obligations
- details of biodiversity net gains resulting, or expected to result, from biodiversity gain plans we have approved, and
- how we plan to meet biodiversity net gain obligations in the next reporting period.

1.2 The Lake District

The Lake District is England's largest national park and largest world heritage site, a distinctive and special place on both a national and global stage. Located at the heart of Cumbria, in the north-west of England, it covers 912 square miles (2,362km2). It is a landscape that has been shaped by generations of people over many thousands of years and continues to be a thriving living-working landscape.

- The Lake District has 13 special qualities, including:
- A wealth of habitats and wildlife
- Mosaics of lakes, tarns, rivers and coast
- Extensive semi-natural woodlands.

1.3 The Lake District National Park Authority

The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) is the public sector organisation charged with looking after the Lake District National Park and English Lakes World Heritage Site.

Our National Park Purposes, as set out in the Environment Act 1995, relate directly to the biodiversity duty.

Our statutory purposes are:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Lake District National Park; and
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

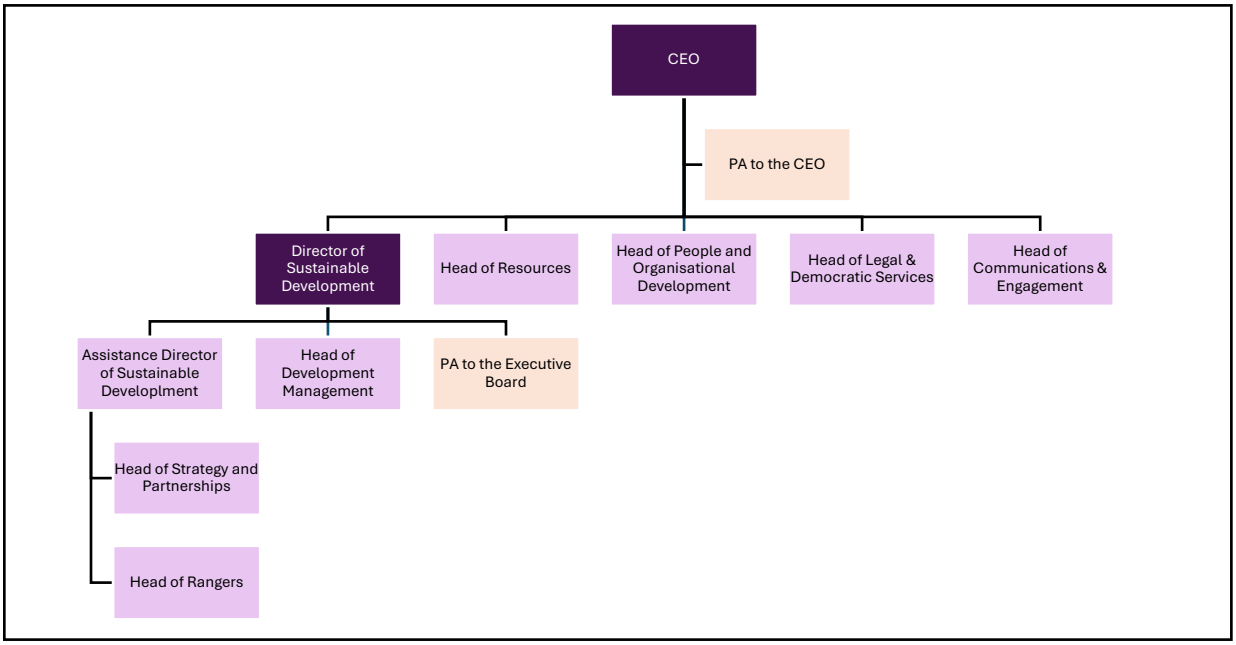
We also have a duty in pursuing those purposes to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park by working closely with the agencies and local authorities responsible for these matters, but without incurring significant expenditure.

Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 makes clear that if the two National Park purposes are in conflict, then conservation must have priority. This is known as the 'Sandford Principle' and stems from the Sandford Committee's recommendation, in 1974, that enjoyment of the National Parks 'shall be in a manner and by such means as will leave their natural beauty unimpaired for the enjoyment of this and future generations'.

LDNPA is also the planning authority for the National Park area. It therefore has a responsibility to manage development in pursuit of its purposes and in accordance with its duty.

The National Park Authority consists of 20 Members. Members are appointed by local authorities and by the Secretary of State for the Environment. The Authority has appointed two Independent Persons to assist the Authority in promoting high standards of conduct of elected and co-opted members of the Authority. Most day-to-day decisions are made by Committees, supported by the LDNPA officers (staff).

The below organogram outlines the structure within which the National Park Authority's 180 staff operate. LDNPA also manages 500 volunteers who provide an immense amount of valuable additional support to help deliver our statutory purposes.



The National Park Authority owns a small portion of the National Park. A number of public, private and charitable organisations own significant landholdings in the Lake District. Examples include: the National Trust (at approximately 20% of the National Park); United Utilities (8%); Forestry England (5%), the Lake District National Park Authority (3.2%) and Cumbria Wildlife Trust (1%). Most of the land is in private ownership (approximately 63%). Furthermore, many more public, private and charitable organisations operate within the Park boundary in a variety of ways.

All public bodies have a duty to further the statutory purposes of the Protected Landscape to keep the Lake District special.

1.4 How we can affect biodiversity

The Lake District National Park Authority affects biodiversity in a range of ways through the land it owns, its operations and its engagement with others.

Land we own and manage

We own or manage around 8,500 hectares (ha) of land, most of which is moorland and woodland. The way this is managed can have direct and indirect impact on biodiversity. Most of our ‘green’ property also has significant stakeholders such as Commoners whose rights and use of the land must be fully considered. We have a responsibility to manage our property to maximise its climate, natural, social, and economic potential.

Of the land owned by the LDNPA, 6,708ha falls within designated sites, primarily Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). The Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy

(LNRS) identifies substantial areas that are already of particular importance for biodiversity.

Areas of particular importance for biodiversity	**Ha**
Blanket bog	442.69
Purple moor grass and rush pastures/Lowland fens	11.45
Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)	320.74
Coastal sand dunes	0.04
Ancient Replanted Woodland (PAWS)	28.77
Lowland fens	14.95
Ancient and veteran trees	1.71

Across the land we own there is however opportunity to better conserve and enhance biodiversity. The Cumbria LNRS identifies substantial areas of our land that *could become* of particular importance for biodiversity.

Areas that could become of particular of importance for biodiversity	**Ha**
Moorland, Heathland and Montane	1557.25
Woodland Trees and Scrub	107.17
Grasslands and Limestone Pavement	81.81
Wetland and Freshwater	98.24
Built Environment	6.84

In pursuing habitat enhancement and creation opportunities where appropriate on the land we own, we also have the opportunity to achieve indirect benefits for biodiversity through slowing the flow of water across and through the land. This can reduce drought impacts by improving water storage in soils and reduce sediment (and pollutants) entering watercourses thereby supporting biodiversity downstream of our landholdings.

