



Corporate Plan

2016 – 2017

The Corporate Plan identifies the performance of the Authority in the previous year and sets the priorities for the current year 2016/17.

These key actions are matched against our ability to deliver and are cascaded into team and individual staff programmes of work.

June 2016

Our Values

In Northumberland National Park Authority our corporate values are:

- Respect for each other
- Equality
- Collaborative and supportive working
- Trust and empowerment
- Communicating and Acting
- Strong, clear and inspiring leadership

Our Culture

In order to address these values and to achieve its aims the Authority will adopt a culture which:

- Is open to and embraces change
- Actively supports personal and organisational learning and development
- Values innovation and achievement over systems
- Recognises and celebrates individual and team achievements
- Learns from what we do within a “no blame” culture, with performance management and review contributing positively to our learning
- Has open and honest communications where information is freely shared, feedback given and actions explained
- Where non-adherence to our Culture and Values is challenged and inappropriate behaviours are not tolerated

Statutory Purposes, Duty and Powers

PURPOSES - The role of the National Park Authority is clearly defined in our two statutory purposes which are to:

1. Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and
2. Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

DUTY In pursuing these two purposes, we are also required to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities **within** the National Park.

POWERS - The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016: provides a power for English national park authorities to do:

- anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of the carrying out of any of its functions

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Section 1. Executive Summary

Organisational Development

In December 2015 Northumberland National Park Authority was informed by Defra (the Authority's sponsoring government department) that its core government grant would be protected in real terms for the next 4 financial years. This provides a very sound platform on which the Authority can build. Therefore the review of the Corporate Plan performance in 2015/16 was the last year of implementing business changes to adjust to the 40% loss in core government grant. During this period the Authority has achieved a balanced budget, increased income generation from private sources including its own enterprise and voluntary and philanthropic sources. Throughout the period Authority maintained a focus on its core priorities, whilst developing new partnerships and initiatives including taking on responsibility for managing the Hadrian's Wall National Trail. Northumberland National Park Authority is ambitious and in 2015/16 the Authority signed contracts to formally embark on the largest ever project by a National Park Authority – The Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre.

The Authority will use the guarantee of protected core government funding to create a more enterprising and ambitious organisation. Key priorities will be determined in 2016/17> these priorities will be implemented from 2017/18. The scale of ambition and change will require a five to ten year change process. The changes required will result in new ways of work and these changes will be implemented using the Authority's Organisational Development Strategy to we become:

1. An Expert Organisation. Attracting, retaining, supporting and developing expertise, which is valued both within and outside the organisation and which enables delivery, of our stated priorities, both directly and through others; and
2. Support new approaches and emerging challenges through effective workforce planning.

The National Park Authority now employs 51 full-time equivalent staff posts and is recruiting 8 new full-time equivalent staff posts in 2016/17.

Prioritising our work and managing the expectations of our partners, communities and service users remains critical exercise. The Authority's new priorities will be finalised in September 2016 following discussion at two member policy conferences and including dialogue with key partners and consultation with staff and volunteers.

Budgets

The provision of a protected core government grant for the medium-term is enabling the Authority to plan its budgets across the medium term with a higher degree of certainty. This means the financial planning model is more able borrow funds on a business by business case with a higher degree of certainty. In addition, the healthy balances created to manage the financing of the Sill can be allocated fully to the Sill knowing that they will not be needed for unforeseen circumstances such as a further round of staff downsizing. Recent projects to benefit from taking a more medium term approach to financial pay back include expanding the rural enterprise hub at Eastburn, Hexham and providing additional parking at the popular Housesteads site in the Hadrian's Wall area of the National Park.

The Authority has successfully readjusted to less core resource and is demonstrating it can deliver ambitious projects and first class performance in its priority work areas with limited resources. With more certain times ahead, the Authority's has a much better ability to maintain this level of performance and build on it in innovative ways.

Governance

Governance arrangements are continually enhanced and during the time of the Corporate Plan we will:

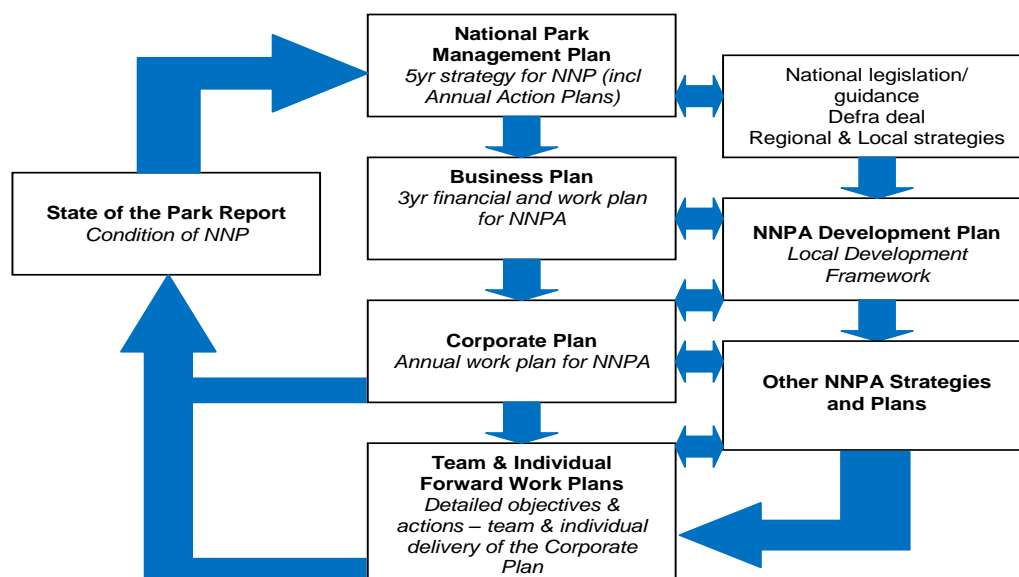
- provide more effective linkage between the two delegated sub-committees for the Sill (Project Board and Activities Board);
- consider more formal involvement of members from the Northumberland National Park Youth Cabinet;
- maintain the involvement of external partners, providers and service in the process of Review;
- members and senior officers will develop their understanding and work jointly to develop solutions often with expert external advisers including in 2016//17 a revised Risk Strategy; and
- Members will visit other national park authorities to learn from best practice.

The new powers of competency conferred on English national park authorities in 2016 provide the Authority with much greater freedom to operate in new ways to better support the principal purposes of conservation and public enjoyment of the national park. The use of these new powers will be actively explored in 2016/17 and used to inform the new three year Business Plan in September 2016.

Medium Term Business Plan

The Authority adopted a three-year Business Plan in March 2016 setting out its priorities in 2016/17 and associated investment strategy through to 2019. In early 2016/17 key partners and the Authority will agree on an action plan to achieve the aims of the new 5-Year National Park Management Plan. In September 2016 the Authority will set its Business Plan to define the prioritised work plan for the following 3 years. These prioritised work plans then cascade into individual work programmes for staff and teams of staff via the Corporate Plan.

The process is described in the diagram below explaining how the three-year Business Plan and the annual Corporate Plan form core elements of the Authority's planning and performance management framework and help guide the day to day work of the Authority.



Risk Management

The Strategic Risk Register defines the key risks to the delivery of the Authority's three-year Business Plan and is reviewed regularly. The register contains seven high level risks and the measures we will implement to mitigate them.

1. The National Park Authority lacks the capacity to complete major parts of the Corporate Plan
2. The Sill development interrupts the core business of the National Park Authority for the foreseeable future.
3. Development decisions damage the long-term special qualities of the National Park.
4. An inability to realise a step change increase in income generation for The Sill Activity Plan and other commercial income opportunities.
5. National Parks become less relevant to society and as a result less valued by the public and national policy decision makers.
6. Community infrastructure in the National Park fails to provide adequate support for businesses and residents.
7. The effects of climate change damage the environment and reduce the resilience of National Park businesses and communities.

A new Strategic Risk Register will establish in 2016/17 and will be based on risks to the successful completion of the next Business Plan 2017/18 to 2019/20. As part of this process the Authority will also set its risk appetite for the next three years. This process will align with the prioritising process.

Our Performance – Delivery Against Plan in 2015/16

In 2015/16 our performance against actions in our work programme showed a mixed picture with a small reduction in actions 'Achieved / Substantially Achieved' and a small improvement in 'Not Achieved'. Overall there was therefore an increase in the number of actions 'Partially Achieved'. In context, this demonstrates a continued improving trend in delivering the work programme from the post-budget reduction period where performance was significantly impacted (from 22% of actions not achieved to 4%). We achieved or substantially achieved 65% of actions (70%, 50%, and 60% in the previous three years) and partially achieved 31% (22%, 33%, and 18% previous three years). Only 4% of actions were not achieved (8%, 17%, 22% previous three years).

	Status of 2015/16 actions			
	Substantially Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved	
Aim 1	11	7	0	
Aim 2	6	1	1	
Aim 3	5	2	0	
Aim 4	4	3	1	
Aim 5	4	0	0	
Aim 6	6	4	0	
Total	36	17	2	
Total as a %	65%	31%	4%	100%

Performance Highlights from our Corporate Plan

The Outstanding performance of the year was starting the Sill construction which was achieved as a result of ensuring high quality design, a strong package of matched funding and a robust a flexible financing programme across the medium term. Members, staff and the design and construction teams had to all work in a very co-ordinated an effective manner to achieve this landmark outcome.

Aim 1 – Welcoming Park

- i. Construction of the Sill progressed to within 2 weeks of the agreed timetable following a difficult winter. Fundraising for The Sill was on target in overall terms. Despite delays in appointing additional Sill staff, the existing in-house team met all the year 1 targets set by the principal funders the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- ii. Excellent progress to the visitor infrastructure was made across the whole of the National Park including new facilities at Ingram, and a dramatic improvement in the quality of the rights of way network.
- iii. The new website and a new communication team created a greater focus on social media and website users and Facebook likes more than doubled in the year.
- iv. There was slow progress in developing new volunteering roles and growing volunteer involvement. Overall, volunteer days fell by 25% driven by our change in approach to rural development funding reducing supported / recorded community volunteering.

Aim 2 – A Distinctive Place

- i. As a result of several years of planning and negotiating, 2015/16 saw a dramatic improvement in Historic Environment outcomes. 12 scheduled ancient monuments were removed from the at-risk register's high / medium categories,
- ii. Improving the environmental quality off Sites of Special Scientific Interest has remained unchanged for the last three years. However, in 2015/16 all areas of these areas where successfully entered into the highest level of countryside stewardship.

Aim 3 – A Living Working Landscape for Now and The Future

- i. The value of tourism rose by 5.3% in a year to £158.3m driven by an increase in visitor numbers of 7.0% to 1.69m. Popular developments included the Sandstone Way cycle route, Dark Skies and the Hadrian's Wall bus which attracted 20,000 passengers.
- ii. The area of farmed land covered by agri-environment schemes remained at 100% with the area in the most beneficial 'higher level' rising to 86%. Schemes provided £4.6m of support to farmers and land managers.
- iii. The area of new native broadleaf woodland planning more than doubled in the year to 105ha equivalent to 100,000 trees. This demonstrates a commitment to increasing woodland cover in the National Park and the concept of 'the right tree in the right place'.

