

Appendix 1 to ITEM 2: 2021-2022 Performance Report

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2021-22 Summary

This year Northumberland National Park Authority, in line with government guidance, progressed towards a complete easing of restrictions after two years of impacts caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. As reported in the Forward Work Programme for 2021-22 the Business Plan aims, and objectives were rolled forward for a year to allow us to track our progress through the recovery period. The pandemic caused changes to our working patterns, delays to the implementation of the Organisational Development Strategy and prompted overhaul of our IT services. A review of our set of our KPIs and Business Plan is set to take place in the coming year and align our objectives to the revised Management Plan which will be adopted in later in 2022.

As predicted in the performance summary for 2020-21 our delivery against the established targets improved significantly over the year with 75% our objectives having achieved ‘good’ performance and 0% delivering ‘poor’ performance. However, when we look at our high-level set of 9 KPIs, we do not have the required information to update the figures for five of the 9 targets. Having discussed this with our partner organisations, we have a number of reasons for this but all of it relates to national staff shortages. This is particularly evident in the KPI list of 9 objectives as these are derived, for the most part, from external organisations. We are expecting updates for the data, but we do not currently have a timeline for this.

Internally we continue to work through a hybrid system with on-site and home working. A review of this is to take place in September 2022. The BCP arrangements set up in March 2020 to respond to the pandemic concluded in March 2022 following the government announcement to accept Covid-19 as an endemic disease and as an organisation we have now moved to a ‘Covid Aware’ status of operation.

Our financial performance for 2021-22 was above expectation with a surplus of £116,900 which is proposed to be placed into general reserves in anticipation of short-term cost pressures.

Status of the 2018-21 Strategic Risk Register

The Strategic Risk Register (SRR) seeks to identify and mitigate the risks of not achieving Business Plan aims. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic the Authority identified that many Business Plan aims were ‘Almost Certain’ to be impacted and that this had the potential to be ‘catastrophic’. Revisions were made to the SRR to address these challenges, and the mitigation measures were successfully actioned.

The Authority has a set of 59 actions intended to mitigate the impact on our work and these are split among the 7 identified strategic risks. These are:

1. The National Park Authority fails to respond to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. The National Park Authority is unable to adapt to policy changes from national government.
3. The National Park is unable to deliver nature recovery and enhancements of our natural capital.
4. The National Park Authority is unable to become an organisation fit for the future.
5. The National Park Authority is unable to manage our financial position.
6. The National Park Authority fails to deliver the goal of national parks for everyone.
7. The National Park Authority is unable to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The inherent and residual risks have been tabulated to better illustrate the change in risk following the adoption of the 59 mitigation measures, these are presented in Table A and Table B.

The SRR is operated as a 'living' document constantly undergoing review.

Table A. SRR Inherent Risk Matrix

Inherent Risk	Probability				
Impact	1. Rare	2. Unlikely	3. Possible	4. Likely	5. Almost Certain
5. Catastrophic				5	1
4. Major			4	2,6,7	
3. Moderate				3	
2. Minor					
1. Slight					

Table B. SRR Residual Risk Matrix

Residual Risk	Probability				
Impact	1. Rare	2. Unlikely	3. Possible	4. Likely	5. Almost Certain
5. Catastrophic					
4. Major		4	2, 5	1, 7	
3. Moderate			3		
2. Minor		6			
1. Slight					

Risk 1, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and Risk 7, Climate Change, remain the greatest area of concern in the residual risk matrix as, whilst we are able to mitigate these to some extent, solutions to the underlying problem are beyond our immediate control as an organisation. The Authority's response to the impact of Covid -19 was subject to an internal audit report this year which has provided full assurance and the Authority's actions in respect of climate change are reported elsewhere on this agenda.

Risk 2, Policy Change from National Government and Risk 5, Our Financial Position also require ongoing monitoring and mitigation measures as it is possible that policy or funding changes can have a major impact on our ability to deliver our objectives.

Risk 3, nature recovery and natural capital, Risk 4, an organisation fit for the future and Risk 6, national parks for everyone are the areas of lowest residual risk, and also areas of work over which we have the greatest control as an Authority.

Table C presents a summary of progress against the Strategic Risk Register actions as at the end of Quarter 4 2021/22. 47% of actions are completed or at an accomplished and ongoing state, 36% had significant or 'good' progress, 17% were at a level of 'acceptable' progress and 0% are in 'early' progress. 0% of actions are yet to be progressed.

