

LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP WITHIN NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK

Current Land Uses

Today there are three main land uses within Northumberland National Park:

1. Farming: 81,106 hectares (ha.) Total Park Area:104,949 ha.
2. Military: 22,900 ha.
3. Woodland and Forestry: 22,745 ha. (NB. The three land uses may overlap.)

(Source: Farming and Woodland and Forestry from Taylor, J C (1991): 'Landscape Change in the National Parks of England and Wales, Vol V111: Northumberland' produced by Silsoe College for The National Parks and the Countryside Commission. Military from Map Info tables of OTA boundary)

1. Farming

The predominant agriculture in Northumberland National Park is upland hill farming with the production of lambs being the main source of income, although some cattle are bred. Each farm's acreage is divided into "Outbye" and "Inbye" land. The Inbye is fertilised or drained grassland that is often mown and made into silage to provide winter feed for the livestock. Inbye comprises about 18% of farmland. The remaining 82% of land is Outbye, including the open moorland over which the sheep roam.

There are about 220 farms in the Park, with an average size of 560 ha. This varies with the terrain: in the uplands of the Cheviots the farms average 1,205 ha (mainly sheep), whilst in the Hadrian's Wall area where there is more improved land and cattle farming, the average size is 293 ha. 50% of farmland is owned by four large landowners: the Duke of Northumberland, the Ministry of Defence, Lilburn Estates and the College Valley Estates. A single farm may have been tenanted by several generations of the same family.

(Source: 1999-2000 Farm Survey data)

2. Military

Northumberland has seen a great amount of war-like activity over the centuries since the Roman invasion. The most modern phase began in 1911 when the Ministry of Defence (MoD) bought a large area of Redesdale as an artillery range. This area was extended during World War 2 and is the second largest live firing range in the UK. There are 31 tenanted farms within the Otterburn Training Area (OTA). The MoD encourages the use of public Rights of Way on at least 90 days each year when there is no live firing. OTA is used for infantry training, manoeuvres, rifle, machine gun and mortar firing, and demolitions. Aircraft and helicopters use the OTA for live firing and bombing. OTA is used for on average 274,000 man training days each year.

3. Forestry

Since 1956, when the National Park was designated, the afforested area has doubled to almost 20% of total area, mainly located between 200m and 450m above sea level. Of this 19,062 ha. are managed by Forest Enterprise. The Forest Park enjoys open access for the public, and Rights of Way that have been planted over are now being opened up. When these conifer trees (90% are sitka spruce) were first planted there was scant regard for the landscape they were to cover, but now, as these forests are yielding their first crop, the felling pattern is taking account of the landscape. This is resulting in less harsh outlines and more sympathetic planting with open spaces and broadleaved trees being incorporated. Large scale forestry planting

ceased in the 1970's and the trend now is to remove coniferous plantations where they were planted in inappropriate locations.

Land Ownership

Northumberland National Park is not owned by the nation. There are a number of different individuals and organisations who each own part of the total of 104,949 ha.

Private ownership	57%	National Trust	1%
MoD	23%	National Park Authority	0.2%
Forest Enterprise	19%		

(Source: Northumberland National Park Authority Management Plan: 3rd Review: Framework Document)

Natural Habitats

The main habitat types within the National Park are:

1. Unimproved grassland 33,146 ha.
2. Heathland 20,578 ha.
3. Mire 5,195 ha.
4. Broadleaved semi-natural woodland 807 ha.

(Source: Northumberland National Park Phase 1 Habitat Survey 1992)

There are three National Nature Reserves (NNR), one RAMSAR site, no Special Protection Areas (SPA), four candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) and 32 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); a total of 11,856 ha. There are a further 38 sites designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance which have some level of protection covering 11,064 ha.

Settlements

Northumberland National Park does not contain any settlements larger than a village. The total population is 1,936, which is starkly contrasted with other National Parks: The Norfolk Broads, the next smallest, has 5,876 and others of comparable area e.g. Dartmoor has 33,552. Consequently there have been only a few small expansions of residential areas.

(Source: 2001 Census, [Key Statistics for Local Authorities]. Crown copyright)

Rights of Way

All roads within the National Park are either single track or single carriageway. Only three roads carry significant volumes of traffic:

- B6318 Military Road which runs along the Hadrian's Wall corridor,
- the A68 which joins the A1 corridor with Jedburgh and Scotland via Redesdale,
- and the C211 road along the River North Tyne which links Tyneside with Kielder Forest.

There are approximately 1,077 km of Rights of Way within Northumberland National Park. These include the Pennine Way, St. Cuthbert's Way and those within the Otterburn Training Area that are closed to the public during live firing.

Historic Land Uses

Northumberland is an historic landscape. Originally almost the entire county was wooded, and the very fact that this woodland has disappeared is evidence that people have been supported by this landscape for thousands of years. There is plentiful evidence of human occupation since 2000BC; within the National Park are the sites of Bronze Age farms, an Iron Age hillfort, rigg and furrow field systems, numerous Roman remains, mediaeval abandoned villages and unique fortified farmhouses (or Bastles) and more recent industrial archaeology such as limekilns and a Victorian workmen's hut. In addition to the 362 scheduled monuments within the Park, there is the World Heritage Site of Hadrian's Wall, of which the most impressive section, 43 km long, lies within the National Park.

10/03 SAH