



Report 5: Appendix 1

State of the National Park Report 2022

The State of the National Park Report provides an overall picture of the 'health' of the National Park and measures progress against the outcomes set out in the National Park Management Plan in 2016.

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Introduction

The State of the National Park Report provides a snapshot of the overall health of Northumberland National Park (NNP) and provides an update of the progress in delivering the aims and objectives of the Northumberland National Park Management Plan 2016-2021.

The Management Plan was developed in close consultation with the communities, businesses and organisations that have an interest in the National Park; these make up the Management Plan Partnership. The Plan represents a shared vision for the place, and this is therefore a report on the special qualities of the park, how these qualities are enjoyed, and by whom, and on the economic and social wellbeing of the park communities.

The report is structured in line with the five Aims of the National Park Management Plan with a comprehensive update on the achievements of the Management Plan Partnership in delivering each of the 16 primary outcomes¹.

The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) has meant that the decision has been made to extend the State of the Park monitoring until we begin monitoring the targets of the next Management Plan, in 2023.

This year's State of the National Park report sees improvements in across several outcomes which were affected by the impact of Covid-19. Ten outcomes (62.5%) achieved a 'good' performance while 6 outcomes are 'acceptable'. Last year several outcomes had a trend which was 'unknown' reflecting the sudden drop in performance, future trends for which were unknown. There is only one outcome which is declining after this period, and this relates to people of working age coming to live and work in the National Park. Although the data will take some time to catch up, current estimates predict that the average age of residents in Northumberland National Park continues to increase.

I trust you will find this report of interest and I would welcome your feedback on any aspects of the report.

Tony Gates, Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

December 2022

¹ The format of the report has changed to meet accessibility standards. Northumberland National Park Authority is a publicly funded body and our information published online is regulated by the Government Digital Service (GDS).

Northumberland National Park Authority Key Performance Indicators

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%)	1.27m (↓14%)
Increase the economic contribution of National Park visitors to the local economy.	£141 million (2015) ²	£155 million (↑10%)	£71 m (↓49%)	£146 million (↑4%)
Develop and implement the Sill Activity Plan.	-	30,000 days / p.a.	10,922 days (36% of Target)	6,884 days Hi (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 ³ 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) ⁴	70%	89% ⁵	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 by NNPA	£242,000	£922,000	£1,000,600	£1,868,000

² 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.

³ NEV target of 1000 ha additional heathland area between 2010 and 2035 (25 yr period). 160 ha is 4 years' worth.

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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, but ultimately staff shortages and capacity are impacting our access to figures.

Delivery of desired outcomes from the Northumberland National Park Management Plan 2016-2021

Introduction

Performance of our 16 desired Outcomes is recorded as Good, Acceptable or Poor and trend information is recorded as Declining, Static, Improving, or Unknown.

Aim 1 – A Welcoming Park

Outcome 1.1 – People who come to the National Park will feel they have had an exceptional experience in relating to the landscape and in finding peace, tranquillity and adventure and will have enjoyed their visit.

Target – To maintain and improve levels of visitor satisfaction and achieve a high standard and broad range of facilities, information, and service within the National Park.

Performance – Good

Trend – Improving

Impact – In 2021, improved signage, interpretation and visitor welcome facilities have been provided in a number of key visitor access points. This was made possible by a grant from the Culture Recovery Fund (CRF). As a result, our satisfaction survey of 531 visitors, revealed a net promoter score of 76%, with an average satisfaction rating of 9.3 out of 10.

Car Parking information for 2020 and 2021 indicated that, out of lockdown, our facilities at Cawfields and Walltown were visited more often than in recent years and this is likely to be due to our refurbished facilities at these sites improving the visitor offer.

Key points -

- 2018 Visitor Survey showing 67% of visitors rated the park 6 out of 6.
- 2021 net promoter score of 76%.
- Average satisfaction rating of 4.3 out of 5 from online ratings.
- Public experience exceeded expectation for 9 of 14 facility types.
- Upgrade of facilities from Once Brewed to the Sill completed in 2017.
- Upgrade of facilities at Walltown and Cawfields completed in 2019.
- 2021 new signage and interpretation and visitor welcome facilities have enhanced visitor experiences at a number of sites across the Park.
- A bounce back in visitors more generally across the National Park in 2021.