Table C. Summary of progress against Strategic Risk Register actions

	No Action	Early Progress	Acceptable Progress	Good Progress	Actioned	Total
1. Covid-19 pandemic	0	0	0	0	10	10
2. Policy changes	0	0	2	3	2	7
3. Natural capital	0	0	2	5	2	9
4. Fit for the Future	0	0	1	6	3	10
5. Financial Position	0	0	0	3	7	10
6. National Parks for Everyone	0	0	3	1	3	7
7. Climate change	0	0	2	3	1	6
Total	0	0	10	21	28	59
%	0%	0%	17%	36%	47%	100%

Business Plan 2017-2021 Key Performance Indicators

Table D. Key Performance Indicators for NNPA

Indicator	Baseline	Target (2021)	Status 2020/21	Status 2021/22
Increase visitor numbers to Northumberland National Park.	1.47 million (2015)	1.62 m (↑10%)	0.97 m (↓34%)	Awaiting Update ⁵
Increase the economic contribution of National Park visitors to the local economy.	£141 million (2015) ¹	£155 million (↑10%)	£71 m (↓49%)	Awaiting Update ⁵
Develop and implement the Sill Activity Plan.	-	30,000 days / p.a.	10,922 days (36% of Target)	6,884 days (23% of Target)
The National Park will remain the most tranquil part of England.	Most tranquil (CPRE 2016)	Most tranquil	Study required	Study required
Maintain the area of blanket bog and extend the area of heathland.	20,800 ha (2016)	160 ha ² new heath	20,816 ha Total Heath	20,816 ha Total Heath
Maintain or increase the number and distribution of curlew.	450 pairs / 211 areas (2016)	Maintain or increase	Study required	Study required
Farmland managed under 'enhanced' agri-environment schemes.	85% (2016) ³	70%	89% ⁴	Awaiting Update ⁵
Reduce the number of scheduled monuments that are "at risk"	53 [12%] (2016)	21 [5%]	39 [9%]	33 [8%]
Total self-generated income	£242,000	£922,000	£1,000,600	£1,868,000

¹ 84% of visitors to the National Parks 'influence zone' visit the National Park but spend outside the boundary. This figure is 84% of the value of the visitor economy of the wider influence zone.

² NEV target of 1000 ha additional heathland area between 2010 and 2035 (25 yr period). 160 ha is 4 years' worth.

³ In 2016, 100% of the farmed area of the National Park was covered by an agri-environment scheme. 85% of the farmed area was covered by agreements with 'higher level' options. Changes to agri-environment schemes mean only (and not all) areas with higher level options will qualify in the future. The 70% target is based on the 2016 benchmark for other English National Parks.

⁴ There are no longer any holdings in Entry Level Stewardship in NNP. The definition of farmland now applies to all holdings under the Rural Land Registry, as Countryside Stewardship Schemes also include woodland and scrub areas.

⁵ There are a range of factors responsible for the delay to national data, after effects of Covid-19 are impacting our partners ability to generate the figures in the National Datasets.

2020-21 Business Plan Performance Indicators

To better understand how our projects are progressing the objectives of the National Park Authority Business Plan 2017-21, performance in 2021-22 has been mapped against the 28 headline indicators in the Business Plan. This showed that 21 were considered 'good', 7 'acceptable' and 0 were 'poor'. This year our targets have been rolled over as the pandemic caused a reduction in our delivery in 2020-21. The report aims to shape the context of our delivery and therefore makes frequent reference to our activities over the past two years.

Table E. Headline Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators - Assessment		
Good Performance 21	☑	75%
Acceptable Performance 7	☐	25%
Poor Performance 0	☒	0%

The section below details the 28 main work areas during the year and performance tables related to them.

Table F. Performance Key

KEY:	☒	Poor performance	☐	Acceptable performance	☑	Good performance
	↓	Declining trend	=	Static trend	↑	Improving trend

Our Performance in 2021-2022

Aim 1 – Contributing to a Welcoming Park

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

a) 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.

☑ At the end of 2021-22 NLHF support for The Sill was fully wound down. There has been a rebound in visitor figures during the year. The initial target was set with an assumption of a 20% fall from 2019-20 (pre covid) and this has been realistic with 106,517 visitors coming to the site. This remains above the expectation, of 100,000, set when The Sill was in development. Even with the impact of Covid in the last two years, the site has attracted an average of 109,300 visitors per year.

The Sill has also been proven to be a leading building and visitor experience winning several awards following construction, these are:

- 2018 – RICS Tourism and Leisure Award
- 2018 – RIBA North East Award
- 2018/19 - National Landscape Award for the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe
- 2019 – Selwyn Goldsmith Award for Universal Design
- The Sill was also a finalist in the Cultural Enterprises BEST SHOP award 2021-22

b) 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.

