



Operational Plan

2018-2019

The Operational Plan sets the Authority's work programme for the coming year.

The actions contained within this Plan have been identified taking into account our available resources and the ability to deliver within the 12-month period. All actions are cascaded into team and individual staff programmes of work for 2018-19.

Our Values

The Values of Northumberland National Park Authority are:

- ❖ Respect and Equality
- ❖ Collaborative and supportive working
- ❖ Trust and empowerment
- ❖ Communicating and Acting
- ❖ Strong, clear and inspiring leadership
- ❖ Developing and supporting people
- ❖ Customer focus
- ❖ Outward looking and enterprising

Our Culture

To be reflective of Our Values and to fulfil our ambitions, the Authority will adopt a Culture that:

- ❖ Is open to, and embraces, change
- ❖ Supportive community
- ❖ 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

Our Statutory Purposes, Duty and Powers

1. Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and,
2. To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Special Quality of the area by the public.

In pursuing the Statutory Purposes, **Our Duty** is to seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities *within* the National Park.

The Cities & Local Government Devolution Act 2016 provides a **Power** for English national park authorities to do anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of carrying out any of its functions.

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Introduction to the Operational Plan

Priorities and Resources

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 four financial years, providing a platform upon which the Authority can build. As we come to the end of this period of certainty there have been a number of developments which will affect the National Park in the Medium Term, including the 2016 vote to leave the European Union, and the 2018, 25 year Environmental Plan.

To prepare for a period of greater uncertainty since the budget announcement in 2015, the Authority has achieved a balanced budget, increasing income generation from private sources including its own enterprise, voluntary and philanthropic sources. The Authority has maintained a focus on its core priorities, whilst developing new partnerships and initiatives along the way.

Northumberland National Park Authority is ambitious and following the signing of contracts in September 2015 to formally embark upon the construction of The Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre, rapid progress and development of the physical build, the public offer and alignment of the Northumberland National Park and The Sill brand has been made. The centre opened in July 2017 and exceeded the visitor targets set in The Sill business plan, the building now acts as the hub for activities and events with benefits being felt across the National Park.

The Authority continues to create a more enterprising and ambitious organisation, and in March 2017, Authority Members adopted a new Business Plan (2017-2021).

Through the 2017-2021 Business Plan, the Authority has set its priorities on:

Natural Environment	<i>To support sustainable land management in the National Park, whilst leading the way in developing ideas and practical solutions to restore nature.</i>
The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre	<i>To establish The Sill as a national centre for landscape discovery and the means through which we deliver across all of the National Park.</i>
A Park Authority For the Future	<i>To continue to evolve an organisation and model of operation fit for the future.</i>

The realisation of The Sill has enabled the Authority to significantly enhance its potential for income. However, progress of the Operational Plan 2017-18 was impacted by the completion of the Sill and required structural changes to the organisation. A great deal of experience has been gained in the latter 6 months since the completion of the build and these lessons have been brought forward into the budgets, fundraising and activity programmes of 2018-19. The Authority intends to develop its potential for income and fundraising capabilities

Business Plan (2017-2021)

In March 2017, Authority Members adopted the new Business Plan for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2021. The new Business Plan sets out the National Park Authority's priorities through the five aims of the Management Plan. For this reason, the Business Plan takes a similar medium term view to that of the Management Plan (5 years).

The Business Plan also sets out how the Authority will continue to evolve the Authority as an ambitious, forward-looking organisation that is fit for the future. [Diagram-1](#) provides an overview of how the Business

Plan and Operational Plan form core elements of the Authority’s planning and performance framework and help guide the day-to-day work of the Authority.