Planning and development decisions

All planning applications which are not exempt are now subject to the statutory requirements of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The law requires that all non-exempt applications must deliver a minimum 10% increase in BNG.

It is a condition of the Town & Country Planning Act (as amended) of any relevant planning permission that:

> the development may not be begun unless:
>
> (a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and

(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

In determining planning decisions, since 2 April 2024, when the requirements came into force, we have assessed the biodiversity gain plans for all applications that are not exempt, to ensure that the plan will deliver the required BNG for the proposed development. More information on our actions relating to Biodiversity Net Gain is provided in Section 6.

Advice we give

We offer a consultation service for any proposals to enhance or change land management within the National Park, for example Woodland Management Plans, Woodland Creation projects, river restoration projects and felling licences. Through this advice service we seek to support proposers to make balanced decisions taking account of damaging locations or practices that should be avoided, key strategic biodiversity opportunities in their location, and the landscape context they are working in, so that proposals can have the greatest chance of delivering appropriate biodiversity improvements.

In addition to this, our Farming team work to support farmers and land managers to identify opportunities on their land and access funding, including if appropriate through the Farming in Protected Landscape Programme - see Sections 2 and 3 for more detail.

Raising awareness within the community

Area Rangers work with residents, businesses, community groups, landowners and farmers. They are the first point of contact for a number of matters, and through this contact advocate for biodiversity improvements where possible. For example, they support new local initiatives or community projects, advise on access and recreation enquiries, and provide information about the LDNPA's own work. They also work with other partners to deliver larger scale projects, and the Farming in Protected Landscapes grants scheme, helping ensure they deliver biodiversity benefits.

Our 500 volunteers all share a love of the Lake District, and the volunteering service we offer provides us with an additional opportunity to both increase volunteer awareness of specific challenges and solutions in relation to biodiversity in the park, and further extend that awareness through them to the wider community of locals and visitors. Volunteer opportunities focused on caring for the natural landscape include Fix the Fells, Ranger service, Young Rangers, and advocacy volunteer opportunities include Information Centre volunteers and Guided Walk leaders.

On the shores of Lake Windermere, our Brockhole site provides a place for young people to get a taste of the Lake District and combine learning with fun. Here our Education team offer tutored learning sessions in an outdoor learning environment for primary and secondary school groups, on both local educational days out as well as school trips from further afield. Our Science and Nature workshops focus on habitats and species including Creatures of the Deep (Pond Dipping), Woodland Wonders, Wildlife Safaris, Explore & Restore Nature Day. The National Park is also a particularly fascinating place for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4+ to learn about geography and the impacts and management of tourism. The team also provide online resources for teachers.

Our operations

The level of resources that all organisations use, and the amount of waste and pollution created, in the course of their operations has the potential to have a negative impact on biodiversity both through direct impact and indirect as a result of emissions contributing to climate breakdown. The LDNPA's organisational operations are not exempt from this potential to impact. The LDNPA leads work (through the Fix the Fells Partnership) to maintain the network footpaths across the National Park, and this work can be resource-intensive. It also has direct benefits for biodiversity (see Section 4). The organisation also operates a number of visitor information facilities, ranger bases and office buildings in support of the delivery of its functions, and looks after 180 staff and 500 volunteers, all of which requires energy and materials.

The Authority's vision is that 'the Lake District National Park will be an inspirational example of sustainable development in action' and to lead by example we have set out a vision for what we think a sustainable National Park Authority looks like in our Sustainability Strategy which will guide efforts to reduce or operational impacts.

Partnership working

In recognition of the need to work in partnership with others to deliver the purpose of the National Park, we established the independently chaired Lake District National Park Partnership in 2006. It is now a collaboration of 24 Partners from the public, private, community, and voluntary sectors with the shared goal to look after an enhance the Lake District.

One of the main ways we can have a positive impact for biodiversity as a Partnership is through collectively writing, and then delivering, the Partnership Plan for the Lake District, in which actions to address the biodiversity crisis and climate emergency play a critical role.

In the 2020-2025 Partnership Plan a shared Key Outcome of securing the future of farming, forestry, nature recovery and climate change, has driven Partners to work together to address challenges in the Park and realise biodiversity conservation and enhancement biodiversity enhancement. By coordinating resources and working collectively we are able to achieve more for nature in the Lake District National Park.

2 Our policies and objectives

In this section we outline the policies and objectives we have set to support us in meeting our biodiversity duty over the last five years.

2.1 The Lake District National Park Partnership Plan 2020-2025

The Lake District National Park Partnership (LDNPP) Plan 2020-2025 is a joint Management Plan for the Lake District – reflecting its position as a National Park and a World Heritage Site. It has been prepared by the Lake District National Park Partnership and adopted as a statutory document by the Lake District National Park Authority in 2021.

It describes how the Partnership delivers and reports upon relevant biodiversity plans and policies through its key outcome 'Securing the future of farming and forestry, nature recovery and climate change'.

Relevant actions in the Plan are for this programme are described in Outcome 3, Securing the future of farming and forestry, nature recovery and climate change. These include:

Action 1: Deliver a Partnership agricultural transition support approach to enable viable business adaption, farmer-led nature and climate recovery, and maintenance of the cultural landscape by:

a. Joining up and filling gaps in existing business and environmental advice for farmers, foresters and land managers, including through projects such as the Farming in Protected Landscapes-funded Farm Cluster project and the Upland Farmer Toolkit.
b. Delivering the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme to secure the climate, nature, people, and place themes.
c. Support project delivery and future bids to Landscape Recovery Schemes and share learning to understand how they can secure the future of the National Park Special Qualities and attributes of World Heritage Outstanding Universal Value.
d. Partners to collaborate to support a high take-up and secure successful delivery of Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier schemes.
e. Develop projects to secure a blend of finance opportunities for natural capital from private, charitable, public, and other sources, share learning, and explore delivery models.

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

a. Working with individual farms, farm clusters and community land management initiatives to increase understanding of options for nature and climate recovery, maintaining cultural heritage, and identifying and co-creating farming-led local nature recovery projects and landscape recovery pilots.

b. Delivering targets for woodland creation and restoration schemes in line with the Partnership's 'Tree planting and woodland creation guidelines'.

c. Delivering targets for peatland restoration schemes coordinated through the Cumbria Peat Partnership.

d. Supporting the delivery of the species recovery projects for Pine Marten and Freshwater Pearl Mussel.

e. Work with the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy team and partners to develop an effective and efficient Cumbria-wide partnership approach for assessing, recording, and sharing the condition and extent of priority habitats.

f. Preparation of a Wild Deer Management Strategy by March 2025.

2026 onwards

The future Partnership Plan covering period 2026-2031 (and the next Biodiversity Duty Reporting period) is currently in draft form and out for public consultation. See Section 6 for more information on how this will likely shape our future actions.