Aim 4 – Thriving Communities

- i. The review of rural development has led to a large reduction in the amount of grant aid the Authority awards to local communities and private businesses. Overall grants awarded fell from 47 to just 4.
- ii. The planning service continued to provide an excellent service with all national targets for speed of decision making being achieved, 98% of applications were approved supported by an improved pre-application advisory service.

Aim 5 – A Valued asset

- i. The key strategic achievement for the Authority was the timely and successful review of the National Park Management Plan. This key document will determine policy and resource priorities for the national park for the next 5 to 10 years.
- ii. Good partnership working has raised the National Park's profile in terms of land management (the Local Nature Partnership), rural development (Local Enterprise Partnership, and North East Farming and Rural Advisory Network), and tourism (Northumberland Dark Sky Park, and Northumberland Tourism).

Aim 6 - An Excellent Organisation

- i. Member and Staff development were a focus for action in the year including income generation, health and safety, and learning from others. Staff sickness fell to just 2.2 days per year per member of staff. This is half the national average, lower than the private sector and much lower than the public sector averages.
- ii. The Authority's three year income generation target was met in 2015/16 with the highest achieving area being the selling of specialist / knowledgeable staff time.

Performance Indicators

Our performance in 2015/16 against our 49 headline indicators showed that 29 were considered 'good' 9 'acceptable' and 5 'poor' whilst a further 6 were not available for publication as they were not due for collection or data was unavailable. The assessment is made taking into account longer term trends and benchmark information where it is available. Overall, 'good' performance outweighs 'poor' performance by a ratio of 6:1.

Performance Indicators - Assessment		
Good Performance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	29
Acceptable Performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	9
Poor Performance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5
Not available for publication*		6
*Not due for publication or data unavailable		

In terms of generating income and use of resources in 2015/16 the National Park Authority's financial performance was as follows:

	2015/16 Financial Performance			Net Cost Target
	Income Received	Expenditure Made	Net Cost Actual	
Aim 1	£3,048,300	(£3,178,000)	(£129,700)	(£63,800)
Aim 2	£134,800	(£806,300)	(£671,500)	(£701,500)
Aim 3	£31,100	(£468,300)	(£437,200)	(£449,100)
Aim 4	£16,800	(£297,200)	(£280,400)	(£341,100)
Aim 5	£61,500	(£274,100)	(£212,600)	(£210,200)
Aim 6	£17,000	(£327,000)	(£310,000)	(£377,400)
Total	£3,309,500	(£5,350,900)	(£2,041,400)	(£2,143,100)
Total as a % of Target	95%	95%	95%	

Our Forward Work Programme – 2016/17 Priority Actions

This Corporate Plan sets interim priorities and targets until the emerging Business Plan for 2017-2020 (incorporating revised/new corporate priorities) has been finalised. Our work programme remains ambitious however it is also recognised that both national and community needs and expectations remain high. Elements of the Defra 8 point plan for National Parks in England (2016-2020) have been incorporated where appropriate.

As an interim arrangement the four key priorities identified in the Business Plan 2013-2016 will be the same for 2016/17 as follows:

- Land Management;
- Rural Development;
- Engagement with young people through pathways to work and education; and,
- The Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre.

Northumberland National Park Authority is committed to focussing on those areas where it can best deliver its priority areas of work.

In terms of generating additional income and use of resources the National Park Authority's financial plan for 2016/17 is as follows:

	2016/17 Financial Plan		
	Income	Expenditure	Net Cost
Aim 1	£7,780,800	-£10,080,500	-£2,299,700
Aim 2	£91,100	-£630,200	-£539,100
Aim 3	£46,300	-£353,100	-£306,800
Aim 4	£31,500	-£299,200	-£267,700
Aim 5	£64,800	-£167,600	-£102,800
Aim 6	£28,300	-£281,100	-£252,800
Total	£8,042,800	-£11,811,700	-£3,768,900

In 2016/17 we aim to:

The detail contained within the forward work programme (Annex 1) can be summarised into 8 key areas of focus for 2016/17. The work programme for the year ahead is challenging as the Authority implements a major national project in addition to its existing core work. The Authority will be kept apprised of progress against the 8 key areas of focus through quarterly updates. The 8 areas are:

Land Management – We will continue to work towards the Natural Environment Vision for the National Park by working on land management at a landscape scale within and beyond the National Park. This will involve estate-wide and multi-farm approaches to land management and agri-environment schemes within the National Park. Beyond the Park it means working on projects and initiatives, such as Revitalising Redesdale, and through the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership to ensure investment in land management is directed into the National Park and ensuring connectivity with the wider landscape.

Rural Development – We will shift our focus on rural development within the National Park away from direct grant giving to supporting development of business and community initiatives and assisting in gaining access to external funding sources. This will involve working with key policy makers, funding partners and local enterprise to ensure investment is directed into the National Park.

The Sill – We will work towards the successful opening of The Sill as a nationally significant landscape discovery centre in summer 2017. We will complete the construction, fit-out, and interpretation to time, quality, and budget and further develop and implement an activity programme that achieves 10,200 activity days by the end of March 2017. We will utilise the opportunities presented by The Sill to significantly enhance our engagement with children

and young people. We will work with partners to develop the education, training, and events programmes to ensure content is specifically targeted at key audiences.

Income generation – We will seek to diversify the funding base of the Authority by embedding existing and developing new sources of income generation. We will continue to make the Authority less dependent on its core Defra grant by continuing to work on fundraising, estate management, trading, and sale of professional services, and specifically raising significant income from The Sill Activity programmes.

Strategic Planning – We will adopt and widely communicate the revised Northumberland National Park Management Plan. We will lead the Management Plan Partnership to ensure partners and stakeholders embed the aims within their own work. We will begin work on the review of the 'Local Plan' to ensure a strong policy framework is in place to guide future development within the National Park. We will undertake a fresh process of setting medium term priorities and strategy for the Authority.

Development Management – We will maintain the high standards achieved within the Development Management service. Continue with a positive and proactive approach enabling timely decisions and high quality development. We will maintain high levels of customer satisfaction and deliver ongoing service improvements.

Communications – We will continue to enhance both our internal and external communications. We will use the opportunity of the 60th anniversary to raise the profile of the National Park and the National Park Authority with the general public, visitors and key decision makers. We will continually raise awareness of The Sill to create an 'air of excitement and anticipation' for the opening. We will deliver internal and key partner communications to maintain high levels of staff, volunteer, member and partner understanding and engagement.

Border Uplands Demonstrator – We will host and play a key role in developing a Border Uplands Demonstrator project to test new approaches to environmental and cultural management and economic development on a cross (Anglo/Scottish) border basis. We will work closely with Defra, the Scottish Government and a number of key partners to deliver this programme.

Tony Gates - Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

June 2016

Section 2. Delivering the Vision – Our Previous Year’s Performance (2015/16)

Aim 1. A Welcoming Park

‘Our aim is to put people and their connections with the landscape at the heart of the National Park.’

	2015/16 Financial Performance				Net Surplus / (Cost) Target	Net Surplus / (Cost) Actual
	Income Target	Income Actual	Expenditure Target	Expenditure Actual		
Aim 1	£3,188,900	£3,048,300	-£3,252,700	-£3,178,000	-£63,800	-£129,700

The Sill: Unspoilt Landscapes, Inspiring People –

a) **Progress the Sill building construction project in 2015 to enable the centre to open in 2017.**

- Construction contracts awarded to plan and site handed over to the developer to plan. Construction project well advanced and close to plan. Including Progress Against Target:
 - Awarded the stage 1 contract by the end of April 2015 as planned;
 - Met the target by confirming the fixed build costs and awarded the construction contract by the end of August 2015 and let the contract in mid-September 2015;
 - Removed all operational and visitor centre materials from Once Brewed. Vacated the site in September 2015 – two weeks later than planned due to the Tour of Britain cycle event.

b) **Establish and develop philanthropic and private fundraising activities with the primary focus in 2015/16 to reduce the Sill funding gap.**

- Northumberland National Park Foundation established and registered with the Charity Commission. Philanthropic income 6 months behind target for Sill but ahead on other areas and Local Enterprise Partnership funding well ahead of target. Activity for fundraising from individuals was overall behind target. Including Progress Against Target:
 - Supported and developed five trustees of the Foundation in the role of project champions for the Sill and the National Park and appointed a President;
 - Worked with trustees of the Foundation and secured £400,000 by March 2016 – some 6 months later than planned;
 - Secure £1m from Local Enterprise Partnership funding by July 2015 – some 3 months ahead of target;
 - We did not establish a varied programme of fund raising activities in 2015/16 which should have included: seeking support from individual major donors; approaching charitable trusts and foundations; approaching companies; launching a legacy fund raising programme in autumn/winter 2015, and launching a public fund raising programme in early 2016;
 - We began preparing for a national high profile event which will take place in July 2016 as planned
 - We did develop ongoing fund raising relationships with a range of potential major donors to support both the Sill and the Authority more generally.

c) Establish the staff resources and practices for the Sill.

Sill Manager appointed but later than planned and new Events staff delayed a full year. Some progress with developing volunteer roles into the Sill business model.

Including Progress Against Target:

- Recruited Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre Manager by January 2016 some 6 months later than planned;
- We were unable recruit two Events Officers by September 2015 and these posts will be recruited in 2016/17 some 12 months later than planned;
- We partially developed volunteer roles to support the Sill activities programme including charging for walks, Limited recruitment of volunteers began as 'new roles' for The Sill are yet to be developed.
- Additional temporary staff were contracted to ensure the Sill project progressed as planned against major sponsors targets i.e. the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Local Enterprise Partnership.

d) We established alternative staff accommodation and visitor centre arrangements whilst the Sill is under construction.

A fully function alternative staff accommodation is up and running. This action provided the additional benefit of some important permanent improvements to the Walltown site. Including Progress Against Targets:

- We provided alternative operational staff accommodation at Walltown in September 2015;
- We completed the necessary construction work to enable the existing facilities at Walltown to enable temporary visitor centre accommodation to operate despite postponing the planned large scale developments until further market research had been received;
- The work to improve the water supply at Walltown providing a legacy of potable (drinking) water to the site was completed in time for the 2016 visitor season.

e) Implement the communications strategy for the Sill ensuring key messages are effectively communicated.

New publicity and fundraising publications have been developed and external media consultants have assisted in significant media presence for the Sill.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Significant increase in social media used to raise awareness of Sill activities with target audiences;
- Regular Sill awareness events and newsletters to keep local communities informed;
- Relationships with key educational bodies not progressed to the level planned.

f) Develop the new Sill Arts Programme to compliment the construction of the Sill.