Outcome 1.2 – The National Park will be accessible to a wider and more diverse audience including people who live in, work in, and visit the National Park.

Target – To increase visits to Northumberland National Park by those living within the region by 10% by March 2021 (from the 2016 baseline); increase visits from currently under-represented groups by 10% by 2021 (from the 2016 baseline); and improve information and infrastructure with more sites in the National Park accessible to all.

Performance – Acceptable (COVID Impacted)

Trend – Improving

Impact – With impacts remaining on foreign travel during the 2021/22 visitor season, there was a bounce back of visitors coming to Northumberland National Park with many of them visiting the for first time. Following on from the previous year, we saw a continued increase in new visitors from urban areas. However, our baseline for visitors to the National Park was 1.47m and the number

visiting in 2021 was estimated to be 1.27m, the target for the end of the management plan was 1.62m. Similarly, we have not been able to achieve our ambitious target for Activities during the year.

The funding provided by the CRF enabled us to recruit more volunteers and seasonal rangers to support these visitors and provide additional information and support.

We have been fortunate to be able to participate in Generation Green, a UK wide £2.5m project led by Access Unlimited. The project has reached more than 115,000 young people and children concluding in early 2022/23. We have also been working with JET, Chrysalis Dementia Support and Black Nature in Residence to provide target opportunities for people to visit and enjoy the National Park.

The Sill has been awarded the Selywn Goldsmith Award for Universal Design, recognising its credentials as an accessible venue. In addition, we have installed 3 Changing Places facilities at The Sill, Cawfileds and Walltown.

Unfortunately, Storm Arwen caused damage to around 20% of our public rights of way network. The impacts continue to be felt with closure or diversions on a number of routes leading to fewer access opportunities.

Finally our web visits have grown significantly following the pandemic as people continue to explore our visitor offer.

Key points -

- Total Visitors⁶:

Table A. Visitor Metrics for NNP, Change against 2015/16 Baseline. Note 20/21 figures continue to be impacted by COVID restrictions.

Metric	2015/16 (baseline)	2020/21	2021/22	% Change ⁷
Activity Days (In NNP)	10,153	820	6,884	-32%
Activities Held	383	15	208	-45%
Visitor Centres	29,609	48,600	120,382	+306%
STEAM (Tourism measure)	1,465,000	970,000	1,274,000	-13%
NNP Website	114,037	426,399	569,690	398%

- In 2021/22 97% of our Public Rights of Way were estimated to be ‘easy to use’⁸.
- Significant investment has gone into some key sections of our Public Rights of Way network in 2017 and 2018 with £50,000 invested in improvements to the Simonside footpath and £30,000 invested in improvements to the Pennine Way.
- Visits to our website have increased by over 300,000 per year with visits to our walking pages around 25% of the total.
- Our website is 94% compliant with current accessibility guidelines, within the top 10 of all government websites.

⁶ Source: NNPA, Go Northeast, STEAM

⁷ Change from 2015/16 Baseline

⁸ RoW surveys are selected on 5% of the network at random by Northumberland Country Council. This has caused the unusual situation of 97% of our network being “easy to use”, despite 18% of our network being closed following Storm Arwen.

Outcome 1.3 – A more diverse range of learning opportunities will be available to help people understand, value and contribute to conserving, enhancing and enjoying the National Park’s distinctive natural and cultural qualities.

Target – To use the resources of the National Park to provide increased access to learning and educational opportunities for young people.

Performance – Acceptable (COVID Impacted)

Trend – Improving

Impact – Site improvements continue across the National Park and from a range of our partners. In 2021 we had renewed interest in our education and events offers at both The Sill and our activity centre at Walltown. This year we hosted our first STEM festival and Tarmac were a key supporting partner in this. Our Partners, including universities, also make extensive use of the National Park as an educational resource and regularly require volunteers to help deliver these objectives. This includes our projects such as the Cheviot Peat Project, Revitalising Redesdale and Generation Green.

Our temporary exhibition programme has been busy during the year, hosting:

- 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.