2.2 Lake District National Park Partnership Nature Recovery Plan

The LDNPP Nature Recovery Plan describes how the Lake District National Park Partnership will contribute to restoring nature on 30% of land by 2030 (30 X 30). It's strategic priority is to achieve nature recovery that will help the Partnership celebrate, sustain, and enhance the Lake District National Park's Vision and Special Qualities, and World Heritage attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. In doing so, it will also support the delivery of the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Its goals are:

- Restoration of our SSSIs to favourable condition.

- Establishment of Core Nature Recovery Areas, to deliver 30 X 30 across the wider landscape.
- The integration of nature throughout everyday land management and activities across the National Park as a whole.

By 2030 it will deliver:

- At least 30% of the Lake District National Park being managed as core areas for nature recovery
- 95% of SSSIs will be in recovering condition
- 100% of SSSIs in favourable management
- 75% of waterbodies at or above Water Framework Directive good ecological status (by 2027 to meet Water Framework Directive)
- 209 ha of annual woodland creation
- 1000 ha of annual peatland restoration works (now superseded by Protected Landscape Target and Outcomes Framework – PLTOF - target 7)

By:

- Working with farmers and land managers
- Championing and resourcing the recovery of priority and protected habitats
- Delivering targets for peatland restoration, tree and woodland establishment; and also improving the water environment by taking a catchment-based approach
- Pursuing the restoration and reintroduction of key species
- Establishing a system to assess condition and extent of all priority habitats
- Supporting the delivery of four community led land management
- Linking nature with other nearby protected landscapes as well as other important habitats and nature areas outside of the National Park

2.3 The LDNPA Organisational Strategy

Our Organisational Strategy includes ambitions for nature, by 2030 for the Authority to deliver through this programme for:

Climate Action

- On track to achieving net zero by supporting Cumbria's 2037 ambition and adapting to climate change

Farming and Nature Recovery

- Our natural environment, wildlife and resilience to climate change are strengthened. Sustainable farming is central to a culture and nature rich landscape, community and economy

And also provides an opportunity to demonstrate nature recovery in a cultural landscape by:

Landscape, Culture and Beauty

- World Heritage Status is used as a positive force to understand, celebrate and sustain our cultural landscape and historic environment.

2.4 Our Business Plans 2021-2025

Our Business Plans covering 2021 – 2025, in the context of the organisational strategy, set out actions that have shaped our activity over the last five years. These were:

Priority: Net Zero

Net zero carbon Lake District by 2037.

Action 1: Net Zero Lake District/Cumbria

- Lead and support partnership efforts to deliver park-wide carbon reductions through the Low-carbon Lake District programme, ensuring that appropriate plans are in place to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Action 2: LDNPA Carbon Reduction

- Further reduce Authority carbon emissions over the next three years to < 150 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions per year.

Action 3: LDNPA Carbon Off-setting

- Deliver a carbon off-setting programme sufficient to offset > 150 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, focusing on tree planting and taking into account yield class, species mix and planting densities.

Priority: Nature Recovery

Our natural environment, wildlife and resilience to climate change are strengthened.

Action 1: Natural Environment

- Deliver priority projects as agreed by the Natural Environment Programme Board (who will consider the existing pipeline, as well as new opportunities and commitments in context of the new organisation structure and available resource capacity), delivering nature recover.

Priority: The Future of Farming

Farming is central to a culture and nature rich landscape, community and economy.

Action 1: Economic Growth

- Develop and deliver activity to enable and encourage sustainable development, including farming, in the National Park.

Priority: Landscape Culture and Beauty

World Heritage Status is used as a positive force to understand, celebrate and sustain our cultural landscape and historic environment. .

Action 1: Lake District National Park Partnership's Plan:

- Fulfil our role as facilitator of the Partnership, monitor the performance of the LDNPP and the State of the Park. Anticipate future issues and shape opportunities, including responding to consultations.

Action 4: Fix the Fells

- Explore and agree, with partners, how the symptomatic issues of upland path erosion should be managed in the wider context of nature recovery and landscape management over the longer term.

2.5 Our Local Plan

The Local Plan 2020 – 2035 sets out the strategy for all new development in the Lake District. It provides a guiding practical policy framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency by our Development Management Team. It sets out the strategic policies we consider necessary to address the strategic priorities within the Lake District. For biodiversity these are:

- Principles of development – applied to all development
- Improve or at least maintain water quality
- Improve or maintain the natural functioning of coastal and river processes
- Protect biodiversity and ensure proportionate and appropriate biodiversity net gain is secured
- Policy 04: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Protect our important habitats, sites and species
- Achieve bigger, better, more joined up and resilient habitats
- Improve the function of ecosystems

2.6 Our Sustainability Strategy

The purpose of this Strategy is to set out a vision for what we think a sustainable National Park Authority looks like, to celebrate what we're doing well, to work out where we are falling short, and to map out how we're going to make up the difference. It covers all of the Authority's operations and represents a synthesis of all aspects of the Organisational Strategy and Business Plan to which sustainability is relevant. Of particular relevance to biodiversity, our ultimate goal in relation to our land is:

- to manage our land to maximise its ecosystem, climate and social potential in appropriate balance.

In relation to this goal, objectives include:

- All of our green properties make a positive contribution to local biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems
- Our green estate is at least net zero and ideally climate-positive
- All designated sites (SSSIs, SACs, NNRs, LNRs) we own are in favourable condition where this is achievable[1]

We also have goals to reduce the impact of our organisation's operations in terms of resource use which will have consequential impacts for nature and biodiversity more broadly.

[1] Some sites are not possible to bring to favourable condition, such as waterbodies affected by *Crassula helmsii*

3 Our actions – 2021-2025

In this section we outline the actions we have taken on our own or in partnership to comply with the biodiversity duty.

3.1 Our top achievements

In this section we highlight some of our key biodiversity achievements in the last 5 years. A fuller account of the actions we have taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity following is Section 4.2.

Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)

Caption: Infographic highlighting achievements of Year 4 of the FiPL programme (financial year 2024/25)

Our delivery of the Defra-funded Farming in Protected Landscape Programme has supported a wide variety of projects that have benefitted biodiversity through directly supporting as well as engaging farmers and land managers. Biodiversity benefits achieved across the whole programme to date include:

- 10,033 trees planted to support biodiversity and landscape resilience
- 6 ponds created or restored to support wetland habitats and wildlife
- 9 projects to protect and improve rivers, streams and other water bodies

- 2,553 metres of hedgerows planted
- 24 schools engaged within the area and 4 schools engaged outside
- 10 new farm groups created and 18 existing groups strengthened

A specific species benefit example is the Curlew Recovery project in the South Lakes. This project has involved the local conservation of curlew populations via a group of volunteers working with farmers in the South Lakes – north and west of Kendal. Activities include predator control, monitoring nests, ringing, fencing nests for protection, farmer liaison re cutting for haylage and sileage and education community through events and social media. FiPL funding provided between 2021 and 2025 paid for equipment, events, expertise and farm liaison. This year more nests have been detected earlier through the use of their FiPL-funded thermal drone. The 2025 season recorded 50% more chicks fledged – 27 chicks in total compared with 12 in 2021.