After almost a full year with restrictions on delivery in 2020-21 this year there was the opportunity to begin face to face events and education activities. Many of the outreach activities that would be scheduled in a more normal year still did not take place. Instead, many engagement activities were operating on a restricted, ticketed entry only, system rather than mass participation. In the previous two years shows and outreach recorded around 10,000 engagements and this year these have not taken place. Instead, we have been fortunate to be able to participate in Generation Green. 3,350 engagement were planned for the year and 6,884 were delivered, this is a 205% improvement on our annual target, but still represents only 23% of the intended Business Plan target set in 2017. Given that programmes such as our education programme have a limited capacity, it will be necessary to review this target going forwards. There is an ongoing pipeline of work which contributes to our audience development at The Sill, the Temporary Exhibition Programme. These are substantial pieces of work and have included in the past year:

- The Lost Words, remaining in residence until June,
- Stories in Stone, in partnership with Newcastle University,
- Graft and Glory, in partnership with the Mining Institute,
- Future Landscapes, with art supplied by Newcastle University,
- Inspired by our Land, a rolling celebration of local artists, and the
- Dark Skies Exhibition, curated internally.

c) 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.

At the end of the business plan period we have delivered 9 projects, secured funding for 3 and have submitted proposals for a further two. There is also a pipeline of upcoming work which is not included in this list, but it includes facilities upgrades to support the transition to Net Zero and the work committed to The Sill through the Temporary Exhibition Programme.

The pandemic postponed decisions and funding opportunities for Hadrian's Wall Path improvement project and the Cheviot Hills Heritage Project respectively, as philanthropic and government funding sourced switched to the immediate priority of supporting communities. The NNP Culture Recovery Fund was a result of funding changes caused by the pandemic and provided support to the organisation to meet visitor demands during the start of the visitor season.

Work has been taking place to establish a partnership with the Ad Gefrin distillery in Wooler which can meet this need close to the north of the National Park.

The following is the list of facilities and access projects:

Completed Projects

- 400m of pitching and slabs – Simonside, concluded 2017-18
- 2500m footpath improvement - Pennine Way, concluded 2018-19 (Revitalising Redesdale)
- New brown and white signage – Breamish Valley 2018-19
- Repaint of Boundary Cairns and Benches – Across NNP 2018-19
- Building Refurbishment – Walltown, building complete 2019-20
- Additional Outdoor Classroom – Walltown building complete 2019-20
- Building Refurbishment - Cawfields building complete 2019-20
- NNP Culture Recovery Fund – Complete 2021-22 including:

- New Accessible Routes proposed
- Improved signage and interpretation
- Car Park improvements at congested sites.
- Outdoor Play Area at The Sill – Completed 2021-22, some snagging remaining.

Funding Secured / In Delivery

- Hadrian's Wall Path improvements – Funding secured 2020-21
- Hadrian's Wall Recovering Nature – Funding Secured 2020-21
- The Lost Spells Curation – To be delivered in 2022-23

Awaiting Funding

- Cheviot Hills Heritage Project – Funding proposal drawn up 2020-21
- Cheviot Footpath Restoration Project – Funding Proposal Drawn Up 2020-21
- Ad Gefrin car park
- Hareshaw Linn car park extension

d) 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.

Digital engagement in 2020-21 increased significantly as lockdowns restricted people's ability to travel, website use alone increased 36% year on year. This trend accelerated in the past year with unique visitors to The Sill site increasing 64% from 2019-20 and NNP website users increasing 79% from 2019-20. There were 649,840 unique visitors to our websites during the year, far exceeding the 500,000 target. Social media followers increased more slowly to 85,627.

e) Greatly expand opportunities for people to become involved in volunteering with the National Park Authority achieving 3,300 days a year by 2021.

Volunteering across the National Park was given a boost by the Culture Recovery Fund which, among other things supplied additional funding for our volunteer costs and additional ranger work days. Our volunteers achieved 2,497 days activity during the year, below the Business Plan target but a significant increase on the 1,318 days recorded last year due to the restrictions in place.