The full Sill Arts Programme was achieved in the year with 5 artists commissioned to develop work and 1 young film maker engaged to document the process.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Simon Armitage has completed a series of poems inspired by the National Park and the 'Poems in the Air' mobile phone app is to be launched in summer 2016;
- A ceramics artist completed 10 community workshops, and two textile fellowships were completed with an exhibition of their National Park inspired work on display in the Queen's Hall in Hexham.

- g) Start delivery of the Sill Activity Plan achieving 5,500 engagement activities in 2015/16 working towards the target to engage people in 30,000 engagement activities (1,000 events) each year by 2019/20, 50% of which will be delivered by our local partner businesses as part of our commitment to sharing the opportunities that the project brings.**

There was also a good geographic spread of activities across and beyond the National Park with 23% of activity days achieved in the Hadrian's Wall and South Tyne area, 46% elsewhere in the National Park, and 31% outside of the boundary (outreach). Whilst this is a very encouraging start for the Activity Plan, the majority of activities were delivered by the Authority with more limited partner engagement, and income generation from activities was low. There is still significant work required to modify the activities offered to appeal more to non-traditional audiences, to develop the value proposition to generate greater income, and to develop business models for partner delivery.

Including Progress Against Targets

- 10,243 Activity Days were delivered against a target of 5,500
- All three programmes (Education, Events, Training) exceeding their year 1 targets

Youth engagement –

- h) Provide formal educational opportunities for young people, continuing the National Park Schools model with local schools and providing education packages for regional/national schools.**

The Sill Education Programme target was exceeded with 2,703 activity days achieved against a target of 2,000. However delays in recruiting education staff meant that planned actions to develop the formal education structures and courses were not achieved.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- The Ranger and Engagement teams delivered over 30 outreach sessions with local schools;
- A loan scheme for archaeological education resource packs was established;
- 12 sessions were delivered enabling 28 local school children to achieve Art Awards and John Muir Awards;
- However, two education initiatives with six regional schools were not developed and five focus groups with educational practitioners to inform the education programme were not conducted.

- i) Continue to provide training, work experience and career pathways opportunities for young people.**

The target to provide 10 career pathway and work experience opportunities for young people across the Authority was achieved and we have successfully retained a number of young people from these programmes within our volunteer service.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Four Young Volunteer Ranger placements were completed;
- A Newcastle University student from the 'Media, Culture and Heritage Centre' completed an 8 week placement on heritage interpretation and two further Newcastle University students completed an evaluation of National Park Week;
- Four young people completed the New Naturalist programme and one young person completed their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award;
- A number of school work experience placements were supported including two with the Ranger Team and one with our Design Officer.

j) Work with the Campaign for National Parks to deliver the third and final year of the Mosaic Youth Project to engage young people with National Parks.

- Virtually all champions and young people engaged through the project were from urban areas and there were many outdoor events delivered. There is some limited legacy with a young champion engaged in the National Park Youth Cabinet but overall legacy arrangements have been weak
- Including progress Against Targets
- 22 individual 'Champions' were engaged over the three years of the project against a target of 30.
 - The Champions engaged a further 318 young people against an original target of 600.

k) Develop engagement activities, partnerships and structures to enhance engagement with young people.

- There were some encouraging developments in this area such as the Sill Easter events programme being designed and marketed specifically at families and young people. Overall there is still significant work required to develop activities, partnerships and structures aimed at young people.
- Including Progress Against Targets:
- Regular Youth Cabinet activities were undertaken throughout the year including input into the Walltown site development consultation. However lack of a clear role and limited resources for managing the Cabinet presents a risk to successful continuation;
 - Events and exhibitions through the Arts project were delivered as planned, but it is unclear whether these were successful in engaging younger audiences;
 - We did work with three private sector Sill partners and Northumberland County Council Adolescent Services to deliver a residential activity in the Breamish Valley for 48 young people.

Visitor welcome and infrastructure –

l) Improve and maintain the Authority's recreation sites and undertake specific infrastructure improvement projects.

- Significant works were undertaken at the Authority's Bulby's Wood, Housesteads, and Walltown sites as well as managing the tenant arrangements at Rothbury and Ingram. However, the replacement of car park payment machines was not completed and has been carried over into the current work programme.
- Including Progress Against Targets:
- We continued to work with business tenants at the Rothbury and Ingram Centres. This involved market testing the Ingram centre and letting the tenancy to a new business in 2015 – Village Cottage Cafe. Shepherds Walks were provided with additional office space at Rothbury with a view to making the temporary expansion permanent in 2016;
 - Following permissions for the proposed development at Bulby's wood we completed the construction of the Bulby's Wood toilet and visitor facilities In August (1 month later than planned) within budget but we are still (1 year after commissioning) awaiting provision of a broadband supply from BT to make the new facilities fully functioning;
 - We completed the expansion of Housesteads car park extension by spring 2016 despite a 6 week delay due to archaeological finds. Although in time the work was £35,000 above budget in order to ensure effective recording and protection of a new nationally important archaeological find;

- We were unable to replace (modernise) 7 car park payment machines incorporating 'contactless credit card' technology to improve pricing/ticketing options to support income generation. This work will be undertaken in 2016/17.

m) Improve visitor welcome and orientation.

- Volunteers continued to provide a welcome and orientation service by leading or supporting activities. Volunteers delivered a programme of welcome patrols and public guided walks as well as solar and star gazing events.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- There was some, but limited recruitment of 'new' volunteers to the 'Welcome and Events' team as clear roles and requirements were established, partially due to delays in recruiting the Sill staff team;
- The Google Trekker project was completed and online imagery is embedded into the website;
- Information Points have been managed throughout the year with a new point established at Bulby's Wood following refurbishment of the site.

n) Continue to work with Natural England and the Highway Authorities to maintain National Trails and promoted walking and cycle routes within the National Park.

- The Authority continued to play an active role in the management of National Trails.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- The Authority continued to act as lead partner for the Hadrian's Wall Path. A full programme of grass cutting and maintenance was completed with support of a seasonal ranger and a team of 5 new maintenance volunteers;
- Maintenance priorities on the Pennine Way were identified and a number of small scale maintenance projects were completed over the winter with claims submitted to the lead partner (YDNPA);
- However, development of national guidance for outdoor challenge events with Natural England and other partners continues to be delayed.

o) Maintain the infrastructure for public access by maintaining and improving the rights of way network and open access.

- In 2015/16, 80% of rights of way surveyed were considered 'easy to use' and 100% signposted where they leave the road.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Rights of way condition surveys were completed in May and November;
- Two new bridges were installed at Threestoneburn and Alnham, the former used as a training exercise for volunteers, and additional funding was secured to replace the bridleway bridge at Fairhaugh which was washed out in the December floods;
- The Authority continued to host the Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF), completing a full recruitment exercise and establishing a new chair of the forum. The JLAF developed an action plan and is active on the Management Plan Partnership.

Activities and events –

p) Initiate the transition to 'The Sill' by delivering a programme of accessible activities and events targeted at engaging new and under-represented audiences.

- Overall numerical targets were exceeded by more than 100%. However, there is still significant work to be done to diversify the activities we offer and develop the value proposition to ensure our programmes are attractive to target audiences and capable of raising greater levels of income.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- The Sill Events programme delivered 6,801 Activity Days against a target of 3,000

- There was a full programme of 23 solar/star gazing activities including one business training event, but the International Dark Sky Park conference has been postponed until 2017 when the Sill centre is open;
- We delivered the three day National Parks Week event at Walltown achieving 580 activity days and three days of outreach at the Great North Museum (staff and volunteers) achieving 1,500 activity days.
- Volunteers delivered a programme of (weather affected) guided walks achieving approx. 550 activity days and we brought the Walks to Wellbeing health walk programme in-house achieving 80 activity days to this audience, although the disabled ramblers event didn't proceed as had been planned.
- There was strong programme in art events culminating with exhibitions at Bellingham and Hexham.

Marketing, website and social media –

q) **Ensure high quality marketing materials are produced and distributed to promote visits to the National Park.**

- A start has been made to develop audience specific design templates for all printed material and there has been closer control of marketing to ensure Sill and National Park brand consistency.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- There has been a significant increase in promotion through the website and social media and £4,000 of advertising revenue generated from the Visitor Guide;
- However there is still work to be done to develop image and video libraries for use in marketing and promotion, and on integrating the Sill and National Park brands.

r) **Ensure the newly launched National Park website is regularly updated with new visitor facing content and fully integrated with social media channels.**

- There has been a significant step change in usage of the Authority's website and social media channels in the past year since dedicated resource has been targeted in this area.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Content is regularly updated on the website with news, blogs and events;
- There has been a significant increase in new content and imagery compared to previous years and the Google Trekker project interactive imagery has been incorporated;
- Advertising space has been sold and a new online ticketing system has supported an increase in online sales for events;
- Social media channels are integrated into the homepage with all press releases, blog posts, events and officer project work being shared over our main channels of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram;
- Website users have increased by 121% from 39,000 to 86,000 in the last year whilst our Facebook following has increased by 191% and Twitter by 33%.

A Welcoming Park – Performance Summary

Indicator Title	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Assm't
National Park Centre satisfaction-effectiveness survey score	88.76%	78.00%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sill Activity Programme					
a) Activity Days – Target				5,500	
b) Activity Days – Actual				10,243	☑
c) Activity Days - % achievement against target				186%	☑
Website usage - unique users and user satisfaction					
a) Unique users	60,000	n/a	39,104	86,000	☑↑
b) % rating the website as 'very good' or 'excellent'	81.9%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Social media presence					
a) Number of Facebook friends/likes	1,170	2,083	3,254	9,460	☑↑
b) Number of Twitter followers	2,270	5,237	8,000	10,600	☑↑
Volunteer Days					
a) Number of volunteer days led by Northumberland National Park Authority	1,730	n/a	2,403	1,823	☐↓
b) Number of those days attended by 'under represented' groups	236	n/a	155	139	☐↓
c) Total "value" of volunteering (£)	£173,000	n/a	£255,450	£204,350	☑↑
Percentage of footpaths and other rights of way easy to use by the public					
a) % easy to use even though they may not follow the exact definitive line	66%	70%	71%	80%	☑↑
b) % easy to use that follow the exact definitive line	66%	70%	55%	80%	☑↑
c) % signposted where they leave the road	100%	92%	93%	100%	☑↑

☑ Good Performance ☐ Acceptable Performance ☒ Poor Performance
↑ Improving Trend = Static Trend ↓ Declining Trend

2. A Distinctive Place

'Our aim is to manage, conserve and enhance the distinctive natural and cultural qualities of the National Park'

2015/16 Financial Performance						
	Income Target	Income Actual	Expenditure Target	Expenditure Actual	Net Surplus / (Cost) Target	Net Surplus / (Cost) Actual
Aim 2	£132,900	£134,800	-£834,400	-£806,300	-£701,500	-£671,500