Lake District Hay Meadows

Caption: A Lake District hay meadow in bloom. Credit: Claire Foster.

During 2025, the Lake District National Park Authority delivered a nature restoration project with funding from the Recharge in Nature Partnership, in conjunction with BMW UK and National Parks Partnerships. This funding partnership is linked to the installation of EV charging points in the Lake District National Park. With £65,000 of funding, the

Authority worked closely with the Cumbria Wildlife Trust grassland team to deliver 16.5 hectares of hay meadow restoration in the National Park through the Recharged Hay Meadows project.

In just one restoration season, teams working on the Recharged Hay Meadow project completed practical hay meadow restoration on 5 farms across the Lake District National Park, near Embleton, Loweswater, Crosthwaite, Collinfield and in the Newlands Valley, using a variety of methods including brush harvesting seed for use on the same farm, using purchased seed from locally approved sources and by planting locally propagated plug plants.

The success of this short project has demonstrated a demand for further hay meadow restoration in the Lake District National Park, and it is hoped future funding can be secured to continue this partnership with Cumbria Wildlife Trust.

Barf Common Peatland Restoration

Caption: Volunteer monitoring and sphagnum plug transplanting. Credit: Fred Moore

In 2023 working with Cumbria Peat Partnership, we took action to restore over 1.5 hectare of peat on our Barf Common land holding funded by the Nature for Climate Peatland Restoration Fund.

This work involved:

- revegetating areas of bare peat & mineral soil,
- inoculating bare peat, micro-eroded & Sphagnum absent areas with micro-propagated Sphagnum plugs.
- installing 1,035m of peat bunds in dryer areas and on bare peat.
- reprofiling and re-vegetating 1,657 m of eroding hag sides.
- removing approximately 252 invasive Sitka spruce.

Since the initial work, we have been monitoring peat and water levels with five monitoring stations and undertook sphagnum moss transplanting from areas where there is plenty, to areas that still needed some help getting established. Restoration of peatland takes time but we are delighted that the condition of Barf Common is improving thanks to the hard work of volunteers and staff.

Caldbeck Common Upland Heath Recovery Project

Caption: Temporary enclosures installed on Caldbeck Common. Credit: Carl Bradford

The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA), the Caldbeck Commoners' Association and Natural England are working together to restore areas of the Caldbeck Common. The Common, owned by LDNPA, makes up part of the Skiddaw Group Site of

Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Lake District High Fells Special Area of Conservation. It includes important habitats such as heather and moss moorland, blanket bog and juniper scrub and supports large populations of upland breeding birds.

With Farming in Protect Landscape (FiPL) and LDNPA funding, in 2024 the project installed temporary protection from grazing pressure in three upland areas of the designated SSSI, totalling 36.2ha, for a period of five years. This will allow the heathland plants, such a heather and bilberry, to regenerate.

Areas were chosen for existing heathland plants with low ground cover, making them likely to respond positively to reduced grazing. Commoners were involved to minimize impacts on grazing, landscape, biodiversity, and access. Open access under the CROW Act has been maintained by installing two pedestrian gates at each site.

In summer 2025 the LDNPA commissioned a habitat condition assessment to establish a baseline on vegetation cover and species present for the enclosures. Current coverage within enclosures ranges from 33% to 63% - our target is to establish 75% coverage in all three areas.

Stanley Ghyll Restoration

Caption: Stanley Ghyll following restoration works. Credit: Cumbria Woodlands.

On our landholding at Stanley Ghyll in Eskdale, since December 2020, we have removed around seven hectares of invasive rhododendron to bring the SSSI back into good condition.

Thanks to an Ancient Woodland Restoration grant received in May 2021 under the DEFRA Green Recovery Challenge Fund, with the support of Woodland Trust and Cumbria Woodlands, we cleared 4 hectares(ha) of rhododendron from the steep sided gorge, requiring specialist rope access contractors. Additional follow up treatment and removal of regrowth was also carried out.

Since this immense initial effort, a weekly volunteer work party has continued to manage rhododendron on site. The remaining patches are now largely confined to steep, hard to reach banks, with at least 7ha of the 10ha site now cleared. The work party also work with neighbouring landowners' permission to cut and remove rhododendron present outside our Stanley Ghyll land boundary to reduce the opportunity of it re-colonising the Ghyll.

This work has helped secure the bryophyte features from the threat of the invasive Rhododendron ponticum. Stanley Ghyll is known to host the lichen M subsimilis (the only known record in England), and we are working on plans to survey the lichen extent and condition and take further supportive management actions to ensure continued improvement of the SSSI condition.

3.2 Biodiversity Delivery Activity

The following table and additional information set out the actions we have completed, either alone or in partnership with others, in the last 5 years to benefit biodiversity.

Projects led by LDNPA

Project	Activity	Partners	Funding	Links to delivery of Strategy etc.	Outputs
Bassenthwaite Lake NNR Management Plan - lakeshore management	Delivery of actions to help enhance lakeshore hydrosere and habitats. (Bassenthwaite Lake National Nature Reserve (NNR) and Site of Special Scientific Interest). 520m of post and rail fencing to manage recreational trampling which can lead to the loss of vegetation cover and make the shoreline susceptible to erosion through wave action.	LDNPA Rangers and volunteers	LDNPA	Bassenthwaite Lake National Nature Reserve Management Plan Actions. Bassenthwaite	Re-establishment of the natural vegetation that provides valuable cover for fish, birds and insects and helps protect the water quality by absorbing phosphorus and nitrogen from land run-off and filtering loose sediments.
Selective coppicing of willow in the lakeshore hydrosere at Banks Point, Bassenthwaite.	Selective coppicing to increase light levels to promote growth of understory flora and lake margins. Create natural barriers against trampling hydrosere.	LDNPA Rangers and volunteers	LDNPA	Bassenthwaite Lake National Nature Reserve Management Plan Actions.	Create healthy understory of plant communities including globeflower (*Trollius europaeus*).
Development of management	Development of new management plan and peatland restoration plan. Activities will include the	LDNPA; Natural England;	LDNPA	Business Plan	By April 2026 we will have a new management plan and working action plan

plan for Rusland Moss National Nature Reserve (NNR)	restoration of lowland peatland enhance access and learning opportunities and monitor bird and invertebrate assemblages on site.	Cumbria Wildlife Trust			providing an outline on how we intend to manage the site with the resources available to us over the next 5 years.
Securing continued agri-environment scheme support for our Commons	Collaboration with commoners to support successful roll-over of agri-environment schemes to ensure continued management Early preparations with commoners and Natural England to explore potential evolution of land management to support increased delivery for nature on commons.	LDNPA; Natural England	LDNPA	Nature Recovery Strategy	Suitable management of commons secured until to 2028
Caldbeck Common Upland Heath Recovery Project	Installation of three enclosures, covering an areas of 15 hectares, to support the natural regeneration of upland habitat. Enclosures contain the essential building blocks of upland heath e.g. heather and bilberry to kick-start regeneration.	LDNPA; Natural England; Caldbeck Commoners	LDNPA & FiPL	Skiddaw Group SSSI – management to improve condition status.	Foster improved relationships and understanding of nature recovery. Reduction of grazing pressure to help negate further reductions in stock numbers as part of an HLS extension. Farmer-led local nature recovery, contributing to long-term landscape-scale recovery initiatives.
Stanley Ghyll	In combination with work to create better visitor access, 7 hectares of invasive Rhododendron has been removed to allow regeneration of native broadleaved woodland.	LDNPA	LDNPA	Business Plan Stanley Ghyll SSSI – actions to improve condition status.	Substantial reduction in invasive non-native species presence.