Table G. Performance Summary, Aim 1

Indicator	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Assessment
Total Sill Visitors					
· Visitors (target)	100,000	100,000	53,716	115,000	
· Visitors (actual)	146,446	134,849	48,492	106,517	☐↑
· Achievement against target	146%	135%	90%	93%	
Sill Retail Income					
· Retail Income (target)	£195,000	£188,500	£88,500	£150,650	
· Retail Income (actual)	£174,854	£176,018	£89,444	£211,851	☑↑
· Achievement against target	90%	93%	101%	141%	
The Sill Activity Programme					
· Activity days (target)	25,000	29,600	0	3,350	
· Activity days (actual)	21,157	28,369	820	6,884	☑↑
· Achievement against target	85%	96%	100%	205%	
The Sill Education Programme					
· Activity days (target)	10,300	12,600	0	2,000	
· Activity days (actual)	8,556	17,261	15	5,054	☑↑
· Achievement against target	83%	137%	100%	253%	
The Sill Events Programme					
· Activity days (target)	13,300	15,400	0	1,350	
· Activity days (actual)	11,048	10,226	10,907	1,488	☑↓
· Achievement against target	83%	66%	100%	110%	
The Sill Training Programme					
· Activity days (target)	1,400	1,600	0	0	
· Activity days (actual)	1,553	882	498	342	☒↓
· Achievement against target	111%	55%	100%	100%	
NNP Website engagement					
· Website unique visitors (target)	316,000	310,000	425,000	425,000	
· Website unique visitors (actual)	276,735	312,932	426,399	569,690	☑↑
· Achievement against target	88%	101%	100%	134%	
SILL Website					
· Website unique visitors (target)	58,000	55,000	75,000	75,000	
· Website unique visitors (actual)	49,466	54,432	51,160	89,150	☑↑
· Achievement against target	85%	99%	68%	119%	

Indicator	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Assessment
Facebook engagement (NNP & SILL)					
· Facebook followers (target)	32,700	29,400	55,000	55,000	
· Facebook followers (actual)	26,732	29,538	31,912	33,248	<input type="checkbox"/> ↑
· Achievement against target	82%	100%	58%	60%	
Other social media					
· Instagram followers (actual)	7,218	10,306	16,578	19,153	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↑
· Twitter followers (actual)	15,761	16,729	18,001	18,457	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↑
· LinkedIn followers (actual)	1,827	1,967	2,239	2,625	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↑
Volunteer days					
· No. Volunteer days organised or supported by Northumberland National Park Authority	5,059	4,065	2,153	2,497	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↑
· No. Of those days attended by 'under-represented' groups	649	616	133	322	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↑
· Value of volunteering	£329,000	£389,543	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Footpaths and other rights of way easy to use by the public					
· %age easy to use even though they may not follow the exact definitive line	65%	84%	84%	84%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =

Aim 2 – Contributing to a Distinctive Place

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

a) 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 Specific 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.

Over the course of the Business Plan period, NNPA and our partners have undertaken work to project areas covering 527 ha of degraded blanket bog habitat. The work which has taken place is just the beginning of the restoration process and it may take many years for the habitats to return to favourable condition. Some of the area covered has been revisited from earlier projects and further enhancements are being made to vegetation and blocking additional grips.

The Cheviot Peat Project concluded in December 2021 and resulted in 30km of eroded hags being reprofiled and bare peat covered with 2,496 bags of heather brash to restore 150ha of peatland. Volunteers on the project hand planted 80,000 cotton grass plugs.

The Northumberland Peat Partnership (NPP) was formed in 2020-21 with 3 'shovel ready' projects with support from the Environment Agency and Defra. 2 of these projects, at Sundaysight and Lilburn, have been completed. Unfortunately, the impact of storm Arwen and the resulting access issues meant that the work on Uswayford has not been possible. Funding for this work cannot be carried forward, but it remains a 'shovel ready' project for the NPP.

Figures for 2021 suggest that 33% of SSSI in NNP is currently favourable and work on the summit of Cheviot and throughout NNP should improve this in the coming years. 99% of SSSIs in NNP are registered as favourable or recovering.

b) 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 Bumblee, Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary, Juniper, Aspen and Woods Cranesbill

The Northumberland Hen Harrier Protection Partnership successfully supported the fledging of 18 chicks during the year from 5 nests, a joint record. Since 2015 there have been a total of 80 fledgelings from 24 nests, making Northumberland one of the best nesting places in England in recent years.

Less high-profile projects have also been taking place including the planting of Red Campion and Willow for the benefit of a wide range of pollinators. 500 Willow trees were planted in 2014 and these are now mature and blossoming and a further 300 trees were planted in the North of the National Park in 2018 and 2019. Our Sykes Bees Project 'Pollen in Love' in 2021-22 has allowed us to continue to sow wildflower seed on roadsides, plant 1,200 volunteer grow wildflowers and plant 150 willow and crab apple trees. A further 150 trees will be planted in the coming year.

We have been working with the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership (NUC LNP) to support the distribution of Curlew, however a funding bid from the LNP intended for June 2020 was not submitted due to knock on impacts from the pandemic. Fortunately, for Northumberland National Park, funding was secured by the RSPB for a curlew project along Hadrian's Wall and Geltsdale, Curlew LIFE. The project has involved volunteers undertaking survey work for both wading birds and their predators this spring and summer. 28 curlew territories have been identified. The project will continue until 2024 with improvements to land management practices and surveys hoping to evidence a stable Curlew population through 2024.