Unfortunately, with impacts of lockdown extending into July 2021, we have not yet been able to return to pre-pandemic levels of volunteering and learning opportunities.

Key points -

- Education and engagement re-started in 2021 and saw an increase in bookings as the year progressed.
- Existing volunteering provision and improvements will be continued through ongoing and project work, including:
 - Guided Walks,
 - Revitalising Redesdale,
 - NLHF Culture Recovery Fund opportunities,
 - Generation Green Project lead by the YHA,
 - Historic environment volunteering.
- Volunteer days decreased around 50% from 4,065 in 2019/20 to 2,153 in 2020/21. The number increased slightly during 2021/22 to 2,497.
- There were 6,884 engagement days in 2021/22.

Aim 2 – A Distinctive Place

Outcome 2.1 – A distinctive place that will maintain a sense of inspiration and tranquillity.

Target – To protect and enhance tranquillity levels as the highest in England; conserve and enhance the National Park’s distinctive characteristics and sense of place; to ensure that all new development within or on the fringe of the National Park will conserve or enhance the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.

Performance – Acceptable (Storm Arwen Impacted)

Trend –Static

Impact – NNPA continue to work with partners and stakeholders ensuring that NNP retains its sense of place. ‘Low impact’ tourism opportunities are being embedded, overhead powerlines are being buried in areas of greatest visual impact and we continue to ensure that woodland planting is permitted in line with the principal of ‘the right tree in the right place’. Storm Arwen in November 2021 had a significant impact on the tranquillity and sense of place as around one million trees fell, nationally, in one night. Within the National park it is estimated that around 1,000 ha of trees fell. This has impacted the visitor offer and meant that 18% of our public rights of way were temporarily closed. It has not been until July 2022 that many of the forests have been cleared to re-open to the public.

Key points -

- Storm Arwen caused significant damage to the forestry landscape and PRoW of NNP.
- The new Local Plan adopted in July 2020.
- Tranquillity protected through existing and future planning policy.
- Dark Sky awareness campaigns protect the Gold status of Northumberland Dark Sky Park and targeting a reduction of sources of light pollution in the Park.
- Low impact tourism is being promoted through the use of electric bikes and ongoing financial support of Hadrian’s Wall Bus (HWB). The bus did not operate in 2020 but re-started in 2021.
- A Landscape Enhancement Initiative bid has been developed to make significant improvements and reduce erosion on Hadrian’s Wall Path National Trail.
- New native woodland planting inside the park boundary is being driven by woodland grant schemes and the current Countryside Stewardship grants.

Outcome 2.2 – The natural qualities and diverse habitats that characterise the changing landscapes will be safeguarded and enhanced.

Target – To bring about measurable improvements in the natural environment and deliver the Natural Environment Vision 2014-2035 (NEV).

Performance – Good

Trend – Static

Impact – Our partners continue to work with us to conserve and enhance our habitats and key species throughout the National Park. Through the new Northumberland Peat Partnership, we are assessing, with partners, degraded peat areas within and without NNP and attracting funding to restore them. The number of birds of prey fledglings in Northumberland continues to increase year on year, and the Authority continues to work with land managers to develop woodland and moorland management plans to improve habitats.

Funding was secured by the RSPB for a curlew project along Hadrian's Wall and Geltsdale, Curlew LIFE. 28 curlew territories have been identified and work continues with our partners to support pollinators, wading birds and freshwater species that live in the National Park.

Finally a Natural Capital Assessment has been undertaken for the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership (NUCLNP), with initial figures to be used as a baseline for future work.

Key points -

- 99% of SSSI sites within the National Park are in 'Favourable' or 'Recovering' status.
- The Cheviot Peat Project has concluded and restored 150 ha of damaged peat.
- Some damage to SSSI Sites has occurred during a fire on the Otterburn Training Area (OTA) in 2018 and a further fire damaged moorland on Simonside in 2020.
- Landscape scale approaches to natural capital, habitat and biodiversity continue through the Northern Upland Chain (NUC) and Revitalising Redesdale.
- Bird of Prey protection partnerships are improving the number of fledglings of osprey and hen harriers. The number of hen harrier fledglings in Northumberland has increased from 0 in 2014 to 18 from 6 nests in 2020 with successful nests in each of the last 6 years.
- The RSPB led Curlew LIFE project supporting volunteer survey work for both wading birds and their predators.