	Over 200 Larch infected with *Phytophthora ramoram* were also removed from site.				Control of damaging *Phytophthora ramoram* tree disease. Better natural regeneration of native broad-leaved woodland. Improvements have enabled us to now pursue citizen science work, developing volunteering offers and delivering an interpretive strategy focused on the natural and social history of the site (awaiting funding)
LDNPA Woodlands Project	Developing woodland management plans for Rusland, Stanley Ghyll and Keswick Railway. Works to Atlantic Rainforest Works on our properties at Hall Brow, Glass Knott have included selective thinning of birch, sycamore and holly and veteranisation of oaks to enhance structural diversity; such as fracture pruning, decay pockets, and bird box tops, with a strong emphasis on increasing both standing and lying deadwood.	LDNPA; Woodland Trust; Plantlife; Forestry Commission	LDNPA Species Survival Fund	Lake District National Park Partnership Plan Business Plan Cumbria Rainforest Restoration Project	Improve light condition around mature oaks and to protect corticolous lichens. Creation of microhabitats, restores important wildlife habitat for nesting and roosting and natural habitat networks for invertebrates.

Rusland Valley Mosses SSSI Wild Deer Management Plan	Conducting research into the deer population and its management, both on the SSSI and surrounding catchment area, and its management to develop a management strategy to support the restoration of the SSSI whilst reducing population displacement and deer impacts on land adjacent to the site. *Project completion 31 March 2026.*	LDNPA; Natural England	Defra	Lake District Partnership Plan Protected Sites Strategy Cumbria LNRS Rusland Valley Mosses SSSI – actions to improve condition status (currently unfavourable declining).	Implementation plan that enables management of deer pre and post restoration and that allows the SSSI to recover once additional restoration measures have been put into place.
Fix the Fells Project	Additionality to upland path maintenance through the delivery of habitat works to benefit nature recovery and implement activity to secure climate change resilience: **<u>Peatland Restoration</u>** Ravens Edge. 1250m2 of degraded peatland restored, peat hags reprofiled and peat dams installed, 800 sphagnum plugs planted. Tree planting Approx 4000 trees consisting of native broadleaf species (plus a few scots pine).planted up in tree cages, around the Helvellyn massif and on Helm Crag.	LDNPA; Lake District Foundation; Friends of the Lake District; Natural England; Cumbria Wildlife Trust	Various partner funding, donations, external grants and FiPL.	Lake District Partnership Plan Fix the Fells Strategic Plan 2025 - 2030	Maintenance of access for people exploring. Reduction of erosion through footfall pressure leading to better carbon sequestration and stable soils. Upland habitats and paths resilient to impacts of climate change.

	NFM Leaky Dams and pol / wet area creation around Rigg Head by building turf/peat dams and landscaping surrounding areas. **Rewetting/holding back water** Projects have supported the re-wetting of valley mires at Watendlath, Castle Crag valley mires, including at Boulder Valley, above Coppermines Valley in Coniston.				

Projects led by others

Project	Activity	Partners	Funding	Links to delivery of Strategy etc.	Outputs
The Derwent Invasives Partnership	The project aims to better coordinate the invasive non-native species management, prevention and awareness raising efforts of partners across the Derwent Catchment. Projects included better interpretation and over 30 hectares of balsam removal across the catchment.	**West Cumbria Rivers Trust;** LDNPA Natural England Environment Agency Cumberland Council		Derwent Invasives Species Strategy and Action Plan 2023-27	Coordinate the management of INNS across the catchment to ensure partners can have the biggest possible impact across the catchment.
Lakefly Pilot-Bassenthwaite Lake	Citizen science project to monitor the health of lakes by collecting and identifying freshwater invertebrates (*Pilot in progress until 31 March 2026)*	**Freshwater Biological Association**; LDNPA Volunteers	Defra's Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment	Nature Recovery Strategy Natural Capital and Ecosystem	Collect valuable data to help detect pollution, track ecological changes, and support better management of

			(NCEA) programme	Assessment (NCEA) programme	our freshwater ecosystems.
Barf Common Peatland Restoration	Restoration of 2 hectares of eroded peat and hags on a 35-hectare site. Follow up work to plant sphagnum moss plugs following peatland restoration in order to re-vegetate bare peat whilst improving biodiversity on site.	**Cumbria Wildlife Trust;** LDNPA & Rangers and volunteers	Defra Climate for Natures Peatland Restoration Fund	Cumbria Peat Partnership pipeline as part of Great North Bog.	Re-establish peat-forming mosses and improve water quality by slowing down and holding water for longer periods, reducing fire risk and supporting the sequestration of carbon.
Natterjack Toad - monitoring of historical breeding sites.	The installation of bioacoustics equipment to monitor presence / absence on historical sites at Torver and Suberthwaite Commons (and Solway).	**Amphibian and Reptile Trust**; LDNPA Natural England Solway National Landscape	FiPL	Nature Recovery Strategy Cumbria LNRS	Data analysis in progress. Roll out to other sites in LDNPA (and Solway) in 2026/27 and beyond.
Rusland Water Vole Recovery Project	Establishment of a network of smart rafts in the Rusland Valley as part of a wider project funded by the EA and involving Cumbria Wildlife Trust and the John Strutt Foundation that aims to eradicate American Mink populations at landscape scale in the South Lakes to support the recovery of Water Vole populations. area covering around 1880 ha and involving 14 land holdings.	**Volunteer led** working in collaboration with landowners and farmers. LDNPA John Strutt Foundation Cumbria Wildlife Trust Natural England Environment Agency	FiPL	Nature Recovery Strategy Cumbria LNRS	Up to 21 mink rafts and traps installed in the Rusland Landscape. The trap network aims to eradicate 90% of mink in the next 2 years. Future outputs include total eradication of mink populations leading to the recovery and restoration of local water populations.

Lake District Charr Recovery & Management (LD-CHARM) Project	To review the state of knowledge and develop new monitoring and assessment protocols for Windermere. Generate data on population genetics of the Windermere population (including any differentiation among the different races), and how it fits into a UK context. *(Project in progress*)	**Freshwater Biological Association;** LDNPA Environment Agency Natural England UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology University of Hull University of Glasgow Westmorland & Furness Council University of Highlands and Islands Institute of Fisheries Management Blueprint Subsea Echo view	LDNPA Species Recovery Fund (NE) Species Restoration Fund (W&F)	Nature Recovery Strategy Cumbria LNRS	The development of innovative and non-lethal survey methods using sonar and eDNA methods to tell us more about how the condition of Windermere charr population. Production of conservation plans to help save the species from extinction in Windermere.