Protect and enhance the natural environment and landscape –

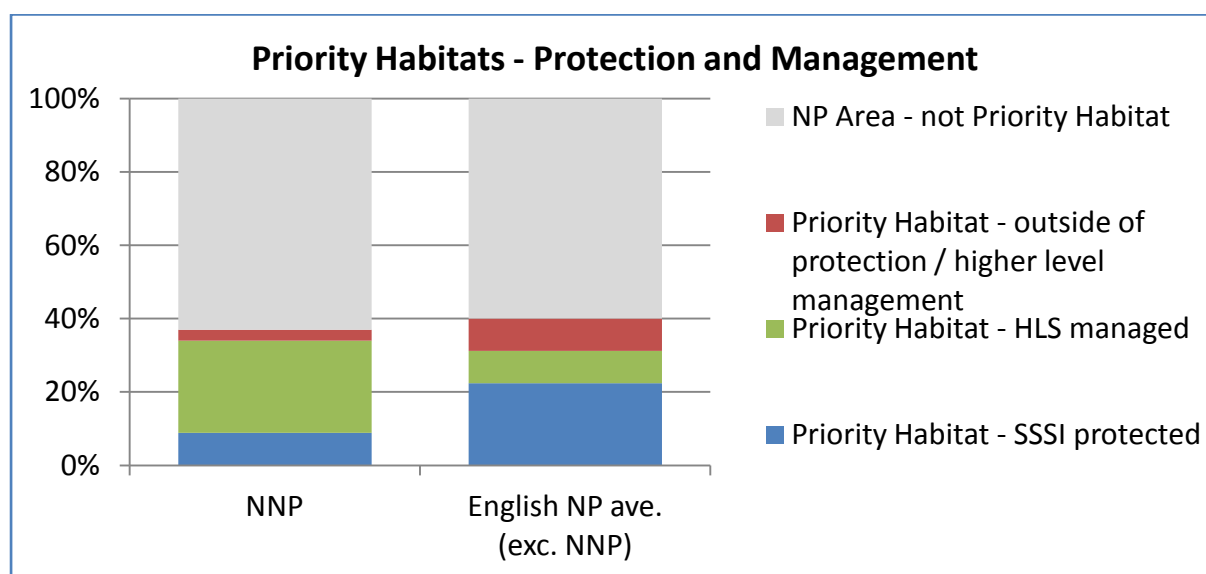
a) Undertake habitat improvement work to contribute towards the recently adopted Natural Environment Vision for 2035 and Biodiversity Action Plan targets.

We have completed significant habitat mapping work including 8 habitats for the entire Local Nature Partnership area securing £3k income. We also completed stewardship mapping to help target farms for entry into the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- 8 habitats mapped for the entire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) area;
- Contributed to a 'Natural Capital Investment Prospectus' for the LNP area;
- Delivered over 50 practical conservation and site maintenance projects supported with over 200 volunteer days;
- However work to map species rich grasslands and potential waxcap fungi sites was only partially completed.

The condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest remained static compared to the previous year with 29% considered 'favourable' and 69% considered 'recovering'. Data from 2013 highlights that a relatively low area of the National Parks 'priority habitats' are protected by SSSI designation compared to the English National Park average, but that the Authority and its partners have been successful in entering priority habitats into 'higher level' agri-environment schemes leaving a below average area left outside of protection or higher level management.



b) Undertake specific species work to contribute towards the recently adopted Natural Environment Vision for 2035 and Biodiversity Action Plan targets.

- The planned Black Grouse survey was not undertaken but replaced with Wader survey to help inform targeting for the new Countryside Stewardship agri-environment scheme supporting a number of farms to successfully enter the 'higher tier' of the scheme.
- Including Progress Against Targets:
- A Black Grouse survey was not undertaken;
 - We continued to coordinate the Northumberland Hen Harrier partnership;
 - Work progressed on developing a 'pollinator project' and updating a Bumblebee Atlas but was not completed.

c) Landscape improvement work.

- The Authority continued to coordinate the Border Uplands partnership and worked with the Forestry Commission on removal of significant areas of conifer forest at Threestoneburn and Uswayford.
- Including Progress Against Targets:
- Contributed to the successful 'Revitalising Redesdale' HLF bid for landscape improvement works;
 - Worked with Northern Power Grid to underground 4,000 metres of overhead power cable (against target of 5,000m).

Protect and enhance the historic environment –

d) Prepare and consult on a Historic Environment Plan for the National Park as part of the review of the National Park Management Plan.

- A new approach was agreed in the year to produce a Historic Environment Vision to mirror the approach taken with the Natural Environment Vision. However overall this area of work was not progressed as planned in the year.

e) Work with the Heritage at Risk volunteer group to monitor and maintain scheduled monuments in the National Park.

- A programme of prioritised surveys and practical conservation of monuments was undertaken in the year.
- Including Progress Against Targets:
- A new approach of volunteers 'adopting a number of monuments' has been implemented this year to improve consistency of recording and to develop relationships with landowners.
 - The long standing problem of electronically storing surveys and sharing the information between volunteers and English Heritage has been resolved.
 - Conservation work was completed at Harehaugh Hillfort, Hethpool, Torleehouse, and four monuments on Ilderton Dod Farm.
 - There was an overall improvement recorded in monument condition across the National Park continuing the trend since the project was first initiated.

f) Support a programme of community archaeology activities.

- There was ongoing work to support community archaeology groups and volunteer archaeologists contributed 19 activity/volunteer days to the Housesteads Roman road excavation.
- Including Progress Against Targets:
- 9 YAC events were delivered in 2015/16 contributing 106 activity days to the Sill Events programme;
 - Two modules of the Altogether Archaeology project were delivered contributing 60 activity days.

g) Support academic research on the historic environment of the National Park.

Strong links are being formed with Newcastle University in the area of heritage interpretation.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- One undergraduate 8 week placement and one postgraduate 9 month placement hosted in heritage interpretation from Newcastle University;
- Support to a Sheffield University PhD student undertaking research into the impact of the Otterburn Training Area on heritage.

h) Act as accountable body for the Roman Cavalry project (with key partners to lead on delivery).

We established a strong and legally binding partnership, operational and financial protocols and we are actively assisting with the planning of the Hadrian's Cavalry project for delivery in 2017.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- The Authority is acting as the accountable body for the project with a fully signed legally binding partnership legal agreement which minimizes risk to the Authority.
- A project Manager has been appointed and trained in the Authority's procedures and has secure access to timely financial monitoring information.

A Distinctive Place – Performance Summary

Indicator Title	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Assm't
% SSSI and NNR in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition in the National Park as a whole	99%	99%	99%	99%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
a) % area 'favourable'	28.5%	28.6%	29.4%	29.4%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
b) % area 'unfavourable recovering'	70.1%	70.0%	69.3%	69.2%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
% SSSI and NNR in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition in NNPA management	100%	100%	100%	100%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
a) % area 'favourable'	-	-	23%	23%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
b) % area 'unfavourable recovering'	-	-	77%	77%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
Number of Listed Buildings 'at risk' in the National Park	23	23	23	28	<input type="checkbox"/> ↓
a) Number of Listed Buildings 'at risk' rescued during the year	0	0	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/> =
b) % of Listed Buildings 'at risk' rescued during the year	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<input type="checkbox"/> =
Changes in Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) risk status					
a) Number in High risk category	48	52	53	52	<input type="checkbox"/> ↑
b) Number in Medium risk category	157	162	160	156	<input type="checkbox"/> ↑
c) Number in Low risk category	219	210	212	217	<input type="checkbox"/> ↑
a) Number of scheduled monuments 'at high or medium risk' conserved during the year (through NNPA actions)	15	0	1	12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↑
b) % of scheduled monuments 'at high or medium risk' conserved during the year (through NNPA actions)	3.5%	0.0%	0.2%	2.8%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↑

Good Performance

Acceptable Performance

Poor Performance

↑ Improving Trend

= Static Trend

↓ Declining Trend

Aim 3. A Living Working Landscape for Now and The Future

'We will help the National Park adapt to change by applying new approaches, together with traditional techniques'

2015/16 Financial Performance						
	Income Target	Income Actual	Expenditure Target	Expenditure Actual	Net Surplus / (Cost) Target	Net Surplus / (Cost) Actual
Aim 3	£57,300	£31,100	-£506,400	-£468,300	-£449,100	-£437,200

Sustainable land management for priority habitats –

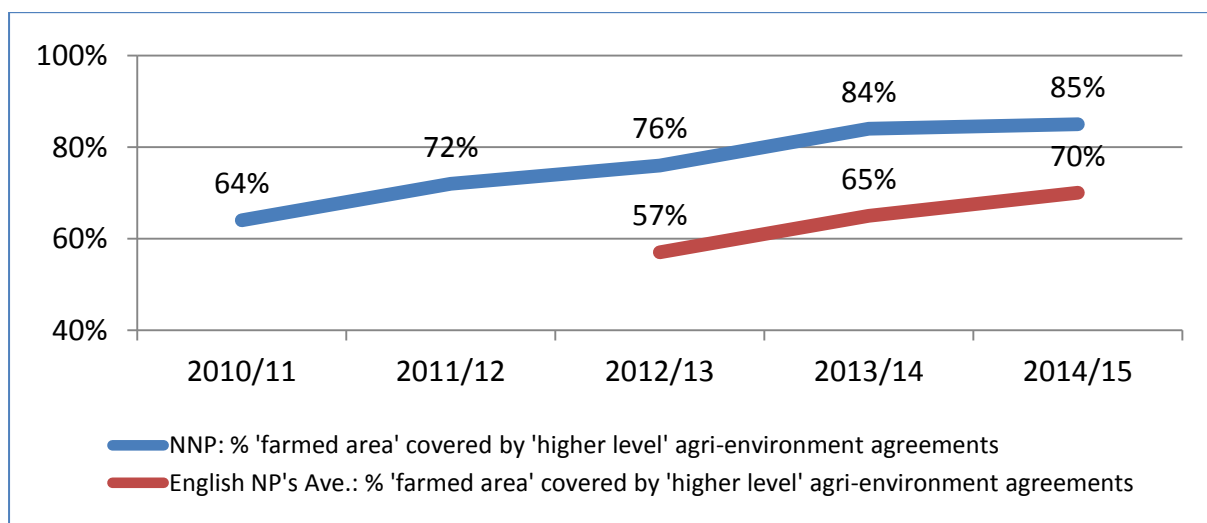
a) Work with land managers and Natural England to achieve sustainable land management which particular emphasis on the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

The Authority continued its approach to utilise agri-environment schemes to target environmental improvements.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- We reviewed 9 Environmental Stewardship agreements adding capital works to at least 5 agreements;
- Mapping work was completed to identify priority farms for inclusion in the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) and was used to prioritise bird surveys in spring 2015 to provide evidence to support applications;
- Work on bracken management plans and on 'pasture woodland planting' completed;
- Work on a multi-farm application for CSS was undertaken but ultimately not progressed and communication events for the new scheme were not progressed due to delays in the scheme launch.
- Also work on Simonside SAC for farm improvement plans and burning plans are delayed due to Natural England resourcing constraints.