- c) **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 creations/restoration project, and plant three distinct new native woodlands greater than 20 hectares.**

✔ Projects to pilot new approaches to land management have evolved during the Business Plan period with the Border Uplands Demonstrator Initiative working to establish a whole farm approach to environmental management, concluding in 2018. This established network then transformed into a bid to Defra to be part of the Test and Trials of the new Environmental Land Management (ELM) System which ran from early 2020 to the end of April 2021. The ELMS pilot took place across the National Park. In total, land holdings with a combined area of just over 34,000 ha, or 32%, of the Park were involved. In 2021-22 Protected Landscapes in England were given funding to help ease the agricultural transition to the new ELM and further support nature recovery. The programme is called Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) and the criteria for funding is that land must contribute to Climate, Nature, People and Place. Payments for projects are made on top of existing stewardship payments.

- d) **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.**

✔ One of the primary drivers for delivering landscape enhancement at a landscape scale is the change to ELMS and the removal of Basic Payments which will be phased out between 2021 to 2027. In its place will be a system of Public Money for Public Goods. FiPL is the first evidence we have of what may be in store in the coming years. While the change is not happening during this Business Plan period, the work undertaken to prepare for this has been taking place.

Regular consultation on Forestry Management Plans and Forest Design Guides ensures that planting in the National Park meets the UK Forestry Standard at a minimum. The Authority is now also engaging with the Great Northumberland Forest (or Northumberland Woodland Creation Partnership) initiative to support the planting of new native woodland in the National Park in line with the principal of the 'right tree in the right place.'

The National Park has a presumption against proposals for large-scale low carbon and renewable energy development in the Local Plan adopted in July 2020, unless they are compatible with the Park's special qualities and community need.

In 2019 the Park was one of five National Parks in the UK to receive a grant from CLIF Bar as part of their National Parks Protectors Fund, receiving a £10,000 grant to support the Park's Dark Skies conservation projects. Available across the National Park the fund aimed to help retrofit outdoor lighting that was causing light pollution to more suitable forms.

- e) **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.**

✔ Revitalising Redesdale (RR) completed its penultimate year of the five-year project during 2021-22 and continues to operate to complement our other work programmes. The scheme is scheduled to be finish at the end of March 2023. The project will continue to deliver on its [twelve core themes](#) over the course of the coming year. As Covid restrictions are lifted, the focus will shift to even more community engagement and to assist with this a new Engagement Officer has been recruited. Much of the early work is ready to be shown off to the public and to compliment this, an interpretative contract has been let to deliver a series of interpretative materials. Thoughts are also turning to the legacy of the Partnership and ideas for the future of some elements of the landscape partnership, projects and activities are being discussed among the project partners and beneficiaries and will be integrated where necessary within our future business planning.

More information on how the project is progressing is available at <https://www.revitalisingredesdale.org.uk/>

f) Develop a new project to enhance access to, understanding of, and community engagement with the unique historic environment in the Cheviot Hills.

The objective during this business plan period, to develop a new project in the Cheviot Hills, has been substantially achieved with the initial symposiums and project brief drawn up. The next steps are to re-evaluate the project and identify potential funding streams as the UK restrictions begin to ease. In 2021-22 the project brief was reassessed after two years postponement due to Covid. The project will progress as an expression of interest to the NLHF in the coming year.

The Traditional Farm Buildings Pilot Scheme is currently in the final year of the delivery phase. 15 of 21 projects have now reached practical completion. Five projects are ongoing and there is 1 project left to begin physical works in May 2022. The scheme will close on 31st of December 2022. £1.44 million of the £2.17 million has been claimed to date. A full historical assessment has been carried out for each building. While this project was not envisaged during the development of the business plan, it has nevertheless contributed significantly to the restoration of our traditional buildings and supported the agricultural community in the National Park.

Table H. Performance Summary, Aim 2

Indicator	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Assessment
Percentage of SSSI land in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable but recovering' condition in the National Park as a whole	98%	98%	99%	99%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
· %age of land in 'favourable' condition	33%	33%	33%	33%	<input type="checkbox"/> =
· %age of land in 'unfavourable but recovering condition'	65%	65%	66%	66%	<input type="checkbox"/> =
Percentage of SSSI land in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable but recovering' condition in NNPA management	100%	100%	100%	100%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
· %age of land in 'favourable' condition	35%	35%	35%	35%	<input type="checkbox"/> =
· %age of land in 'unfavourable but recovering' condition	65%	65%	65%	65%	<input type="checkbox"/> =
Number of Listed Buildings 'at risk' in the National Park					
· Average number of Listed Buildings 'at risk' conserved during the last 3 years	0	0	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/> =
· Average number of Scheduled Monuments 'at high or medium risk' conserved during the last 3 years	10	7	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> =

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) 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.**

In the latest Natural England report, July 2020, 89% of Northumberland National Park’s farmed area is in a stewardship agreement. This contains some holdings in roll over of Environmental Stewardship and some field parcels that are now in the new Countryside Stewardship scheme. However, it should be noted that the new Countryside Stewardship schemes incorporates areas of woodland which were not originally included in the UAA definition of farmland.