In addition to these outlined specific delivery project activities, we have carried out a range of additional activities to benefit biodiversity as detailed in Sections 3.3 to 3.5.

3.3 Delivery of the Farming in Protect Landscape Programme

Our delivery of the Defra-funded Farming in Protected Landscape Programme has supported a wide variety of projects that have benefitted biodiversity through directly supporting actions as well as engaging farmers, land managers and schools. FiPL support has reached over 500 farm businesses. In the first 4 years of the scheme (April 2021- March 2025), we supported:

- 10,033 trees planted to support biodiversity and landscape resilience
- 6 ponds created or restored to support wetland habitats and wildlife
- 9 projects to protect and improve rivers, streams and other water bodies
- 2,553 metres of hedgerows planted
- 24 schools engaged within the area and 4 schools engaged outside
- 10 new farm groups created and 18 existing groups strengthened
- 16 projects to help reduce flood risk and protect communities.

Data for April 2025 to December 2025 is not available at the time of publication due to administrative timetables for the FiPL programme.

3.4 Management of the Lake District National Park Partnership

Through managing Lake District National Park Partnership delivery, we facilitate collaborative working within the National Park, focused on key shared objectives. Since 2020, the National Park Partnership has supported Partners and others to:

- Increase woodland cover by at least 967ha[2]
- Since 2020 approximately 2519ha of peatland has undergone restoration work.
- Translocate 29 pine marten from Scottish Highlands to South Cumbria
- Translocate over 8,000 freshwater pearl mussel at multiple river sites across the Lake District
- Deliver the Wild Deer Management Strategy
- Establish 15 blended finance projects, including 4 Landscape Recovery Projects
- Maintain Countryside Stewardship High Tier scheme support for over 50% of the national park area.

[2] Based on National Forest Inventory Data for the period April 2021-March 2025

3.5 Considering and contributing to other strategies and initiatives

We work to coordinate with a range of other public bodies and partnerships, including through the Lake District National Park Partnership as well as many other forums to support other biodiversity strategies and initiatives.

Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Lake District National Park Authority was key partner in the development and production of the Pilot Cumbria LNRS, published in 2021. We have used this strategy to prepare the first Lake District National Park Partnership Nature Recovery Plan and influence the delivery of Farming in Protected Landscapes project for nature themed projects.

During the time between the Pilot and development of the first statutory LNRS, the Lake District National Park Authority worked with partners in the Core LNRS Group to prepare for the preparation of the statutory LNRS. This included:

- Developing methodology for selecting priority species
- Creating an outline project initiation plan to deliver the development and preparation of the LNRS
- Scoping the stakeholder and engagement plan
- Packaging these documents to hand to the Responsible Authority

The Lake District National Park Authority was a Supporting Authority to Westmorland and Furness Council, the Responsible Authority, throughout the development and production of the Cumbria LNRS, published in November 2025. We supported, contributed, skills, experience and knowledge, the equivalent of a 1.5 FTE member of staff, in these LNRS Partnership groups:

- Project Board
- Core project team
- Steering Group
- Species Group
- Stakeholder planning and engagement
- Farming Group
- Spatial Mapping

Love Windermere

The LDNPA is a key partner in the Love Windermere Partnership. The Love Windermere Partnership brings together a diverse range of organisations from the public, private, and

third sectors, all committed to improving and protecting Windermere's water quality. Though phosphorous in Lake Windermere has significantly decreased since the 1990s, continued nutrient inputs and rising water temperatures are resulting in continuing water quality challenges. The LDNPA leads the Land Management workstream of this partnership, a group of organisations working to improve our collective understanding of diffuse pollution and help develop a suite of interventions that will reduce catchment run-off. Initiatives include citizen science, farmer and land manager awareness and education, direct interventions to land, and working to secure private funding streams for nature-based solutions to water challenges. Land-based solutions often offer multiple benefits for biodiversity, both in supporting improved water quality across the catchment and in delivering terrestrial habitat enhancements.

Catchment Partnerships

The LDNPA is a member of all 3 catchment partnerships that cover the Lake District National Park area – West Cumbria, Becks to Bay (South Cumbria) and Eden. Through these partnerships we coordinate with other member organisations to identify opportunities and undertake activity that will protect and enhance the environment through catchment specific focus. Each catchment partnership operates in slightly different structures, but they all are making substantial progress both in stimulating activity on the ground (e.g. Bassenthwaite Lake Sediment Project, see Section 5.3) and engaging communities with the importance of healthy water ecosystems (e.g. the Lakes Biosecurity Priority Areas Project).

Protected Sites Strategy Pilot – South Cumbria Lowland Peatland SSSIs

LDNPA is a partner in the above pilot working under an MOA with Natural England and Cumbria Wildlife Trust. The aim is to collaborate with landowners, managers, and farmers in Duddon Mosses, Rusland Valley Mosses, and Nichols Moss to address barriers to peatland restoration with a focus on developing solutions that foster strong partnerships, restore natural processes, and secure financial resources for enhancing the condition of these protected sites. The LDNPA owns or leases the majority of Rusland Moss NNR.

The outputs of the pilot will influence the Rusland Moss NNR Management Plan, currently in production, and will inform how we identify funding and work with adjacent landowners, farmers and communities to manage the site both internally and through the management of the wider external catchment.

County Wildlife Site Review

Working with partners from Westmorland and Furness Council, Cumberland Council, Forestry Commission, National Trust, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and North Pennines National Landscape to re-establish a working and updated Cumbria County Wildlife Sites (CWS) programme that will provide the best available evidence for the Cumbria Wildlife Sites (CWS) system that supports the delivery of the LNRS, Nature Recovery Plans and multiple programme delivery in the county as a core part of and LNRS data-base, creating monitoring frameworks, local development planning and BNG and a basis for Natural Capital Investment.

Local Nature Partnership Data and Evidence Group

Working with partner organisations to develop a shared data standard and reporting mechanism that increases the quality and quantity of species and habitat data held by CBDC and the Partnership and provides means of monitoring the delivery of the LNRS and nature recovery targets.

Outputs will include a recognised framework for recording, sharing and reporting data to inform the delivery of LNRS and Nature recovery targets which will be used for our own internal reporting and support documents such as the Local Plan, State of the Park Report, PLTOF and 30 x 30 monitoring.

Local Nature Partnership Nature Recovery Group

Its purpose is to support bigger, better, more joined up delivery of nature recovery in line with the Lawton Principles to create a Nature Recovery Network (NRN) across Cumbria. development of landscape, habitat, and species projects, aligning with the data and evidence working group, Cumbria LNRS priorities, and other cross-sector plans/priorities.