Outcome 2.3 – The rich historic environment and archaeological heritage will be understood, valued and cared for.

Target – To protect and enhance the historic environment and archaeological sites within the National Park and develop further understanding of its cultural heritage.

Performance – Good

Trend – Static

Impact – The number of Scheduled Monuments at Risk remains in decline thanks to our Heritage at Risk (HAR) volunteers who continuously monitor their condition and support early intervention or restoration. Delivery of Revitalising Redesdale (RR) and the Traditional Farm Buildings Pilot have had a significant impact on to improvement of the condition and understanding of our heritage assets during this period. Equipment and funding, made available through the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, are supporting landowners with maintaining monuments on their land.

Key points -

- The number of scheduled monuments at High Risk has fallen from 53 to 33 in the past 5 years, or 8% of the total of 426 monuments.
- Through the 'Traditional Farm Buildings' pilot project 21 traditional farm buildings are being restored across the National Park.
- The Revitalising Redesdale landscape partnership scheme has supported the restoration and conservation of Otterburn Battlefield and Bremenium Roman Fort. This project has become more focussed on engagement for the final year with a view to maintaining a community led legacy.
- Further understanding of the Rede Valley has been enabled through Lidar survey and community Archaeology Groups. More than 1,000 additional historic records have been added in 2019 thanks to this community led project.

Outcome 2.4 – The strong sense of identity and deep-rooted cultural heritage is balanced with a vibrant approach to the future.

Target – To perpetuate the vibrant traditions of the National Park and its gateway communities as part of the distinctive character of the area.

Performance – Good

Trend – Improving

Impact – Volunteers and partner organisations continue to take a leading role in ensuring local heritage and culture is preserved. This work is supported by staff input and community funding from the National Park Authority. During the year it has been increasingly important to provide outreach opportunities and take the park to the people, either through school assemblies, activity boxes or distributing materials to primary schools.

Key points -

- Following the Pandemic our Heritage At Risk volunteers have been keen to restart their survey work reporting directly to Historic England with their findings.
- Our temporary exhibition programme has displayed our industrial heritage during the year through Stories in Stone, Graft and Glory and Future Landscapes.
- The Revitalising Redesdale project team have been exploring the heritage of the Otterburn Ranges with the MoD and Breaking Ground Heritage, as well as with participants from Operation Nightingale, an MoD initiative to assist the recovery of wounded, injured and sick military personnel and veterans.
- The Community Archaeology Group at Redesdale was formalised during the year as part of the Revitalising Redesdale project legacy.
- The Augmented Reality PhD project in 2019/20 to 2021/22 has concluded with a successful demonstration at The Sill.
- Activity boxes and copies of the Lost Words provided to children and schools across the region.
- After successful temporary exhibitions featuring local artists and photographers, 'Inspired by our Land' is now a regular feature at The Sill.

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

Outcome 3.1 – New and better approaches to sustainable land and water management have been tested, adopted and embedded.

Target – To encourage and support the uptake of better and more sustainable land management practices which conserve and enhance the National Park’s qualities; and to ensure that all its rivers are of the highest quality and minimise the flood risk and impacts to communities and businesses.

Performance – Good

Trend – Improving

Impact – Initiatives are being implemented across the National Park to reduce point source pollution, improve the quality of our water courses and improve the diversity of our woodlands. Our ELMS test and trials was successfully concluded, and we are in the second year of the Defra funded, ‘Farming in Protected Landscapes’ grant scheme which supports improvements to our Natural Capital. The Authority has received a grant to trial new and innovative land management practices to help restore nature, whilst retaining an agricultural focus, through Hadrian’s Wall: Recovering Nature (HW:RN).