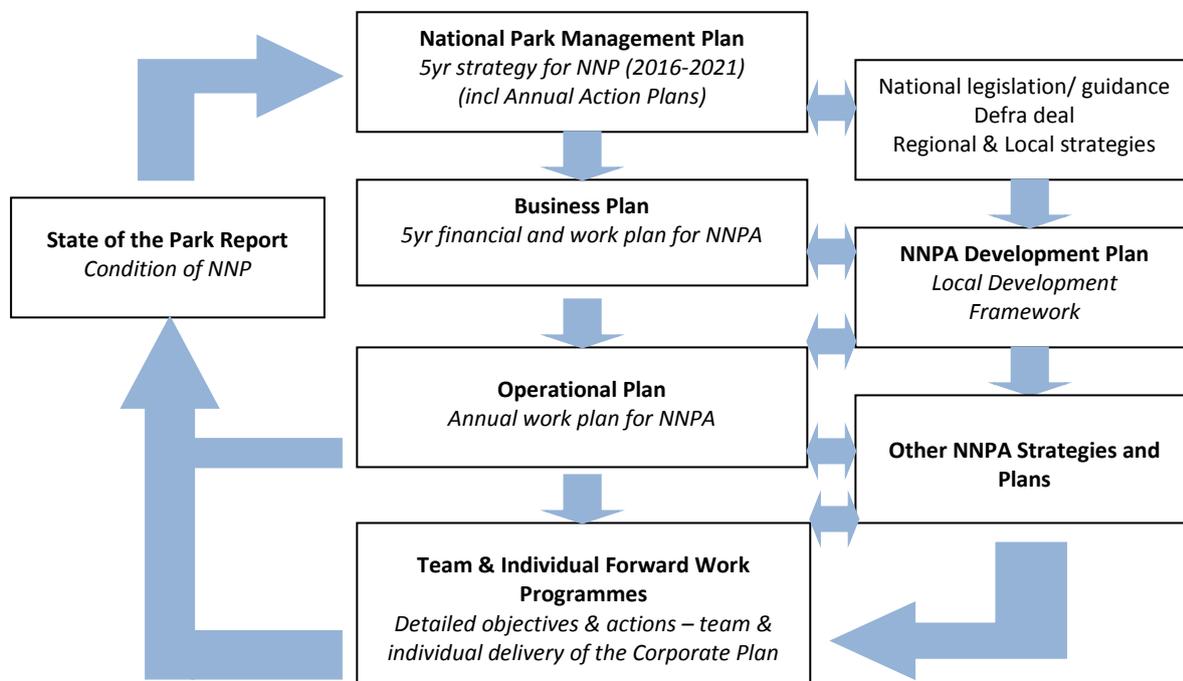
Risk Management

An updated Strategic Risk Register has been developed for Authority approval, this helps identify key risks for the delivery of the Authority’s Business Plan and sets the Authority’s risk appetite.

Risks against the Business Plan are categorised within different risk levels: impacts will range from ‘Catastrophic’ to ‘Almost None’; and, likelihood of the risk occurring ranges from ‘Almost Certain’ to ‘Rare’.

Categories will be used by the Authority’s Leadership Team to identify all key risks and develop a strategy for mitigating the impact and likelihood of the risk occurring, whilst measuring the relative levels of assurance for the management of each key risk.

Diagram-1



Overview of the 2018-2019 Forward Work Programme

Summary of Our Forward Work Programme for 2018-2019

Moving into 2018-19, the Authority will continue to maintain a wide programme of work towards delivering the shared Vision for the National Park as set out in the National Park Management Plan. In presenting the Authority's Forward Work Programme for 2018-2019, clear targets are set against the 2017-2021 Business Plan objectives. In developing these targets, we focussed on the Authority's three priorities for the Business Plan period – key deliverables that will demonstrate progress throughout 2017-18 are outlined below:

Natural Environment

- Work with partners on key landscape-scale initiatives to provide high-level research, public access, and, engagement through natural and historic environment improvement projects.
- Deliver work which achieves a demonstrable improvement in the natural environment of the Park in line with the Natural Environment Vision.
- Further develop the Border Uplands Demonstration.
- Play a key role in the development and delivery of the Revitalising Redesdale Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre

- Operate The Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre as one of the leading visitor attractions in North East England.
- Celebrate and showcase The Sill in order to realise the economic and social benefits for our local communities and throughout the wider region.
- Deliver with our partners, a varied and high quality activity programme through The Sill attracting new, larger and more diverse audiences to the National Park and beyond.
- Greatly expand opportunities for people to become involved in volunteering and training programmes with the National Park Authority.

A Park Authority for the Future

- Develop a new Local Plan and Infrastructure Plan for the National Park through which we will actively advocate for the provision and retention of essential community facilities and services, and the development of new homes to meet local needs.
- Promote the value and relevance of the Park and The Sill brand alongside continued commitment to internal and external communications and marketing; we will use data to further understand and demonstrate the value and impact of our work (including the continuous development of innovative digital communications channels and content).
- Diversify our sources of income generation and grow the contribution of self-generated income.
- Continue to evolve the operational model for the Authority to support our new powers to trade and enhance our income generation and fundraising capabilities.
- Begin to better understand our customers and design our products and services accordingly by effectively implementing and operating a new business information and intelligence system.