The group provides strategic leadership and coordination to advance LNRS priorities through the identification of gaps, overlaps, and future project requirements, alongside the development of a collaborative pipeline of project and innovations. Practical tasks include the systematic review of evidence and monitoring of progress, while addressing data needs and enhancing mapping and monitoring tools. It also facilitates effective communication and partnership working by advising on integrated messaging, establishing specialist sub-groups when needed, engaging subject matter experts, and promoting best practice to support collective delivery.

National Nature Reserves Strategy Advisory Group

The NNR Strategy was developed by NE to increase the benefits of NNRs for 21st century conservation, environmental research, and people. The strategy aims to demonstrate high-quality environmental outcomes, provide places for people through access, interpretation, and direct participation, and increase the range and variety of engagement opportunities. The advisory group brings together different organisations that manage NNRs to advise on the delivery of the NNR Strategy. The LDNPA represent Protected Landscapes.

Wild Deer Management Strategy

Working with partner organisations to develop and deliver the Lake District Wild Deer Management Strategy. The Strategy has been developed by the Lake District Wild Deer Management Strategy Steering Group. The steering group is made up of representatives from the following organisations with either the expertise and / or statutory responsibility for managing wild deer: Natural England, Forestry Commission, Forestry England, North Lakes Red Deer Group, Cumbria Connect, National Trust, United Utilities and facilitated by the Lake District National Park Authority.

Outputs include the following:

- A better understanding of the position of all species of wild deer in the Lake District National Park.
- To respond to the Government's evolving deer management strategy, and to prepare a LDNP Deer Management Strategy.
- To improve the effectiveness of all Wild Deer Management Groups operating within the LDNP and to better co-ordinate activity to deliver necessary actions identified in the LDNP Deer Management Strategy.
- To secure improved resources for all LDNP Wild Deer Management Groups and to champion interventions that promote sustainable deer management.

Arctic Alpines Project

- The LDNPA, British Mountaineering Council and National Trust maintain the operation of two remote weather stations at Great Side and above Red Tarn in the Helvellyn range to provide data for ice climbers. Winter climbing routes pass through areas of high value to arctic–alpine plants and climbing in unsuitable conditions can cause significant damage. By installing turf temperature sensors, the project ensures climbers have clear information on whether the turf is sufficiently frozen and securely bonded to the rock before they proceed. This

helps to safeguard threatened arctic–alpine species on the high crags of the Helvellyn range, such as alpine mouse-ear, alpine cinquefoil and purple saxifrage are expected to benefit from gradual population increases.

South Cumbria Pine Marten Recovery Project (SCPMRP)

SCPMRP is a regional partnership of public and private sector organisations led by the University of Cumbria which aims to recover pine marten populations in south Cumbria using translocation methods. The first cohort of 13 pine martens, trapped under licence in the Scottish Highlands, was released in Grizedale Forest and on Graythwaite Estate in September 2024 and a second release of up to 16 animals completed in the autumn of 2025. The LDNPA have provided support, guidance and advice, including seeking funding to deliver a pioneering, drone-focused approach to support the pine marten translocation pilot in the Lake District, using thermal imaging, radiotelemetry, and onboard real-time wildlife tracking. The project will help inform and support the delivery of the Cumbria CLNRS: Priority 4: Safeguarding our habitats and species; and Priority 27: Species recovery.

Cumbria Water Vole Recovery Working Group

The Water Vole Recovery Working Group is a regional partnership of public and private sector organisations led by natural England which aims to coordinate the recovery and reintroduction of water voles in Cumbria, including monitoring and mink eradication. The project will help inform and support the delivery of the Cumbria CLNRS: Priority 4: Safeguarding our habitats and species; and Priority 27: Species recovery.

Cumbria White Tailed Eagle Steering Group

The Cumbrian White-Tailed Eagle Project has been exploring the concept of bringing white-tailed eagles back to the Cumbrian landscape. The project is hosted by the Cumbrian White-Tailed Eagle Steering Group, made up of organisations including the University of Cumbria, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, The Lifescape Project, RSPB, the Wildland Institute and the Lake District National Park Authority alongside local estate owners and managers. A pre-feasibility study was undertaken in 2023, and following this the project has been working on a social feasibility study (ongoing). The white-tailed eagle is one of the 21 prioritised species highlighted in the opportunities for restoration, reinforcement, or reintroduction in the Lake District National Park Partnership Nature Recovery Plan.

4 Our future actions

In this section we outline the actions we plan to take over the next 5-year period, on our own or in partnership, to comply with the biodiversity duty.

4.1 The LDNPA Organisational Strategy

Our Organisational Strategy, as outline in Section 3, will continue to apply for the duration of the next 5 year Biodiversity Duty Reporting period.

4.2 Our Business Plan 2025-2028

Our current Business Plan 2025 – 2028 is set out in the context of the organisational strategies priorities. These are the current actions set that we will take over the remaining three years of the business plan:

Priority: Climate Action

- On track to achieving net zero by supporting Cumbria's 2037 ambition and adapting to climate change.

Action 1: Achieving Net Zero as a National Park

- Lead efforts to deliver park-wide carbon reductions to achieve net zero by 2037 through the Partnership's Plan and our Natural Environment programme board.

Action 2: Climate Change Adaptation in the National Park

- Lead efforts to deliver park-wide adaptation activities through the Partnership's Plan and our Natural Environment programme board

Action 3: LDNPA Carbon Reduction and Sequestration

- Reduce Authority carbon emissions to net zero by March 2030 (on a scope 2 basis). Expand monitoring to move towards scope 3. Deliver our carbon offsetting programme.

Priority: Farming and Nature Recovery

- Our natural environment, wildlife and resilience to climate change are strengthened. Sustainable farming is central to a culture and nature rich landscape, community and economy.

Action 4: Farming and Nature Recovery

- Lead the Partnership's focus on delivering the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023, facilitate a fair transition for farming, contribute to the 30x30 ambition and

the Partnership's Nature Recovery Plan. Deliver priority projects through our Natural Environment programme board.

The next Business Plan will be developed in order to support continued progress on these actions and the below plans from 2029 onwards.

4.3 Our land

Specifically, in relation to land (and waterbodies) we own, as captured in our Sustainability Strategy over the next 5 years we plan to:

- Complete management plans for our most significant green properties
- Undertake full natural capital assessment for our green estate
- Work with our Commoners and other tenants to ensure that suitable public or private funding agreements are in place to secure future positive management that will deliver biodiversity benefits.

In addition, in 2026, the Bassenthwaite Lake Sediment Project will be taking actions to reduce the sediment loading of the lake. By using sediment finger printing to facilitate the identification and apportionment of sediment contributions from different land uses in the Bassenthwaite Lake catchment. In addition, we will be conducting structured interviews with farmers / landowners to identify attitudes towards the land use change required to reduce sediment loading. This project will be being delivered in partnership with Rothamsted, West Cumbria Rivers Trust, Natural England, Environment Agency. Addressing the water quality of Bassenthwaite Lake NNR and SSSI is vital for the future of the habitat and the species that rely on it, and we will continue to work beyond 2026 to securing future funding for further work to benefit Bassenthwaite Lake.