Data from 2015 shows that 100% of the farmed area of the National Park is covered by agri-environment scheme management compared to the English National Park average of 86%. 85% of the farmed area is covered by agreements including 'higher level' management options compared to the National Park average of 70%. This demonstrates strong performance in our chosen approach to our land management priority.



b) Work in partnership with educational institutions and land managers to conduct research and facilitate information sharing.

A number of educational initiatives linked to the Sill have been completed in the area of land management.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Work continued with Newcastle University and other academics on wild goat research and on the cattle tracking project;
- A Key Stage 1 and 2 education pack related to cattle tracking was produced;
- Work has progressed on establishing a 'farmer led forum' as part of the Local Nature Partnership wide Higher Nature Value farming work.

High quality watercourses –

c) Work with the Environment Agency, Natural England, and rivers trusts to undertake works in river catchments to improve water quality.

We have continued to work on water improvement projects including using the 'water' element of the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS).

Including Progress Against Targets:

- The Authority successfully negotiated capital works using the 'water' element of the new CSS for 4 farms in the Breamish Valley, including work to improve sheep pens to reduce diffuse pollution;
- Work to improve the condition of the 'Roman Wall Loughs' and other 'moderate' condition water courses included installing two new crossing points and two volunteer tree planting projects with the Tyne Rivers Trust;
- We continued to coordinate the Tyne Catchment Partnership with arrangements in place for the partnership to become self sustaining.

d) Continue the Hill tracks project to reduce sediment pollution to watercourses.

Work continued on the project, but analysis of results to date and future funding by key partners are still awaited.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Monitoring of the hill track geo-textile trial continued including a survey by a PhD student studying similar trials in the North Pennines;
- Work to map hill tracks and their usage on two Estates has been completed and pre-application planning advice sort;
- However monitoring of water quality on priority sites in the Cheviot and Upper Coquetdale has stopped due to lack of partner funding, and full analysis of the results to date are still awaited.

Woodland –

e) Work with land managers to achieve sustainable woodland creation and management in the National Park.

A number of woodland and forestry policy and strategy actions were completed within the year as well as ongoing operational work.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Members 'Woodland and Forestry' Policy Conference held in April 2015;
- UK National Park Authorities 3 day 'Landscape and Woodland' training seminar held in September;
- Woodland planting schemes identified for 4 farms as part of the new CSS;

- Volunteers contributed to 5 practical maintenance projects in Authority managed (s.39) woodlands and were involved in a number of other woodland planting and maintenance projects;
- Methodology and maps to identify appropriate locations for plantation forestry have been developed and we have input into two Forestry Commission forest design plans and 10 private woodland management plans.

Sustainable development and climate change –

f) Support sustainable tourism and transport development in the National Park through partnership delivery.

A number of positive sustainable tourism and transport outcomes were achieved in the year.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Continued on the board of Northumberland Tourism to influence and develop Northumberland as a destination with a destination management plan produced;
- The Hadrian's Wall Bus carried over 20,000 passengers in the 2015 season and we continued to chair the Bus Partnership securing funding to operate the service for the next four years;
- We contributed to a county wide walking and cycling prospectus providing the strategic vision for future investment, and worked through the Cycle Tourism Group to promote the Sandstone Way resulting in a successful visitor payback scheme;
- However, the partnership between National Parks England and Visit England to develop a campaign to promote National Parks as visitor destinations was not achieved.

g) Mainstream climate change mitigation work into the Authority's work programme and focus on adaptation work.

Climate change work is well integrated into our work programme with much of our land and water management work contributing in this area, however a number of specific actions were not progressed as planned.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- We produced figures and analysis of the Authority's carbon emissions for the financial year 2014/15 demonstrating a 38% reduction in emissions since 2010/11. About half is accounted for by genuine improvements and half from the reduced size of the Authority's operations;
- We continued to work in partnership with the Northumberland Wildfire Group including providing a wildfire awareness training course for countryside volunteers;
- However there was limited or no work on the climate change adaptation report, weather stations, and automatic wildfire detection systems.

A Living Working Landscape – Performance Summary

Indicator Title	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Assm't
Agri-environment indicators:					
a) % 'farmed area' of NNP covered by agri-environment agreements (NPE benchmark data)	98% (78%)	100% (81%)	100% (86%)		☑=
b) % 'farmed area' of NNP covered by 'higher level' agri-environment agreements (NPE benchmark data)	76% (57%)	84% (65%)	85% (70%)		☑↑
c) Agri-environment income to the rural economy (£m)	£4.7m	£4.7m	£4.6m		☑=
% length of watercourses in 'high' or 'good' ecological status (NPE benchmark data)	59%	60% (37%)			☑=
Area of native broadleaf planting approved (hectares)	35 ha	131 ha	45 ha	105 ha	☑↑
Importance of the visitor economy (value & volume of tourism)					
a) Value of tourism (£ million) - Northumberland National Park	£68.0	£66.1	£71.6	PI reports previous years data	☑↑
b) Number of tourists (million) - Northumberland National Park	1.33	1.32	1.42		☑↑
a) Value of tourism (£ million) - Action Areas (inc. NNP)	£154.5	£150.2	£158.3		☑↑
b) Number of tourists (million) - Action Areas (inc. NNP)	1.61	1.58	1.69		☑↑

☑ Good Performance

☐ Acceptable Performance

☒ Poor Performance

↑ Improving Trend

= Static Trend

↓ Declining Trend

Aim 4. Thriving Communities

'We will contribute to the thriving and vibrant communities which have a strong sense of place and an economy grounded in the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park'

	2015/16 Financial Performance				Net Surplus / (Cost) Target	Net Surplus / (Cost) Actual
	Income Target	Income Actual	Expenditure Target	Expenditure Actual		
Aim 4	£25,200	£16,800	-£366,300	-£297,200	-£341,100	-£280,400

Community engagement –

a) Review the Local Plan (formerly the “Local Development Framework - Core Strategy”) and supporting development policies and adopt a new/revised Local Plan by April 2018.

- Staff resources being focussed on the Management Plan review and significant changes to national policy and the plan-making process impacted on the timetable Local Plan review.

Progress Against Target included:

- Task and Finish group re-established with initial draft Project plan being agreed on 30th April 2015. The Local Plan review timetable (Local Development Scheme – LDS) has since been revised to reflect significant changes to national policy and the plan-making process (see June 2016 Authority meeting Item 7).
- The evidence base update has commenced.
- A comprehensive public consultation exercise was carried out for the Management Plan review which will inform the emerging Local Plan broad issues and policy options document.
- The Head of Forward Planning attended a number duty to cooperate meetings with partner organisations and local planning authorities in the North East region.

b) Work with Communities to help them develop Neighbourhood Plans

- We have worked with local communities within the National Park to help them develop Neighbourhood Plans.

Progress Against Target included:

- Public consultation on the submission draft Tasset and Greystead Neighbourhood Plan took place between Friday 2nd October and Monday 16th November 2015.
- The Tasset & Greystead Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan has undergone independent examination.
- The Mid-Coquetdale Neighbourhood Area was designated on the 17th April 2015.
- The Wooler Neighbourhood Area was designated on the 19th January 2016.

c) Hold a National Park Forum by March 2016 and make Awards to those who have made a significant contribution to the National Park.

- We did not hold a National Park Forum or make any awards for significant contributions to the Park in 2015/16.

Rural development –

d) Embed the transition in the Authority’s approach to supporting rural development in the National Park.

- The last year was a transition year completing projects from our former grant funds and starting the transition to an enabling approach.

Progress Against Target included:

- Work to complete the final projects and claims for the old Sustainable Development Fund and Area Funds has been completed;
- Arrangements for a new small grants fund have been established;
- Work on publications to identify and showcase the legacy of the previous funds is behind target and we are still in the early stages of establishing the approach and relationships for a more enabling approach to rural development.

e) Actively contribute to the North East Rural Growth Network initiative.

- The rural growth hub raised more income, houses more businesses and continues to provide a location for start-up businesses to receive advice. During the year the hub proved very popular as an organised training and meeting venue and less attractive to business people as a drop in facility.

Progress Against Targets Included:

- Completing the build of 2 new pods at the Hexham Enterprise Hub in summer 2015 and gaining full occupancy by September 2016.
- Final design changes were made to The Sill to ensure an attractive rural enterprise hub can operate from the Sill. Effective marketing of this facility was delayed until 2016/17 when the building works will be more progressed.

Support for local communities and business –

f) Increase engagement with communities.

- There has been broad community consultation as part of the review of the Management Plan and through neighbourhood planning work. Advice and support of community initiatives continued through community enterprise activity but the new structures and approach for engaging communities for rural development initiatives are still to be fully embedded.

Positive planning service –

g) Continue to operate a positive and efficient development management service.

- There was a second consecutive year of strong Development Management performance across all indicators.

Progress Against Targets Included:

- Customer Service levels for the Development Management Service remained high with 100% of 'major' and 90% of 'minor' and 'other' applications determined within the statutory timescales.
- The Authority responded to 58 pre-application enquiries within the year and received £4,500 in income, exceeding the £2,500 target. The response time of 28 days was met for 91% of these enquiries which is a significant improvement upon the previous year;
- Pre-application charging is considered successful in terms of enhancing the quality of advice given (and applications submitted), as well as for income generation;
- 91% of applicants were satisfied with the service they received and overall 98% of all applications were approved.

h) Improve the effectiveness of the development management service.












- The Development Management team made a number of improvements to processes within the year contributing to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the service.


Progress Against Targets Included:

- Publication of a more customer friendly validation checklist for applicants;
- Review of pre-application charging and planning enforcement capability;


- Temporary enforcement resource employed and breach of condition notices served to all reported sites.