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In terms of generating additional income and use of resources, the Authority's financial plan for 2018-19 is as follows:

2018-19 Financial Plan			
Strategic Aims	Expenditure	Income	Net cost per Strategic Aim
Welcoming Park	(£2,298,900)	£1,354,800	(£944,100)
Distinctive Place	(£703,800)	£99,200	(£604,600)
Living Working Landscape	(£550,200)	£51,600	(£498,600)
Thriving Communities	(£335,200)	£33,900	(£301,300)
Valued Asset	(£250,600)	£68,800	(£181,800)
Excellent Organisation	(£357,700)	£21,100	(£336,600)
Total	(£4,496,400)	£1,629,400	(£2,867,000)
Funded by Core National Park Grant			£2,627,700
Deficit funded from reserves			(£239,300)

Note: (deficit)

Forward Work Programme 2018-2019 Themes

In producing the detailed Forward Work Programme for 2018-19, actions and targets are broadly summarised by theme against the Business Plan Aims.

Aim 1 – Contributing to a Welcoming Park

- The Sill Visitor Experience improvement, Operations, Financial Management
- The Sill Training, Events and Education Strategies
- Sill Satellite development and renovations to existing sites
- Access management, maintenance and improvements across the Park
- National walking trails and cycling trail management
- Developing a management and development plan for Walltown, Ingram and the Breamish Valley
- Digital Strategy and using our new software and platforms
- Marketing Partnerships and Improving our Internal and External Communications
- Internal Volunteer Development and Improving Opportunities for Young People

Aim 2 – Contributing to a Distinctive Place

- Monitoring of Species and Habitats to determine progress towards our Natural Environment Vision
- Environmental improvement including Curlew, Moorland, Broadleaf Woodland and Archaeology projects
- Be a major contributor to BUDI, focussed on the landscape, habitats and species of the Cheviot area
- Revitalising Redesdale Landscape partnership project
- National Traditional Farm Buildings Grant Project
- Surveys for breeding waders, hay meadows and conifer regeneration
- Landscape scale improvements by removing visual infrastructure
- Woodland Management Plans and creation schemes
- Digital data collection in the Park & Citizen Science projects

Aim 3 – Contributing to a Living, Working Landscape for Now and the Future

- Countryside Stewardship scheme upkeep and ongoing project pipeline
- Development of other / alternative agri-environment scheme pilots
- RBAPS pilots – whole farm and hay meadows
- Greenlee Farm demonstrator
- Border Uplands Demonstrator project
- Landscape scale approaches to natural flood management
- Woodland Management Plans and creation schemes

Aim 4 – Contributing to Thriving Communities

- Supporting community businesses and projects
- Operating the Northumberland National Park Authority Small Grants Fund
- Continue a positive and efficient Development Management Service
- Continue a positive and proactive Forward Planning Service
- Involving local communities and businesses in The Sill activities programme and Local Plan review

Aim 5 – Contributing to a Valued Asset

- Working with Partners to achieve aims of the National Park Management Plan
- Produce a Gap Analysis and State of the Park report to monitor ongoing progress
- Development of the Partnership and influencing partner policies
- Promotion of the Park through external working groups and consultations
- Strengthening tourism partnerships
- Marketing and communications improvements through regular news and activity announcements

- Promoting the National Park and Sill brand through corporate partnerships

Aim 6 – Maintaining an Excellent Organisation that is Fit for the Future

- Enhancing income generation through our estate and existing fundraising
- Developing new fundraising channels
- Statutory compliance - Health & Safety and Finance
- Investment in IT infrastructure
- Communications, fundraising and marketing using improved business intelligence
- Understanding key Strategic Risks through the Strategic Risk Register
- Implementing contingencies through the Business Continuity Plan
- Performance monitoring and review against Operational Plan and Business Plan targets
- Financial management (including VAT planning, process reviews, Sill Capital accounting, launch of regular giving scheme/income generation (and diversification)/fundraising, National Park Foundation Gift Aid registration, Pensions)
- Volunteer development
- Ensuring ongoing Data improvements through the GDPR action plan
- Organisational development through HR, including recruitment of key roles, training and support

The Forward Work Programme

Aim 1 – Contributing to a Welcoming Park

To put people and their connections with the landscape at the heart of the National Park.