- b) 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.**

This objective was envisaged as being a priority for the Authority at the start of the business plan period, however, Defra identified the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority as the lead on RBAPS programmes as part of their Test and Trial, and funded this. Instead, the Authority will be taking forward a Test and Trail with Defra to help inform the future of Environmental Land Management.

- c) 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.**

The national change to ELMS is embedding natural capital and the idea of public money for public goods. The Authority has been part of this transition through farming groups, initially supported through the facilitation fund in 2017. The success of these groups has prompted the development of a park-wide Farm Networking Project which began in early 2021. This project was the victim of a funding shortfall through the Facilitation Fund but has now received approval and will be in the coming year.

Natural Capital assessments were undertaken by the land managers involved in the NNPA “Test and Trials” on their respective holdings, potential improvements identified, and theoretical costings established.

The Hadrian’s Wall Recovering Nature project got underway in January 2021 with a combination of philanthropic funding and Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship grant. Hadrian’s Wall Recovering Nature is the Authority’s own experiment to determine how nature first farming will work. Having brought the management in-house, the Countryside Stewardship scheme has been approved and a Partnership Board have been formed to participate in its development.

- d) 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'.**

Work continues with The Great Northumberland Forest initiative to encourage new native woodland planting in the National Park, however, the project at present is focused outside the park boundary.

New native woodland planting inside the park boundary is being driven by woodland grant schemes and the current Countryside Stewardship grants.

Through this business plan period (2017-2021) 289Ha of new native woodland have been planted, with a further 52ha agreed so far in 2021-22. The 4-year average is 72ha, significantly below the target of 200ha per year. However, while this target has not been met, the Authority is currently developing a woodland policy position and ambition to align with the Great Northumberland Forest, and planting of new native woodland seems set to accelerate in line with changes in national policy on climate and nature.

Table 1. Performance Summary Aim 3

Indicator	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Assessment
Importance of the visitor economy (value and volume of tourism)					
· Value of tourism (£million) – Northumberland National Park	£92.80m	£98.64m	£49.78m	To be Confirmed	☐ =
· Number of tourists (million) – Northumberland National Park	1.67	1.74	0.97	To be Confirmed	☐ =
· Value of tourism (£million) – action areas (inc. NNP)	£200.3m	£209.91	£85.06m	To be Confirmed	☐ =
· Number of tourists (million) – action areas (inc. NNP)	1.95	2.02	1.05	To be Confirmed	☐ =

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) 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.

Throughout the Business Plan period The Sill retail space has devoted 80% of its products to local suppliers with one third supporting businesses in the National Park and Hadrian's Wall area. Since opening in 2017, The Sill retail space has spent £438,000 with suppliers generating £764,000 of sales for the Authority. There was a sharp drop in retail sales in 2020-21 as national lockdowns forced the building to close, but sales have rebounded in 2021-22.

The Enterprise Hub at the Sill was initially envisaged as a flexible working space for rural small businesses, however demand for the service was low and the space was adapted for additional capacity for internal and external meetings. Corporate away days and meetings have been developed as a new avenue for people to experience the National Park, these began in 2019-20 and, after the halt in available activity in 2020-21, bookings are looking strong for the coming year.

The AD122 Bus service along Hadrian's Wall had been funded as a year-round service during 2021-22. Uptake figures are expected soon, however public transport data from Google indicates there are 15% fewer users of public transport compared to pre-covid. In future years more information is going to be available as part of our marketing around events and engagements about the benefits of travelling by public transport.

During 2021-22 the Northumberland National Park Communities Fund has supported 12 projects with the opportunity to receive up to £2,000 each. At the end of the year just under £20,000 has been awarded to support community projects.

b) Continue to operate a positive and proactive planning service for the Park which positively facilitates the vision for the Park and its thriving communities.

The Planning service continues to provide excellent service with 100% of 99 applications being determined within statutory or agreed timescales. The approval rate for planning applications was very high at 97% of all applications determined being approved planning permission. The Pre-application advice service provided by the planning team continues to be a highly valued service which accounts for the high approval rate of applications.

c) 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.