Thriving Communities – Performance Summary


Indicator Title	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Assm't
Community grant awards in line with National Park Authority purposes					
a) Number of grants awarded	41	56	34	3	
b) Value of grants awarded	£175,289	£346,397	£71,495	£4,593	
c) Value of levered/matched funding	£175,248	£1,122,824	£214,458	£500	
Business grant awards in line with National Park Authority purposes					
a) Number of grants awarded	22	29	13	1	
b) Value of grants awarded	£245,163	£670,541	£31,850	£1,000	
c) Value of levered/matched funding	£581,312	£1,030,837	£92,616	£23,220	
% all planning applications <u>determined</u> which have been approved	96%	n/a	98%	98%	
% of planning applicants satisfied with the service received	n/a	64%	n/a	91%	
Processing of planning applications (major, minor, other)					
a) % of major applications determined within 13 weeks	100%	no apps	100%	100%	
b) % of minor applications determined within 8 weeks	80%	64%	100%	90%	
c) % of 'other' applications determined within 8 weeks	78%	81%	91%	90%	

 Good Performance

↑ Improving Trend

 Acceptable Performance

= Static Trend

 Poor Performance

↓ Declining Trend

Aim 5. A Valued Asset

'We will help ensure the National Park is valued as a local, regional and national asset, with influence beyond its boundaries, that is worth looking after now and for generations to come'

	2015/16 Financial Performance				Net Surplus / (Cost) Target	Net Surplus / (Cost) Actual
	Income Target	Income Actual	Expenditure Target	Expenditure Actual		
Aim 5	£63,300	£61,500	-£273,500	-£274,100	-£210,200	-£212,600

Communicate the value of the National Park to policy and decision makers –

a) Engage all key partners and decision making bodies in the statutory review of the Northumberland National Park Management Plan with all partners signing up to a shared vision and aims for the National Park to 2035.

The Management Plan Review has now been completed.

Progress Against Target included:

- Partners agreed the scope and timescale for the review at a meeting held on 19th of June 2015 and were involved throughout the review process.
- Revised draft Management Plan considered and approved at Authority meeting on 9th of December 2015.
- Final version of Management Plan was approved by the Partnership in February 2016 and adopted by the Authority in March 2016.

b) Ensure the Sill project is used as a platform to demonstrate the value of the National Park.

We used the Sill project to engage national, regional, and local partners with the economic, environmental and social benefits of the National Park. This included visits from leading decision and policy makers included the Defra Minister for National Parks Rory Stewart MP.

Communicate the wider benefits of landscape scale partnership initiatives –

c) Work in partnerships beyond the National Park boundary to realise landscape scale benefits to the National Park.

We worked through the Local Nature Partnership on a number of projects including 'Higher Nature Value' farming and development of a Natural Capital Investment prospectus. We also worked through the Dark Skies partnership to promote Northumberland as a destination and supported the successful Revitalising Redesdale landscape partnership project.

Focused advocacy and partnership working –

d) Focus partnership working on the Authority's priorities of land management, rural development, youth engagement, and The Sill. Through these partnerships, ensure that the Authority plays a strong advocacy role on issues such as rural services, broadband and rural development.


The Authority continued to develop a number of partnerships to support its priorities through the Sill and contributed on the boards of regional farming, tourism, and heritage bodies. Discussions are ongoing to develop a Borderlands demonstrator, with a broad range of partner engagement.


Progress Against Target included:


- We continued to work through the North East Farming and Rural Advisory Network (NEFRAN) to inform land management and rural development policy, and advocate the needs of rural communities on issues such as rural services and broadband. This has led to a second round of Local Enterprise Partnership funding for rural enterprise hubs;
- Through NEFRAN, we continued to influence the rural development policy of Defra and the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) include a further round of business grants to rural businesses under the Rural Growth Network.

A Valued Asset – Performance Summary

Indicator Title	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Assm't
National awareness of Northumberland National Park	2%	2%	2%	2%	n/a
Partner survey score - NNPA as an effective partner	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

 Good Performance

 Acceptable Performance

 Poor Performance

↑ Improving Trend

= Static Trend

↓ Declining Trend

Aim 6. An Excellent Organisation

'We will be an efficient, effective and inclusive organisation achieving through partnerships and will strive for excellence'

	2015/16 Financial Performance				Net Surplus / (Cost) Target	Net Surplus / (Cost) Actual
	Income Target	Income Actual	Expenditure Target	Expenditure Actual		
Aim 6	£26,300	£17,000	-£403,700	-£327,000	-£377,400	-£310,000

Invest in our staff and volunteers –

a) Develop our staff, Members and volunteers and provide an effective human resources service.

At the strategic level the Authority set a new organisational development plan in March 2016. Key actions were completed to ensure staff and members received training and development including sites visits, focussed training in key areas such as planning. All but one manager completed all their appraisals and 15 member appraisals were completed out of 18.

Progress Against Targets Included:

- The Leadership Team did not undertake any 360 degree appraisals;
- Two well attended 'all staff' events were held with one held in the National Park involving members and volunteers on the theme of volunteering (led by volunteers);
- Provided Member training events to including a commercial income visit to Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park;
- The vast majority of staff completed equalities training by June 2015;
- Staff undertaking senior management training development opportunities were supported;
- Priority Human Resources policies were updated.

b) Undertake actions to ensure a high standard of staff welfare is maintained.

Most of the high-level actions were completed by the consultation and then finalisation of the Organisational Development Strategy.

Progress Against Targets Included:

- Staff sickness was the lowest for several years;
- We did not review the Authority's 'Culture and Values' as planned;
- We did not organise 'Listening Officer' training for relevant staff; and
- Actions from the Investors in people review were included in the Organisational Development Strategy.

c) Ensure the provision of a safe and healthy workplace and working environment for employees and volunteers and to ensure the health, safety and welfare of members of the general public and anyone else who may be affected by the activities of the Authority.

At the strategic level the Authority and its Leadership Team regularly reviewed health and safety and ensured continuous improvement via the Health and Safety Action Plan. Staff training is well managed but the planning and delivery of volunteer health and safety training is less transparent.

Progress Against Targets Included:

- There were no serious Health and Safety incidents in 2015/16;
- We still need to revise appraisal and work planning systems to ensure relevant Health and Safety targets are explicitly included;

- The Sill project - all client Construction Design and Management responsibilities were met regarding construction works; and
- Staff training and development focussed on risk assessment training to increase staff awareness and skills in assessing risks but a key course was postponed into 2016/17.

Income generation –

d) Manage income streams and develop further commercial income generation initiatives.

- The income generating target has been met for the year. This is due to excellent results in areas of the selling of specialist staff time and the Eastburn Enterprise hub making up for continuing poor performance in income from advertising, sponsorship, donations and legacies

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Updating the 3-year income generation is due to take place in September 2016 instead of July 2015. A revised target was set for 2016/17 in March 2016.

Streamlined governance –

e) Ensure a youth voice is represented with the Authority's governance structures. (see Youth Cabinet target in Aim 1).

Effective communication –

f) Complete IT projects to provide improved platforms to enable effective communications.

- Effective progress was made with improved use of mapping software within the organisation and for the public website. A number of infrastructure related projects were delayed and the roll-out of a new centralised contact database was delayed by several months.

Progress Against Targets Included:

- Supporting the new National Park website ensuring the new site operates effectively and is continuously updated with current content;
- Technical solutions resulted in a more stable internal phone system;
- Improved internet speeds at Eastburn were not as reliable or as fast as expected and improvements are required in 2016/17. At Rothbury additional fibre optic lines have improved internet reliability;
- Replaced the IT server hardware and IT back-up system with more resilient solutions,
- We were unable to make significant practical progress in implementing new online volunteer management software to improve coordination of volunteers and enable improved communication with and between volunteers.

g) Implement the outcomes of the Communications and Marketing review to improve the effectiveness of the Authority's communications.

- The results of the Communications and Marketing review were implemented during 2015/16 and the service is well monitored and planned.

Progress Against Targets Included:

- Production on regular member and staff bulletins plus public and partner facing e-zines.
- Use of a rolling communications monthly plan jointly with The Sill project;
- We were unable to test business continuity planning of communications.

Effective and value for money –

h) Develop a new medium term Business Plan for the period 2016-2019

A full three year budget plan was set by the Authority following government assurances on the level of core funding. A priority setting process and new three year business plan were put back to 2016/17 as the high National Park Management Plan was not agreed until March 2016.

Progress Against Targets Included:

- Setting a balanced budget for the next 4 years in March 2016;
- We were unable to progress with simplify the three-year Business Plan and the associated performance management.
- We managed the handover of audit arrangements from Deloitte to Ernst and Young.

i) Complete outstanding service reviews (most completed in 2014/15) to identify the potential for service improvements, savings and/or the outsourcing of services.

Two of the three reviews were completed and the one for Corporate Services was extended to include estate management.

Progress against Targets included:

- Making a tactical change to the Specialist / Programmes service in light in income generation experience
- Creating a new Corporate Services team to support the practical needs of the Eastburn Enterprise hub
- Investing in additional resources in the Sill team to better develop the visitor shop / trading operation.

j) Develop a three year balanced budget which accommodates the requirements of the Sill by March 2016.

A revised balanced three year budget was set following a special meeting of The Authority in September 2016 taking account the £1m uplift in construction costs.

Including Progress Against Targets:

- Developed robust financial and resource plans for the Authority to address uncertain grant and income scenarios;
- Use reserves and loans to manage cashflow requirements of the Sill;
- Implementing a treasury policy and invest to save strategies to enable capital works to progress in addition to The Sill;
- A new approach to franchising the Sill cafe was adopted but the trading plan is still to be re-assessed as planned; and.
- The Authority agreed its first ever loan with the Public Works Loan Board for the Housesteads project in March 2016.

An Excellent Organisation – Performance Summary

Indicator Title	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Assm't
Inclusive Authority - level of the Equality Standard attained	Achieving	Achieving	n/a	?	?
Staff Turnover (excluding end of fixed term contracts)	11.1%	17.7%	12.5%	8.5%	☑↑
Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per FTE	4.17	6.67	2.63	2.23	☑↑
Member participation in attending committees	68%	75%	78%	84%	☑↑
Income Generation - % achievement against target	n/a	140%	99%	98%	☑=
Financial outturn (variance to budget as a % of total expenditure)	8.0%	n/a	2.6%	1.5%	☑↑
Carbon Dioxide (CO2) reduction from National Park Authority operations					
a) Percentage change in CO2 emissions	3 yrly measure	3 yrly measure	-38.1%	3 yrly measure	n/a
b) Total CO2 emissions from Authority operations (Kg)	3 yrly measure	3 yrly measure	156,809	3 yrly measure	n/a

☑ Good Performance

☐ Acceptable Performance

☒ Poor Performance

↑ Improving Trend

= Static Trend

↓ Declining Trend

Section 3. Delivering the Vision – Forward Work Programme (2016/17)

Aim 1. A Welcoming Park

‘Our aim is to put people and their connections with the landscape at the heart of the National Park’

	2016/17 Financial Plan		
	Income	Expenditure	Net Cost
Aim 1	£7,780,800	-£10,080,500	-£2,299,700

The Sill: Unspoilt Landscapes, Inspiring People –

- a) Deliver year 2 of the Sill Activity Plan achieving 10,200 activity days in 2016/17 working towards the target of 30,000 activity days (1,000 events) each year by 2019/20. Continue to ensure a wide geographic spread of activities across the National Park and beyond with 50% of activities delivered by our local partner businesses by 2019/20 as part of our commitment to sharing the opportunities that the project brings. Progress against target will include:
- Volunteers contributing 1,700 volunteer days of which careership participation (work and student placements, and training) will make up 300 days;
 - Generating £100,500 gross income from 2016/17 activities
- b) Progress the Sill construction project in 2016/17 to enable the centre to open in summer 2017 on time, to budget, and to quality standards. Progress against target will include:
- Youth Hostel superstructure in place by September 2016;
 - All external works and landscaping complete by March 2017;
- c) Create the public, private, and third sector partnerships to enable The Sill to operate effectively. Progress against target will include:
- Franchise partner for the cafe in place by November 2016;
 - 10 businesses and/or social enterprise tenants for the Enterprise Hub identified by March 2017;
- d) Develop the design, materials and technologies required for the Sill interpretation and displays. Progress against target will include:
- Issue exhibition and interpretation tender package September 2016
 - Appointment of exhibition fit-out contractor November 2016

Children and Young People –

- e) Deliver the Sill Education Programme achieving 3,000 activity days by providing formal educational opportunities for young people. Progress against target will include:
- Strengthen relationships and formalise opportunities with local higher education institutions (4 local universities).
- f) As part of the Sill Training Programme, continue to provide training, work experience and career pathways opportunities for young people.