- a) *(Business Plan objective)* **Open and operate the Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre as one of the leading visitor attractions in North East England, attracting over 100,000 visitors each year.**
- i. Facilitate the operations of The Sill, including finance systems, HLF claims, contract management, business continuity, health & safety & emergency procedures.
 - ii. Develop a marketing plan for the NNP, The Sill & NNPF by end of June 2018.
 - iii. Deliver the Revised Sill Business Plan for 2018/19 and increase turnover by £30,000.
 - iv. Deliver high quality customer service at the Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre, measured by a variety of means of customer feedback
 - v. Implement a new Dark Skies Development Strategy within the National Park.
 - vi. Continue ranger support in Site Maintenance (25% of time).
 - vii. Develop and enhance visitor access to Sill grounds to address emerging operational needs.
 - viii. Deliver 3 temporary Exhibitions hosted at the Sill.
 - ix. To measure impact of the Sill on attracting new, larger and more diverse audiences to the National Park through visitor surveys and other business intelligence.
- b) *(Business Plan objective)* **Deliver with our partners, a varied and high quality activity programme through The Sill attracting new, larger and more diverse audiences to the National Park and beyond. We will achieve 30,000 activity days a year and give every schoolchild in Northumberland the opportunity to partake in an organised visit to the National Park by 2021.**
- i. Facilitate placements and educational visits throughout the park to contribute to Activity Plan targets including, Land Management and Heritage Management activities.
 - ii. Provide a wide range of public events throughout the region to attract larger more diverse audiences (275 events).
 - iii. Allocation of 30% of Ranger time to enable and support delivery of The Sill engagement programs.
 - iv. Review with Heritage Lottery Fund the activity plan and budgets to ensure there is no additional call on the Authority's reserves during the HLF funded project.
 - v. Develop and publish summer public events (Digital Landscapes theme) programme linked to the HLF Activity Plan in Q1.
 - vi. Develop plan for delivery of Annual Partner Events.
 - vii. Deliver Sill Activity plan through Open Days, by delivering CEVAS training to farmers and designing bike events at the Sill.
 - viii. Deliver Sill Activity Plan through Family Drop-in Days (eg. Sill Sunday).
 - ix. Consolidate the Walk Offer with 10 - 12 events per year.
 - x. Design & deliver Sill Evening Events.
 - xi. Contribute to Year End reports for Activity board & HLF.
 - xii. Design & deliver Annual Professional Events.

- xiii. Support RAF100 Cheviot Air crash sites project.
- c) *(Business Plan objective)* **Deliver a minimum of 10 projects to enhance visitor facilities and accessible sites and routes. Develop Two Sill Satellite sites, prioritising locations in the north of the National Park to greatly enhance the visitor welcome and attract more visitors to all areas by 2021.**
- i. Co-ordinate projects with Partners to ensure they contribute to projects and the wider Management Plan, see also BUDI and Revitalising Redesdale (Aims 2 & 3).
 - ii. Enhance visitor facilities across the Park prioritising satellite sites in the North.
 - iii. Secure funding for renovation works at Walltown to include cafe and toilet block. Make provision for the delivery of adventure activities and scope potential for additional events for the site.
 - iv. Develop the Master Plan for the Breamish Valley Project in the North of the Park including provision for events and infrastructure improvements.
 - v. Develop trails, guided & self-guided, to give confidence to new visitors.
 - vi. Maintain and improve public rights of way across the most frequently used routes, providing specialist advice to partners and ensuring 30% of the network is actively maintained.
 - vii. To develop world-class visitor experiences in the National Park and work with partners to draw international visitors.
 - viii. To operate the Sill in a more sustainable manner through management of green improvements.
- d) *(Business Plan objective)* **Grow and engage our online audience by continually innovating and developing our digital communications channels and content. Grow our website(s) to 500,000 and social media to 100,000 a year by 2021.**
- i. To grow our website audience by 20% and social media audience by an additional 35% from the previous year.
 - ii. Develop, publish and monitor digital content across all NNP digital media platforms throughout 2018-19.
 - iii. Draft and submit NNPA Digital Strategy by March 2019.
- e) *(Business Plan objective)* **Greatly expand opportunities for people to become involved in volunteering with the National Park Authority achieving 3,300 days a year by 2021.**
- i. Work with the Heritage at Risk volunteers to capture aerial and ground based imagery of Scheduled Monument sites. Imagery will be processed into 3D models, shared online and used for digital interpretation.
 - ii. Work with Partners (eg. Revitalising Redesdale) to co-ordinate volunteering efforts and develop systems for allowing shared volunteer engagement.
 - iii. Deliver the Sill Volunteer programme, achieving 2,700 volunteer days by end of March 2019.
 - iv. Continue to broaden volunteering roles across more areas of the Authority's work.
 - v. Continue to develop models for young people to volunteer and for work experience, placements, and internships.
 - vi. Continue to develop walk to wellbeing and recruit volunteer to lead group.

Aim 2 – Contributing to a Distinctive Place

To manage, conserve and enhance the distinctive natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.