4.4 The whole National Park

In relation to the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy we plan to:

- Integrate the local nature recovery strategies into the production of the next Lake District National Park Partnership Plan 2026 - 2031
- Integrate the local nature recovery strategies into the next Local Plan Review, so that areas of greatest potential for nature recovery can be better reflected in planning decisions.
- Use this to incentivise how biodiversity net gain is calculated to encourage taking action where the local nature recovery strategy identifies it as being most beneficial.

- Align projects and funding applications for specific activities that local nature recovery strategies are expected to propose locations for that will assist with delivery of the actions in the Lake District National Park Partnership Plan.
- Utilise the LNRS in current Farming in Protected Landscapes project delivery and any future iteration if the opportunity exists
- Update the existing Lake District National Park Partnership Nature Recovery Plan to integrate and align it to the Cumbria LNRS.
- Use the LNRS to guide the prioritisation of projects that can be delivered through Nature Net Gains, the special purpose vehicle for nature-based finance in Cumbria
- Use it as a material consideration in our Local Plan Review, as well as exploring how we embed LNRS Priorities into Spatial Planning, strengthening Biodiversity Net Gain delivery and Nutrient Neutrality and collaborating across Cumbrian administrative boundaries to align policy, strategy and delivery across the landscape.
- Use LNRS mapping to support the LDNPA property asset management review, determining development management decisions and using LNRS mapping to model opportunities for woodland carbon.
- We will align and integrate the monitoring for the Lake District National Park Partnership Plan 2026-31 (see below) to the LNRS monitoring and evaluation framework.

In our next management plan (currently out for consultation) we intend to set long-term (2051) ambitions to guide our activity in coming years. Many of these will support us in delivering our biodiversity duty.

To deliver these Ambitions we have set clear, targeted Objectives for the next five years.

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

Focusing on objectives of relevance to our biodiversity duty, over the next five years (subject to consultation) we will:

Deliver nature's recovery through:

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

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

- reducing pollution and restoring freshwater habitats.

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

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

Help rural communities to be sustainable and vibrant by:

- …
- Reducing visitor pressures on communities, landscapes, and the environment

Improve the viability and resilience of farms by:

- Enhancing the provision of farm advice through a joined-up network of farm advisors
- Increasing the adoption of nature-friendly farming practices
- …

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

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

5 Biodiversity Net Gain

In this section we outline the actions we've carried out as a planning authority to meet biodiversity net gain (BNG) obligations, details of biodiversity net gains resulting, or expected to result, from biodiversity gain plans we have approved, and how we plan to meet biodiversity net gain obligations in the next reporting period.

5.1 This period: 2021-2025

Development management

To meet our Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) obligations, our Development Management team have:

- Developed a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) relating to BNG and wider considerations. This SPD also requires that retrospective applications, which are currently exempt from mandatory BNG, deliver an equivalent gain to prospective applications
- Indicated use of draft Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) to inform strategic significance until the Statutory LNRS was published and adopted on 07/11/2025.
- Developed local validation requirements for planning applications with regard to BNG.
- Where applicable, implemented further validation requirements including: a completed Statutory Biodiversity Metric with no errors, pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat, baseline date and degradation statement, identification of irreplaceable habitats and a site plan, to scale, showing baseline habitats.
- Once validated, metric calculations, mitigation hierarchy and Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) reviewed and determined whether on-site gains are significant or whether off-site units are required.

Biodiversity Gain Plans

- We have approved 10 applications to discharge the mandatory condition requiring the submission of a biodiversity gain plan prior to commencement of development. We have refused no applications and there are two currently under consideration at of 4 February 2026.
- The approved plans if implemented are expected to result in an increase of 3.0937 habitat units and 0.7464 hedgerow units.

Our Land

To meet our BNG obligations, our Strategy and Partnerships team have:

- Undertaken BNG baselines on 6 properties, covering 178.2Ha of land
- Assessed the above sites for viability of potential BNG uplifts, concluding that 4 are not suitable to progress at this time.

- Moved forward to habitat management and monitoring planning (HMMP) with support of the UK Nature Accelerator for 2 of the sites covering 36.2ha and estimated to deliver 81.68 biodiversity units to the market.
- Participated in round 2 of The UK Nature Accelerator, supporting our team to produce an investment case and cashflow model for our BNG projects. The purpose of which is to trial an investment type approach to nature restoration on our property.

Third Party Land and Cumbria BNG market

In order to meet our BNG obligations, our Strategy and Partnerships team have:

- Achieved Responsible Body status in January 2025, to facilitate development of off-site BNG provisions
- Run two calls for nature sites for the purposes of BNG, delivering free pre-feasibility assessments, training and project support to local landowners, resulting in one secure BNG site and four more in legal process.
- Supported Two Community Interest Companies to understand potential benefits of BNG to their communities and members
- Run farmer and developer training sessions

Supported development of “Nature Net Gains”, a partnership hybrid habitat bank and brokerage owned by LDNPA, Westmorland and Furness Council, Cumberland Council and The Cumbria Wildlife Trust with the purpose of stimulating the local BNG market. Working with these partners, we have been able to secure investment support from The Local Investment in Natural Capital (LINC) fund, supporting us to pump prime delivery of BNG supply in Cumbria.

5.2 The next reporting period: 2026-2030

Development management

To meet our BNG obligations in the next reporting period, our development management team aims to:

- Publish local guidance and thresholds on significant on-site gains
- Publish online guidance to support developers in delivery of BNG
- With support of the planning policy team, update SPD to reflect adoption of new Cumbria LNRS for the purposes of determining strategic significance
- Undertake review of planning permission subject to BNG to inform estimation of future resource burden on the service

- Monitor on-site BNG conditions and where applicable, enforce on non-compliance
- Undertake an updated study on demand for off-site BNG in the Local Authority area

Our Land

To meet our BNG obligations in the next reporting period, our Strategy and Partnerships team aims to:

- Undertake further BNG baselines on LDNPA properties covering 100Ha (subject to securing required funding)
- Assess the above sites for viability of potential BNG uplifts
- Moved forward to habitat management and monitoring planning for those which are suitable
- Bring the two existing sites with HMMP's to market readiness, supporting local provision of off-site units

Third Party Land and Cumbria BNG market

To meet our BNG obligations in the next reporting period, our Strategy and Partnerships team aims to:

- Actively secure sites through the LDNP's Responsible Body Service
- Release guidance for prospective habitat bank providers on delivering BNG within a Cultural Landscape
- Run a further call for nature sites for the purposes of BNG, supporting local landowners with pre-feasibility assessments, training and project development.
- Support at least two Community Interest Companies to realise benefits of BNG
- Run further farmer and developer training sessions
- Support incorporation of "Nature Net Gains", and work with the special purpose vehicle to stimulate the local BNG market and deliver LNRS aims.