Progress against target will include

- Provide a programme of at least 10 work experience and further/higher education placements across the Authority;
- Continue to develop volunteering opportunities for young people, creating targeted activities for young volunteers, and exploring opportunities for family volunteering events.

Activities and Events –

- g) Deliver the Sill Events Programme achieving 6,200 activity days by providing accessible activities and events targeted at engaging new and under-represented audiences.

Progress against target will include

- Develop and deliver activities during school holidays targeted at Explorer Families including Easter / NNP 60th Birthday Party, and National Parks Week;
- Provide a programme of regular organised events aimed at children and young explorers, including the successful Young Archaeologist Club and Curlew Club;

- h) Deliver the Sill Training Programme achieving 1,000 activity days by providing volunteering and public training activities.

Progress against target will include

- Provide a wide range of volunteering opportunities across the National Park including volunteer led activities, event support, heritage at risk, natural environment, access, and practical projects;
- Begin to develop public training opportunities including navigation training.

Marketing, Website and Social Media –

- i) Manage the integration of the Sill brand with the National Park destination brand. Develop and implement brand guidelines ensuring all marketing is targeted to specific audiences.

Progress against target will include

- Agree architecture and branding of Sill website ensuring direct functionality within the existing National Park website

- j) Ensure the National Park website is regularly updated with new visitor facing content and is fully integrated with social media channels and a new visitor facing Sill website.

Progress against target will include

- Increase the number of unique visitors to the website by 20% from 82,150 to 98,600 by March 2017.

- k) Design, build and deploy a new visitor facing website for the Sill focused on providing information about the Centre and the Activity Programme.

Progress against target will include

- Initial changeover from the current Sill website by September 2016;
- Incorporate opportunities to generate income through advertising, sponsorship, online event bookings / ticket sales, and online shop and donation functions;

- l) Continue to grow our social media audience to increase engagement with and visibility of the National Park, the work of the Authority, and The Sill.

Progress against target will include

- Increase number of followers on FaceBook by at least 35% from 8,700 to over 12,000;
- Improve our 'Klout' social media score from 71 to 77 (out of 100) by March 2017.

Visitor welcome and infrastructure –

- m) Improve and maintain the Authority's recreation sites and undertake infrastructure improvement projects to enhance accessibility and improve visitor experiences.

Progress against target will include

- Complete the car park extension at Housesteads including improved signage and layout by April 2017;
- Complete flood damage repairs (subject to funds being secured) at Hareshaw Linn, Fairhaugh bridge, and Tipalt Burn bridge;
- Replace (modernise) 6 car park payment machines incorporating 'contactless credit card' technology to improve pricing/ticketing options to support income generation.

n) Continue to work with Natural England and the Highway Authorities to maintain National Trails and promoted walking and cycle routes within the National Park.

Progress against target will include

- Undertake maintenance improvements on The Pennine Way national trail including the flag path works identified at Rapishaw Gap;
- Monitor the use and condition of the newly opened Sandstone Way promoted route.

o) Maintain and improve public rights of way and routes over open access land with a focus on the 30% most frequently used routes (rights of way and associated sites).

Progress against target will include

- Undertake national benchmarking surveys on 5% of the public rights of way network and survey a further 5% of the network (promoted routes)
- Train existing and new volunteers by the end of September 2016.

The work programme for 'A Welcoming Park' is designed to deliver our Business Plan priority targets:

- The Sill will open in 2017 attracting over 100,000 visitors each year.
- In 2016/17 we will deliver 2,000 days per annum of volunteering and careership participation.
- 6,200 engagement days in events via The Sill project by 2017.
- Visitor numbers and spend to the National Park will increase by 6% to £75.8 or 1.50m by end of 2016 (£62.3m and 1.36m in 2012)

Aim 2. A Distinctive Place

'Our aim is to manage, conserve and enhance the distinctive natural and cultural qualities of the National Park'

	2016/17 Financial Plan		
	Income	Expenditure	Net Cost
Aim 2	£91,100	-£630,200	-£539,100

Protect and enhance the natural environment and landscape –

- a) Finalise the overall monitoring framework for the Natural Environment Vision and establish all baseline figures.
Progress against target will include
 - o Establish a rolling three year action plan to deliver the vision from April 2016.
- b) Undertake blanket bog habitat improvement work to contribute towards the Natural Environment Vision for 2035.
Progress against target will include
 - o Work with the Forestry Commission and Natural England to achieve a favourable Cheviot forest design plan (protecting blanket bog areas in Kidland & Uswayford forests and addressing issues of water quality and flow within their associated catchments);
 - o Continue to map and address problem sitka spruce natural regeneration sites on deep peat areas across the National Park.
- c) Undertake heathland (wet and dry) habitat improvement work to contribute towards the Natural Environment Vision for 2035.
Progress against target will include
 - o Develop burning plans for Lordenshaws, Hepple Whitefield to protect sensitive areas;
 - o Facilitate Heather seeding on Lilburn, Linhope and Simonside.
- d) Undertake woodland and scrub habitat improvement work to contribute towards Natural the Environment Vision for 2035.
Progress against target will include
 - o Regenerate Juniper and scrub habitats at Hepple Whitefield;
 - o Utilise agri-environment scheme agreements to organise planting and natural regeneration projects in woodlands at Billsmoor Park and Hudspeth.
- e) Undertake hay meadow habitat improvement work to contribute towards the Natural Environment Vision for 2035.
Progress against target will include
 - o Survey 25 meadows to enable changes/improvements in condition to be monitored (baseline surveys and repeat visits);
 - o Utilise agri-environment schemes to facilitate seeding in 2 hay meadows.
- f) Undertake semi-natural grassland habitat (wet grassland for waders, whin, andesite, waxcap grasslands) improvement work to contribute towards the Natural Environment Vision for 2035.
Progress against target will include
 - o Develop datasets to map existing sites for priority grasslands;

- g) Undertake rivers and burns improvement work to contribute towards the Natural Environment Vision for 2035.
Progress against target will include
- Assist in developing projects for inclusion in the Revitalising Redesdale project HLF round two bid to assist water quality improvements (woodland planting, erosion control);
 - Ensure the Cheviot Forest design plan incorporates water quality improvements (not planting close to watercourses, more native woodland content, etc);
- h) Undertake species work to contribute towards the Natural Environment Vision for 2035.
Progress against target will include
- Staff and volunteers to complete wader surveys on agri-environment scheme sites to develop datasets on range and population of species;
 - Undertake Black Grouse surveillance in the Hadrian's Wall area to contribute to the 'RSPB stepping stones project' (joining of English and Scottish populations).
- i) Work in partnership with Northern PowerGrid and local communities to remove unsightly overhead lines
Progress against target will include
- identify a further 3 overhead electrical infrastructure projects for undergrounding;
 - complete the undergrounding of 1,000 metres of existing overhead line.

Protect and enhance the historic environment –

- j) Consult on and adopt a Historic Environment Vision to 2035 by September 2016 to provide a framework to guide future historic environment priorities in the National Park.
- k) Work with the Heritage at Risk volunteer group to monitor and maintain scheduled monuments in the National Park.
Progress against target will include
- Enhance the monitoring of monuments by implementing the 'adopt a monument' approach with volunteers, and improve information storage (corporate Cropbox) ensuring the latest monument condition information is shared with Historic England by June 2016;
 - Support volunteers to survey 40-50 priority ("at risk" and "vulnerable") monuments by March 2017.
- l) Support promotion and engagement with the historic environment.
Progress against target will include
- Support volunteers to deliver 10 North Pennines and Northumberland Uplands Young Archaeologists Club (YAC) events in 2016/17;
 - Support volunteers and the community to deliver a financially sustainable Kirknewton Archaeology Festival of at least 300 participants in August 2016.
- m) Support academic research on the historic environment of the National Park.
Progress against target will include
- Support 3 work placements in cultural heritage in 2016 (from the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies (ICCHS) at Newcastle University;
 - Support a PhD study on the impact of 20th century military operations on the archaeology of the Otterburn Training Area.
- n) Act as accountable body for the Roman Cavalry project. Manage the partnership, operational and financial protocols whilst key partners to lead on delivery for 2017.

The work programme for 'A Distinctive Place' is designed to deliver our Business Plan priority targets:

- Northumberland National Park will continue to be the most tranquil part of England. The National Park will be designated as a 'Dark Sky Reserve' in 2013.
- 100% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) maintained in 'favourable/improving' condition and move the area in 'favourable' condition to 45% by 2017 (from 29% in 2012).
- Percentage of scheduled monuments 'at risk' reduced to 45% by 2017 (from 50% in 2012).

Aim 3. A Living Working Landscape for Now and The Future

'We will help the National Park adapt to change by applying new approaches, together with traditional techniques'

	2016/17 Financial Plan		
	Income	Expenditure	Net Cost
Aim 3	£46,300	-£353,100	-£306,800

Sustainable land management for priority habitats –

- h) Host an anglo-scottish 'Border Uplands Demonstrator' to trial land management and rural development approaches within a wider geographic context.
Progress against target will include
- Establish high level task force;
 - Launch initiative by October 2016.
- i) Work with land managers and Natural England to achieve sustainable land management which particular emphasis on the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme.
Progress against target will include
- Work with farms whose Environmental Stewardship agreements are expiring to assist them to enter the Countryside Stewardship Scheme;
 - Facilitate new Higher Tier agreements across The Park;
 - Identify opportunities to secure land management to contribute to flood alleviation.
- j) Work with land managers on a number of pilot and land management projects.
Progress against target will include
- Pilot a project in Upper Coquetdale to improve wader (curlew, lapwing, snipe and redshank) and other ground nesting birds breeding success;
 - Pilot the use of new soil analysis techniques to determine the species of fungi, particularly waxcaps, present in grasslands.
- k) Continue to implement the Northumberland Uplands Chain Local Nature Partnerships 'High Nature Value Farming Project' within the National Park.
Progress against target will include
- Facilitate a 'results-based approach' Stewardship Scheme pilot;
 - Celebrate the wildlife associated with High Nature Value Farming through the production of publications and events.