- a) *(Business Plan objective)* **Work to the Natural Environment Vision for the National Park to deliver a demonstrable improvement in the condition of moorland and blanket bog habitats including Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) including Cheviot and Simonside. The SSSI area in ‘favourable’ condition will increase significantly from 29% towards the national target of 50% by 2021.**
- i. We will continue to work to the Natural Environment Vision to deliver a demonstrable improvement in habitats on NPA managed land and in-park SSSIs.
 - ii. Apply for Water Environment Grant (WEG) and deliver if successful e.g. Roman Wall Loughs.
 - iii. Develop a Moorland Conservation and Restoration Programme to deliver NNPA targets.
 - iv. Develop and initiate a three year Peat Restoration Project on Cheviot Summit in partnership with The College Valley Estates.
 - v. Facilitate the drawing up of 5 Moorland Management Plans working with estates across the National Park.
 - vi. Continue to develop Wildfire Risk Management procedures in conjunction with land managers, the Fire and Rescue Service and current research.
 - vii. Continue projects focussing on bog restoration, Sitka removal and livestock tracking, Eg Lampert.
- b) *(Business Plan objective)* **Work to the Natural Environment Vision for the National Park to enhance the distribution and number of important and characteristic species prioritising: Hen Harrier; Curlew; Mountain Bumblebee; Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary; Juniper; Aspen, and; Woods Cranesbill.**
- i. Undertake and facilitate a range of measures to enhance the distribution of characteristic species and inform land management decisions. Eg. Hay meadow, wading bird, invertebrate and waxcap surveys.
 - ii. Develop a Programme to enhance the numbers and range of Curlew in the Park.
 - iii. Roll out a citizen science public campaign to collect data on key species using web and social media to attract interest.
 - iv. Continue to collect digital data on species and habitats in the Park, replacing traditional paper-based recording methods, using GPS, smartphones, tablets and UAV drone technology where appropriate.
- c) *(Business Plan objective)* **Explore opportunities to work with nature to establish, extend and link habitats through piloting new approaches to land management. We will work with land managers to increase species diversity in hay meadows, initiate at least one large scale moorland creation/restoration project, and plant three distinct new native woodlands greater than 20 hectares.**
- i. Work with Defra and National Park colleagues to inform a new Environmental Land Management Scheme for implementation post Brexit; including bidding for funding to test and trial some of the emerging thinking locally.
 - ii. Develop and initiate a Peatland Project (See 2.a.iv).
 - iii. Pursue the progression of six new woodland creation initiatives; including those at Ingram, Lanternside, Middleburn, Bonnyrigg and Hetherington Farms.
- d) *(Business Plan objective)* **Work to reduce the visual impact of forestry plantations, wind turbines, overhead lines and light pollution on the landscape of the National Park. We will work with key stakeholders to deliver five initiatives that address landscape enhancement at a landscape scale.**

- i. Working with Northern Power Grid, we will progress one further undergrounding scheme through technical feasibility and wayleave clearance, and see the completion of four projects to underground a further 3,000 metres of existing overhead lines by March 2019.
 - ii. Comment on at least two woodland management plans and one Long Term Forestry Design Plan, with the purpose of seeking to establish around 150 hectares of new native broadleaved planting through the restructuring of existing forests.
 - iii. Complete current phase of the Hill Tracks Project initiated in 2017-18.
- e) (*Business Plan objective*) Work with partners on the Revitalising Redesdale Landscape Partnership Scheme providing high-level research, public access, and engagement through natural and historic environment improvement projects.**
- i. Support the delivery of the Revitalising Redesdale Year 1 delivery programme & Provide line management of the Heritage and Engagement Officer.
 - ii. Complete the restoration of 2 historic structures (High Rochester Roman Fort and Ridsdale Ironworks).
 - iii. Deliver 2,500 metres of improvements to sections of the Pennine Way.
 - iv. Provide finance support to the Revitalising Redesdale project, quarterly grant claims and co-ordination of tenders as required.
 - v. Develop a joint programme of volunteering activities with project partners to deliver the Revitalising Redesdale project (See 1.e.ii).
- f) (*Business Plan objective*) Develop a new project to enhance access to, understanding of, and community engagement with the unique historic environment in the Cheviot Hills.**
- i. Support the National Traditional Farm Buildings Grant Pilot.
 - ii. Ensure capital grant applications are submitted by the January 31st 2019 deadline.
 - iii. Continue to develop the Cheviot Hills Archaeological Project (CHAP) by undertaking a scoping study, hosting an autumn symposium and publishing the findings of the Breamish Valley Archaeology Project.
 - iv. Support Ingram bracken project.