Over the course of the business plan period, the review of the Local Plan for the National Park was completed, examined and adopted. The Local Plan is a document containing planning policies which guide the development and use of land in the National Park. There is early evidence of an increase in housing demand in the National Park, through our Planning service. The Local Plan changes should help to stimulate interest in dwellings of primary residence and improve the longevity of communities in the National Park.

The National Park Management Plan has been through its initial review process with Officers and Members and is currently out for consultation with the public. Feedback and final changes will take place in the coming year.

d) 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.

The training target for NNPA and has been wrapped up into our volunteering and engagement activities. Work Placements, apprenticeships and youth programmes are a mix of volunteering opportunities and

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projects such as Generation Green. The time that these groups contribute to work in NNP is recorded through our volunteering system. The structured training in traditional crafts and navigation are now paid for events lead by external providers which are recorded as part of our wider engagement package.

Table J. Performance Summary, Aim 4.

Indicator	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Assessment
Community grant awards in line with National Park Authority purposes					
· Number of grants awarded	19	18	4	12	<input type="checkbox"/>
· Value of grants awarded	£29,866	£28,952	£6,700	£19,775	<input type="checkbox"/>
· Value of levered / matched funding	£112,136	£80,815	£63,866	Not Yet Known	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business grant awards in line with National Park Authority purposes					
· Number of grants awarded	5	8	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
· Value of grants awarded	£7,250	£13,020	£0	£0	<input type="checkbox"/>
· Value of levered / matched funding	£9,009	£65,487	£0	£0	<input type="checkbox"/>
· Percentage of all <i>determined</i> planning applications which have been approved	97%	98%	100%	97%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
· Percentage of planning applicants satisfied with the service received (<i>reported bi-annually</i>)	-	-	-	-	
Processing of planning applications (major, minor and other)					
· Percentage of <i>major</i> applications determined within 13 weeks	100%	100%	-	-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
· Percentage of <i>minor</i> applications determined within 8 weeks	98%	100%	100%	100%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =
· Percentage of <i>other</i> applications determined within 8 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =

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) 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.

✓ A review of the Authority's performance management, undertaken in 2020, found that the Management Plan itself should be the context for all work in the National Park and that officers could be responsible for ensuring work programmes were delivering the desired long-term outcomes. This approach allows for greater flexibility in delivery than is possible with prescribed annual actions.

The revised Management Plan, which is currently in draft, has had input from partner organisation as part of its initial development.

b) 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.

✓ During the course of the business plan period The Sill has been used the temporary exhibition space to showcase local artists, our Dark Skies, future working in 'Digital Landscapes', The Flow Country exhibition, highlighting the importance of the UK's peat bogs and Lost Words Festival, celebrating common words from the outdoors that are falling out of use due to a lack of understanding or awareness in nature. The Sill teams regularly co-ordinate events and activities with these exhibitions in order to make the best use of the available content and to ensure that the messages are understood by a wide audience. On average 45% of all visitors visit the Stell temporary exhibition space to discover more about our work and the work of our Partners.

2021-22 saw a renewed interest in the health benefits of the outdoors and increasing numbers of people are remaining in the UK for their holidays. The Sill, as the gateway to Northumberland National Park was well placed to welcome people and encourage them to explore further.

c) 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.

✓ Ongoing communication and engagement through social media and events are helping to re-enforce The Sill brand. Despite the pandemic, we succeeded in attracting 10% more visitors to The Sill than anticipated at the start of the business plan, and we have grown our website traffic by 210%. Commercial and philanthropic partnerships are being explored both through the Northumberland National Park Foundation, as well as the UK National Parks Partnership. Examples include a sponsorship deal with Columbia clothing brand for our outdoor PPE, the £10,000 grant from Clif Bar to preserve our Dark Skies, The Sykes Bees Pollinator project and grants to develop nature first farming on our site at Greenlee through Hadrian's Wall Recovering Nature.

d) 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.

✓ The LNP continues to be an important collaboration between protected landscapes in the North of England. NNPA representation continues on the LNP board. A Natural Capital Assessment has been completed for the whole of the LNP which identifies where the greatest potential value lies in our landscapes.

Our partnership working on nature and other key priorities has developed beyond that with the NUCLNP during the Business Plan period. These have included the North of Tyne Rural Investment Plan, Northumberland Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilot, The Northumberland Woodland Creation Partnership (Great Northumberland Forest) and the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

NNPA continues to work proactively with land managers and partner organisations and continue to be at the forefront of progress to sustainable upland land management.

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.

e) Continue to evolve the operational model for the Authority, support our new powers to trade and enhance our income generation and fundraising capabilities.