High quality watercourses –

- l) Work with the Environment Agency, Natural England, and rivers trusts to identify which of the 24 waterbodies in the National Park that are in moderate or poor condition could be improved with the Authority's assistance.
- m) Continue the Hill tracks project to reduce sediment pollution to watercourses.
Progress against target will include
- Undertake restoration of bare peat on former track routes;
 - Undertake capital works to address sediment issues identified on priority tracks in the Till catchment.

Woodland –

- n) Work with land managers to achieve sustainable woodland creation and management in the National Park.

Progress against target will include

- Create 100ha of woodland (both broadleaf and conifer);
- Encourage the production and inform the content of 5 woodland management plans and ensure that the percentage of the National Park woodland that is in active management exceeds the national target of 66% by 2018;

Sustainable development and climate change –

- o) Support sustainable tourism and transport development in the National Park through partnership delivery.

Progress against target will include

- Pilot the use of a volunteer driven minibus to supplement the commercial service and support visits to the Hadrian's Wall corridor and Sill activity.
- Support a commercially viable Hadrian's Wall Bus increasing passengers by 10% to 22,000 in the 2016 visitor season.

- p) Continue to mainstream climate change mitigation and adaptation work into the Authority's work programmes.

Progress against target will include

- Incorporate 'natural flood management techniques' within our land management work including agri-environment scheme and project bids to restore peatlands and plant trees along watercourses;
- Continue to work through the European Wildfire project including testing automatic wildfire detection systems and piloting the development and use of a mobile app to direct controlled burning.

The work programme for 'A Living Working Landscape' is designed to deliver our Business Plan priority targets:

- 78,000 ha of the National Park including 95% of priority habitats under positive management in (higher level) agri-environment schemes by 2017 (62,500 ha and 85% priority habitats in 2013).
- 65% of the length of watercourses in 'good' or 'high' condition by 2017 (59% in 2012).
- 400ha of New Native Woodland planted and 600ha of plantation re-profiled or removed between 2013 and 2017.

Aim 4. Thriving Communities

“We will contribute to the thriving and vibrant communities which have a strong sense of place and an economy grounded in the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park”

	2016/17 Financial Plan		
	Income	Expenditure	Net Cost
Aim 4	£31,500	-£299,200	-£267,700

Community Engagement –

- a) Review the Local Plan (formerly the “Local Development Framework - Core Strategy”) and supporting development policies and adopt a new/revised Local Plan by March 2019.

Progress against target will include

- Publish a revised Local Development Scheme, setting out the proposed timetable for the production of the Local Plan, thereby keeping local communities informed by June 2016;
- Prepare for statutory public consultation ensuring our communities have their say by April 2017.

- b) Work with Communities to help them develop Neighbourhood Plans where they wish to do so.

Progress against target will include

- Undertake public consultation/referendum as required to allow the Tarncliffe and Greystead Neighbourhood Plan to be legally made should the plan be approved by a referendum;
- Continue to support the development of Neighbourhood Plans in Mid-Coquetdale and Wooler.

Rural development (Support for local communities and business) –

- c) Shift focus on rural development within the National Park away from direct grant giving to supporting development of business and community initiatives and assisting in gaining access to external funding sources. This will involve working with key policy makers, funding partners and local enterprise to ensure investment is directed into the National Park

Progress against target will include

- Develop a strategic approach with key funding partners to influence policy development and the allocation criteria for rural developments funds;
- Administer a small grant fund of £40,000 p.a. to support small scale projects with initial ‘seed corn’ funding.

- d) Actively contribute to the North East Rural Growth Network initiative by operating the Hexham Enterprise Hub and working towards the establishment of the Sill Rural Enterprise Hub once the centre is opened in 2017.

- e) Explore potential opportunities to assist in facilitating the delivery of affordable housing within the National Park.

Positive planning service –

- f) Continue to operate a positive and efficient development management service.
Progress against target will include
Progress against target will include
- At least 80% of all valid pre-application enquiries dealt with within 28 days;
 - At least 80% of all valid (non-major) planning applications determined within 8 weeks;
 - At least 60% of all valid major planning applications determined within 13 weeks or in line with agreed Planning Performance Agreements.
- g) Improve the effectiveness of the development management service.
Progress against target will include
- Maintain levels of customer satisfaction with the Development Management service and monitor this through an annual satisfaction survey;
 - Undertake monitoring of planning applications and where necessary enforcement action to ensure development accords with policy.

The work programme for ‘Thriving Communities’ is designed to deliver our Business Plan priority targets

- By 2017, more than 27% of National Park residents agree that the Authority listens and responds to their opinions.
- By 2017, more than 37% of businesses and households within the National Park are able to access affordable broadband and speeds of at least 12Mb download.
- The current economic activity rate in the National Park will be maintained.
- The age profile of National Park residents indicates a decrease in outward migration of young people and adults of working age.

Aim 5. A Valued Asset

'We will help ensure the National Park is valued as a local, regional and national asset, with influence beyond its boundaries, that is worth looking after now and for generations to come'

2016/17 Financial Plan			
	Income	Expenditure	Net Cost
Aim 5	£64,800	-£167,600	-£102,800

Communicate the value of the National Park to policy and decision makers –

- a) Widely communicate the vision and aims of the Northumberland National Park Management Plan;
Progress against target will include
 - o Communicate the aims and objectives of the revised Management Plan via online and social media methods linking this to the media campaign around the 60th anniversary of the National Park being designated.
- b) Implement the annual communications plan (with monthly key messages) to target communications to our framework of 'key partners'. The plan will cover 60th anniversary, corporate, and Sill messages.

Communicate the wider benefits of landscape scale partnership initiatives –

- c) Work in partnerships beyond the National Park boundary to realise landscape scale benefits to the National Park through initiatives detailed elsewhere in this work programme including:
Progress against target will include
 - o Continue to work in partnership with Kielder Forest and Water Park to raise awareness and increase tourism linked to the 'International Dark Sky Park' designation;
 - o Continue to work through the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership (LNP) on landscape scale projects such as 'Peatlands' and 'Great Upland Forest' projects and communicate the scale and benefits of such cross boundary initiatives.

Focused advocacy and partnership working –

- d) Focus partnership working on the Authority's agreed priorities. Through these partnerships, ensure that the Authority plays a strong advocacy role on issues such as rural services, broadband and rural development.
Progress against target will include
 - o Continue to work with and influence key partners policies and work plans through the Northumberland National Park Management Plan Partnership;
 - o Continue to work through the North East Farming and Rural Advisory Network (NEFRAN) to inform land management and rural development policy, and advocate the needs of rural communities on issues such as rural services and broadband;
 - o Work through National Parks England to advocate and inform policy at a national level.

The work programme for 'A Valued Asset' is designed to deliver our Business Plan priority targets:

- Enhanced awareness of the value of the National Park to the region and the nation.
- The County Council Local Plan recognises the role of gateway towns and the impact of significant development outside the National Park.
- Management Plan partners are actively delivering the aims of the Northumberland National Park Management Plan.
- National policy development continues to recognise the policy implications for National Parks, including the needs of upland and deep rural communities.

Aim 6. An Excellent Organisation

'We will be an efficient, effective and inclusive organisation achieving through partnerships and will strive for excellence'

	2016/17 Financial Plan		
	Income	Expenditure	Net Cost
Aim 6	£28,300	-£281,100	-£252,800

Invest in our staff and volunteers –

- a) Implement an Organisation Development Strategy to develop and improve the effectiveness and wellbeing of our staff, Members and volunteers.
Progress against target will include
- All staff and Members to have effective appraisals (100% completion);
 - Increase opportunities for staff, members and volunteers to collectively learn and share knowledge about the National Park and the Authorities approaches including Review Meetings and 'all staff' events.
- b) Ensure the provision of a safe and healthy workplace and working environment for employees and volunteers and to ensure the health, safety and welfare of members of the general public and anyone else who may be affected by the activities of the Authority.
Progress against target will include
- H&S competencies will be identified and documented in every staff appraisal by end of June 2016, training planned by September 2016 and embedded in the annual prioritised training programme by March 2017;
 - Meet all client Construction Design and Management (CDM) responsibilities regarding construction of The Sill and highways safety issues resolved by January 2017;
 - Continue to target volunteer training to specific volunteering activities to ensure the H&S needs of volunteers, the Authority and the public are met.

Income generation –

- c) Develop philanthropic and private fundraising activities to achieve at least a further £1.5million in pledges and donations between 2016 and 2020.
Progress against target will include
- Continue fundraising for The Sill: our target is to raise at least a further £865,500 for the Sill by 2020 (£250,000 in 2016/17);
 - Promote the options for people to leave legacy donations.
- d) Diversify income streams and develop further commercial income generation initiatives to help the Authority to become less dependent on the 'core' Defra grant.
Progress against target will include
- Set a new four year income generation plan by July 2016 to raise an additional £120,000 over the next four financial years;
 - Establish initiatives to maximise the commercial benefits of the new 'Power of Competence' legislation by July 2016 including a bid to run the national member training for all UK national park authority members by March 2017.

Effective communication –

- e) Ensure mechanisms are in place to assist the Authority’s internal communications including continuing with an internal process of team briefings and sharing monthly ‘Northumberland National Park News’ communications with members, staff and volunteers.

- f) Complete IT projects to provide improved platforms to enable effective communications. Progress against target will include
 - o Update the Microsoft office suite by September 2016 and fully assess the option of moving to cloud based solutions by February 2017;
 - o Specifying and procuring an internet connection of at least 300Mbps to be live by 31st March 2017 for The Sill;
 - o Implement the use of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV - drone) to assist officers with their work across the Authority. Ensure that at least 2 digital clips are used on social media each month and staff time spent on site visits reduce by 25%.

Effective and value for money –

- g) Develop a new medium term (3 year) Business Plan for the period 2017-2020
Progress against target will include
 - o Engage members in a process to set the corporate strategy identifying medium term priorities and our approach to our work by June 2016;
 - o Review and align the performance management and risk management systems to the medium term priorities by December 2016.

- h) Set a medium term (3 year) Budget Plan to ensure a balanced budget which accommodates the financial requirements of the Sill by 1st April 2016.
Progress against target will include
 - o Set an ‘Estates Plan’ that enables the Authority to be more efficient and provides resources that allow for development of the estate to support priority work areas by December 2016.

The work programme for ‘An Excellent Organisation’ is designed to deliver our Business Plan priority targets:

- Maintain our Investors in People award and staff satisfaction to benchmark in the top 25% nationally (Health and Safety Executive survey) in three priority areas.
- Increase the number of annual volunteer days by 35% to 2,000 by 2017 (from 1,480 in 2012).
- Generate £120,000 of additional new sources of income by 2020