Aim 3 – Contributing to a Living, Working Landscape for Now and the Future

To adapt to change by applying new approaches together with traditional techniques.

- a) *(Business Plan objective)* **Work with farmers and land managers to ensure high levels of take up of appropriate agri-environment schemes. 70% of farmland will be included in schemes with measures to protect and enhance the habitats and species prioritised in the Natural Environment Vision.**
- i. Act as advocates for upland farming, gathering evidence and opinion to contribute to policy and programme development. In doing this, we will maintain links with the Farmer Forum and HNV Project.
 - ii. We will continue to work with Natural England and support existing Countryside Stewardship schemes; help 12 holdings to enter/re-enter the scheme in 2018 and undertake survey work to assist a further 20 holdings to apply in 2019.
 - iii. Identify appropriate indicators for demonstrating the effectiveness of agri-environment schemes.
- b) *(Business Plan objective)* **Establish three practical demonstration farms implementing a ‘results-based agri-environmental payment scheme’ (RBAPS) resulting in economically sustainable and positive natural and historic environment outcomes.**
- i. Establish whole farm RBAPS pilots through the ongoing development of established Agri-Environment Schemes.
 - ii. Begin scoping to convert Greenlee farm into an RBAPS Pilot.
 - iii. Establish links with The Sill activity programme. Establish links between The Sill, Carlcroft Farm and Kirkley College with focus of enhancing the skills development and learning offer of the education and activities programmes.
- c) *(Business Plan objective)* **Implement an initiative to test a ‘natural capital approach’ to land management initially for the upper catchments of the Usway Burn, Rowhope Burn and River Breamish.**
- i. Work with farmers to trial landscape scale approaches to Natural Flood Management.
 - ii. Work with landowners and the Forestry Commission to explore a natural capital approach to Forestry and explore the forestry design plan for the Cheviots Forest.
 - iii. Support research relating to land management and heritage management.
 - iv. Support the ongoing development and implementation of the Border Uplands Demonstrator project, to include: identifying opportunities to pilot new approaches to land management.
- d) *(Business Plan objective)* **Deliver the target for the Natural Environment Vision of 200 hectares of new native woodland planting each year through woodland creation and forestry plantation restructuring. Work with the forestry sector to help deliver the principle of ‘the right tree in the right place’**
- i. We will help develop a three year Action Plan to take forward the shared priorities set out in the 2018 National Parks England/Forestry Commission Accord and undertake an annual review of progress.
 - ii. Establish new native broadleaved planting through new planting and the restructuring of existing forests. Ensure woodland management is undertaken to at least the minimum Requirements and Guidance set out in the UKFS.

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- iii.** Pursue the progression of six new woodland creation initiatives including those at Ingram, Lanternside, Middleburn, Bonnyrigg and Hetherington Farms, (see 2.c.iii).
- iv.** We will comment on two woodland management plans and one Long Term Forestry Design Plan, with the purpose of seeking to establish around 150 hectares of new native broadleaved planting through the restructuring of existing forests (see 2.d.ii).
- v.** Identify resource requirement for assisting in meeting government targets for woodland creation going forward.

Aim 4 – Contributing to Thriving Communities

To ensure the thriving and vibrant communities have a strong sense of place and economy grounded in the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.

- a) *(Business Plan objective)* **Support sustainable local businesses and employment. We will work directly and proactively with more businesses through The Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre and open and operate an Enterprise Hub at The Sill.**
- i. Continue to support sustainable local businesses through the promotion of local products, information exchange, distribution of grants and hosting seasonal fairs.
 - ii. Provide support, advice and signposting (including funding both internal and external) and networking opportunities if appropriate to enable local businesses start up, expansion and diversification (and also to enable the instigation of new community-led ventures and projects).
 - iii. Support local communities in delivering projects and activities which meet the Authority's operational objectives and targets through the engagement, facilitation and empowerment of local communities and businesses.
 - iv. To develop and promote visitor experiences around the National Park cycling offer
 - v. Use the Sill to support sustainable travel.
- b) *(Business Plan objective)* **Continue to operate a positive and proactive planning service for the Park which positively facilitates the vision for the Park and its thriving communities.**
- i. Continue to meet timescale targets for determining planning applications and pre-application enquiries.
 - ii. Undertake monitoring of unauthorised development and where necessary carry out enforcement action to ensure the special qualities of National Park are not harmed.
 - iii. Positive engagement with our customers, communities and Members in maintaining a positive planning service.
 - iv. Work closely with Consultees, external and internal specialists who input into consultations on planning application and pre-application responses.
 - v. Planning consultant services from Programmes & Conservation team Specialists for pre-apps and application comments.
- c) *(Business Plan objective)* **Develop a new Local Plan and Infrastructure Plan for the National Park and actively advocate for the provision and retention of essential community facilities and services, and the development of new homes to meet local needs.**
- i. Develop a new Local Plan for the Park in line with the agreed Local Development Scheme.
 - ii. Update evidence base studies and research to inform the Local Plan review.
 - iii. Work with Community Action Northumberland, Northumberland County Council and other housing delivery partners to explore potential opportunities for the delivery of community-led and other affordable housing within the National Park.
 - iv. Work with local communities to assist them in developing Neighbourhood Plans (e.g. Wooler) where they wish to do so.
 - v. Strengthen current relationships with local development trusts and community partnerships.