The Authority has continued its journey in growing its commercial and self-generated income, alongside growing its philanthropic and charitable fundraising, which together are shifting the reliance on core Government funding.

Opportunities for fundraising and income generation have been reviewed and a significant amount of work has been ongoing to further develop existing relationships with funders and a new prospect pipeline both for The Sill income targets and future projects.

The business hub at Eastburn continues to be fully occupied despite changes to working patterns caused by the pandemic. Over the course of the business plan, it is estimated that the pods have been occupied almost 90% of the time over 4 years. Vacant rooms at Church House, Rothbury continue to be put to use by providing additional space to the Forestry Commission, Northumbria Police and Northumberland Peat Partnership. Bewicks Kitchen and Coffee House has taken up residence in the building and appears to be well received locally.

Against The Sill income target, the focus has been on securing multiple-year grants from Trust and Foundation applications. The Barbour Foundation pledge of support remains current with funding for the education programme over three years (£30,000 per year) and £50,000 to support The Sill's operational costs over two years (£25,000). A bid for £53,560 to the Tarmac Communities Landfill Fund was also successful, funding a new outdoor learning and play space at The Sill.

We continue to develop sponsorship opportunities for the exhibition and engagement programme and £25,000 has been secured from the Reece Foundation (£20,000) and Tarmac (£5,000) to sponsor the STEM Festival at The Sill in 2021.

Against the annual £150,000 special projects target, £490,000 has been pledged from a philanthropic donor towards the Hadrian's Wall Recovering Nature project at Greenlee over three years.

The successful bid to the Cultural Recovery Fund, managed by National Lottery Heritage Fund, secured £133,000 which supported the Authority to welcome visitors back to the National Park in 2021 following the easing of government restrictions.

f) Diversify our sources of income generation and grow the contribution of self-generated income by £680,000 each year to 2021.

Delivering against the Authority's income target in 2021-22 was forecast to be a challenge during the year as restrictions on visits and indoor hospitality remained until the 19th of July. However, with £92,000 of Activities and Facilities fundraising support received during the year and the Culture Recovery Fund grant, the Authority was well placed to receive visitors when restrictions eased. Our Retail and Café sales figures were 141% and 101% of our target respectively and our car parks for the year achieved 128% of our target income. Our Total self-generated income for the year was £1,868,000 far exceeding the original target. Details can be found in the year-end financial report.

g) Continue to invest in our members, staff and volunteers to further develop as an expert, ambitious and innovative organisation.

The Authority continues to revisit our Organisational Development strategy on a 3-year cycle. The aim of this OD strategy is to allow us to Maximise Our Potential, making the greatest possible contribution to the Park, its communities and visitors. This includes four key areas; Fit for the Future,

Wellbeing, Leadership and Management and Employee Engagement. The current iteration is due to be completed in December 2022.

h) Better understand our customers and design our products and services accordingly by effectively implementing and operating a new business information and intelligence system.

✔ Our business information and intelligence systems continue to evolve. Following the 2019 Organisational Development Strategy, the Digital, Performance and Intelligence, IT and GIS work areas were combined. The new Data and Digital Team in was formed in early 2021 and has now been in place for a year. A team strategy is being written to support the organisation moving forwards. This will integrate our infrastructure, data and web capabilities to provide a better experience for internal and external stakeholders.

i) 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.

✔ The Authority continues to work with Defra and the Family of National Park Authorities to explore the changes to protected landscapes, as suggested in the Glover Review.

In 2021-22 the Authority continued to realise the benefits of cloud-based software to support remote working. This in turn has enabled more staff and volunteers to contribute to the same goals and reports and reduced business travel. This improved data collection should continue to be of benefit as we explore flexible working in the future.

As part of our Management Plan review, we are also reviewing our performance management framework and our KPI's. NNPA collects significantly more data internally now than it has done in the past and these data sets can be used to demonstrate our value as an organisation.

Table K. Performance Summary, Aim 6.

Indicator	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Assessment
· Staff turnover (excluding end of fixed term contracts)	14.80%	7.00%	12.90%	16.10% ⁵	☐ ↑
· Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per FTE	3.20	4.89	2.41	2.02	☐ ↓
· Average number of FTE posts on establishment	61.40	59.90	56.00	59.35	
Member participation in attending committees	79%	68%	87%	75%	☐ =
· Income generation – percentage achievement against target	107%	119%	244%	142%	✔ ↑
· Financial outturn (variance to budget as a percentage of total expenditure)	1.8%	0.9%	1.0%	2.3%	✔ =

⁵ Staff turnover is impacted a result of Front of House and Café staff which have face recruitment challenges during the past year.