- vi. Work with communities, partners and service providers to explore ways to maintain and improve essential rural services, community facilities and infrastructure.
- d) (*Business Plan objective*) Establish a new training programme including public training activities, apprenticeships, and enhanced work placement opportunities, achieving The Sill Training Programme target of 1,600 training days per year by 2021.**
- i. Deliver the Sill Training programme, achieving 1,400 activity days that will increase knowledge and understanding of heritage and conservation.
 - ii. Deliver the Sill Training and Education programmes, developing training and development opportunities with local schools, colleges and Universities, such as hosting school work experience students and work experience placements to assist the Authority in delivering various work programmes.
 - iii. Provide Support to the EU funded International Heritage and Landscape School, HERILAND, through work with Newcastle University's "Living Lab".
 - iv. Design & deliver Sill Activity Plan: Specialist Activities, including the support of young people through the Youth Manifesto, Higher Level Apprenticeships and Training for Autism and Dementia awareness.

Aim 5 – Contributing to a Valued Asset

To 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.

- a) *(Business Plan objective)* **Work with and through the Northumberland National Park Management Plan Partnership to ensure the value of the National Park is clearly demonstrated by the policies and actions of all who have an influence on the National Park.**
- i. Work with partners to realise the ambitions of the Management Plan via partnership meetings, monitoring and reporting of progress.
 - ii. Strengthen tourism partnerships at national, regional and local level to ensure that the National Park and Sill are recognised as valued assets.
 - iii. Monitor trends, policy development and product development around transport and travel.
 - iv. Influence key partner policies and work plans and also work with Partners to shape collaborative project opportunities.
- b) *(Business Plan objective)* **Celebrate and showcase The Sill to realise the economic and social benefits. National Park and key partner events will be held regularly on site and advocacy for The Sill and its key messages is taken up regionally, nationally and internationally.**
- i. Coordinate a minimum of 5 marketing campaigns throughout the year linked to key holidays and events by March 2019.
 - ii. Advocate the Sill and National Park Messages regionally, nationally and internationally through work with Tourism and Marketing Groups.
 - iii. Work with National Park Family on joint initiatives celebrating the anniversary of NPs.
 - iv. Progress Health Projects for all (see work with JLAF).
 - v. Successfully deliver the Sill official opening by 2019.
 - vi. Enter 4 regional / national awards to showcase the development of the Sill Brand.
 - vii. Host 20 marketing stands across the region.
 - viii. Write, adopt and implement a Charging Policy for sponsored and paid for events within the Park and along the national trail as part of the Estates Review.
- c) *(Business Plan objective)* **Promote the value and relevance of the Northumberland National Park and The Sill brand. This will be achieved through securing brand partnerships, and a continued commitment to internal and external communications and marketing. We will use data to further understand and demonstrate the value and impact of our work.**
- i. Promote the Sill and National Park Brand through external brand partnerships.
 - ii. Contribute to external consultations and working groups to ensure the National Park purposes remains relevant to future policy. Including Lead Roles within the Historic Environment, Natural Environment and Farm Liaison groups.
 - iii. Host the International Landscape Archaeology Conference in September 2018.
 - iv. Assess the state of tourism in the National Park against the Government's 5-Point Plan for Tourism and proposed Tourism Sector Deal.

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- v. Improve internal and external communications through a co-ordinated and regular schedule of press releases and campaigns. Including 6 joint press releases with partners and 4 high profile campaigns.
 - vi. Improve and enhance “Gateway” signage into and around the National Park.
 - vii. Promote the value and the relevance of the Northumberland National Park and Sill brand.
 - viii. Further implement rebrand across the organisation and with partners by September 2018.
- d) (*Business Plan objective*) Continue to work with partners in the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership to develop and implement innovative projects in nature conservation, land management and the protection of natural capital. The Authority will be widely recognised as being at the forefront of innovation and change towards a sustainable upland land management regime.**
- i. Contribute to the Northern Upland Chain LNP Partnership.
 - ii. Support the LNP Partnership through progression of the Cheviot Peatland Project.
 - iii. Support the LNP Partnership through progression of the Curlew Project.
 - iv. Support the LNP Partnership through progression of the Woodland opportunity Mapping.
 - v. Support the LNP Partnership through progression of the Natural Capital Accounting for the LNP Area.
 - vi. Support the Hill Farmer Training Project.

Aim 6 – Maintaining an Excellent Organisation that is Fit for the Future

To be an efficient, effective and inclusive organisation achieving through partnerships and striving for excellence.

- a) (Business Plan objective) Continue to evolve the operational model for the Authority to support our new powers to trade and enhance our income generation and fundraising capabilities.**
- i. Continue to deliver on the priorities agreed in the Authority Estates Review, implementing recommendations as required and prioritising portfolio management appropriate to 2018-19 and the medium term.
 - ii. Develop an Arts Strategy to enhance our potential for income generation.
 - iii. Develop the Business Sustainability plan for events.
 - iv. Design and deliver Art Activities with support from fundraising team for ACE bid.
 - v. Continue to monitor the Authority's VAT position to ensure the optimum position for the Authority, taking on board any issues arising from the HMRC VAT inspection of April 2018.
 - vi. Deliver a new series of challenge fundraising events in the Park, completing at least one event by March 2019.
 - vii. Continue to maintain and review financial controls for the Northumberland National Park Foundation, ensuring annual accounts are independently completed and comply with the Charities Commission and Companies House requirements. Report to the Foundation Trustees on financial matters and assist with Grant requests.
 - viii. Continue to support the National Park Foundation as a fundraising vehicle for projects within the Park.
 - ix. Fulfil our statutory financial obligations for the year ended March 2018, facilitating a faster close of accounts and submission of the Whole of Government (WGA) as determined by the Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015.
 - x. Act as the accountable body for the financial close of the Hadrian's Cavalry Project, ensuring the independently verified final claim is submitted by 31st July 2018.
 - xi. Review the Standing Orders relating to Contracts and the Financial Regulations and processes in light of the management restructure including streaming as appropriate.
- b) (Business Plan objective) Diversify our sources of income generation and grow the contribution of self-generated income by £680,000 each year to 2021.**
- i. Deliver organisational wide income generation target of £117,000 in 2018-19.
 - ii. To deliver income generation targets for the retail operation at the Sill including 15% retail uptake, 50% margin on merchandise and average £1.34 spend per head.
 - iii. Create diverse and sustainable fundraising through campaigns, donations and membership schemes.
 - iv. Meet our fundraising targets for the year including £15,000 for HWP and £50,000 for Special Projects.
- c) (Business Plan objective) Continue to invest in our members, staff and volunteers to further develop as an expert, ambitious and innovative organisation.**
- i. We will continue to undertake IT projects to provide improved platforms and functionality, such as implementing a Windows Server upgrade at Eastburn, investigating the future plan for Office, gradual migration to windows 10 and upgrading the Eastburn phone server.
 - ii. Continue to invest in our members, staff and volunteers through the launch of a Wellness Plan, Health Scheme, SNPS representation and introduction of 360° appraisals for members.

- iii. Recruit two key roles from the recent Leadership Team restructure, a Director of Park Management and a Director of Business Development, and invest in team development of new Leadership Team.
 - iv. Organise 3 opportunities for staff to undertake practical work in the National Park.
 - v. Complete the Authority's 3-year Organisational Development Strategy ensuring alignment with our Cultures & Values, and taking a particular focus attracting job applicants who are aligned to our core values as an Authority and the continued mental health wellbeing of our staff.
- d) *(Business Plan objective)* **Better understand our customers and design our products and services accordingly by effectively implementing and operating a new business information and intelligence system.**
- i. To create integrated business / audience analysis systems that allow us to better use our data.
 - ii. Implement the GDPR action plan with the aim of having ongoing compliance.
 - iii. Deliver approved Sill Evaluation plan with support from focus groups and case studies.
- e) *(Business Plan objective)* **Refine our performance management framework to enable the impact of the Authority's work to be clearly demonstrated, leading to local, regional and national recognition.**
- i. Review the existing Corporate Performance Management Framework.
 - ii. Monitor and report on the Annual Progress of Relevant Authority Plans and KPIs.
 - iii. If necessary implement a review of any National Park Authority strategic document/plan in accordance with identified timescales and relevant monitoring data/information.