Key points -

- New Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL) grant for projects that deliver improvements to ‘Climate’, ‘Nature’, ‘People’ and ‘Place’. A total £1.4m funding pot is available over a three-year project period.
- The HW:RN project aims to create a nature first approach to the, NNPA owned and managed, Greenlee landholding and influence land management across the wider landscape. The project team is working with partners and land managers to extend the potential of this project at a landscape scale (Up to 6,000ha of adjoining land).
- Projects exploring alternative land management and making space for nature are being delivered at Hepple Whitefield and in the College Valley.
- 97% of NNP Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) is in a Stewardship Agreement.
- 94% of woodland and forestry in NNP is in active management compared to 53% in England.
- In 2016, 65% of NNP rivers were in ‘High’ or ‘Good’ status, in 2019 that number fell to 0%. 93% of rivers are now ‘Moderate’ and 7% are ‘poor’. This is due to a change in reporting criteria established that year.
- Improvements to the bank and bed of the River Rede have been taking place through Revitalising Redesdale in 2019/20.

Outcome 3.2 – The National Park makes an important contribution to achieving sustainable development and responding to climate change.

Target – To promote and implement sustainable land management practices which contribute to ecosystem services using the natural capital provided by the National Park; and encourage the production of renewable energy from sources compatible with the National Park’s distinctive qualities.

Performance – Good

Trend – Improving

Impact – Improvements in land management have seen increased stability of upland bogs, i.e. improved hydrology and reduced erosion. The NNP Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services have been assessed as part of a joint Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership (NUCLNP) project

and separately, the UK National Parks have commissioned a report into the carbon footprint of each National Park. Both of these reports have indicated that for Northumberland, the restoration of degraded peat is the highest priority activity on the path to improved Natural Capital and Net Zero.

Key points -

- Peat restoration is the most important means of reducing carbon emissions in NNP.
- Landscape scale approaches to improving land management have resulted in improving the condition of upland peat bog habitats, as evidenced in SSSI data.
- The government invested £10m to restore 6,580 hectares of peat bogs across the UK with the Cheviot summit contributing 150 Ha to this goal. This project concluded at the end of 2021.
- Further peat restoration work is underway supported by the newly formed Northumberland Peat Partnership, which has a target area from the Tyne gap north to the Scottish border. In 2020, the hydrology of 12 ha of peat was restored with more projects in the pipeline.
- Projects encouraging tree planting, specifically the Northumberland Woodland Creation Partnership (Great Northumberland Forest), are being explored with the intention of significantly increasing tree cover across the county and native woodland cover in the National Park.

Outcome 3.3 – There is sustained and economically-viable business growth in sectors which sensitively make use of the National Park’s special qualities.

Target – To strengthen and diversify the markets for businesses that relate to achieving National Park purposes; to grow the tourism market in and around the National Park; and retain, attract and develop new and traditional skills to meet the demand of enterprises and business growth in key sectors.

Performance – Acceptable

Trend – Improving

Impact –The easing of lockdown during 2020 saw an increase of new audiences. A survey of visitors in 2021 gave the National Park a net promotor score of 76%, almost all visitors would visit again in the future. The visitor season in 2021 saw a ‘bounce back’, but the visitor figure remains at the pre-pandemic level. Business in NNP remains dominated by agriculture and forestry and supporting land managers through the agricultural transition remains a priority area.

Key points -

- We were part of a £1.2m bid with 8 other National Parks to Discover England, supporting the development and delivery of the English National Park Experience Collection. The project ran from 2018/19 to 2019/20. The second phase of the scheme saw all 10 of the English National Parks take part and provide experiences through a central platform.
- Estimates for the Gross Value Add of The Sill demonstrates that with a build cost of approximately £8.7m and the subsequent increase in activities, retail, café and staffing the impact on the local economy is significant. (Over £1.5m GVA p/a).
- The Sill has helped to drive an increasing number of visitors to the National Park with the building welcoming 546,000 over the past 5 years. This supports recovery by increasing number of local arts, crafts and food suppliers for retail and café.
- An Economic Impact Assessment to gauge the contribution made to the regional visitor economy by dark sky tourism in and around the International Dark Sky Park, found that it was valued at £25 million p.a. in 2017 and supported 450 jobs.

- More than 50% of National Park properties now have access to superfast broadband (>24Mb/s), this is a significant improvement from 2015 when the target was for 95% of residences to have speeds of just 2Mb/s.

Aim 4 – Thriving Communities

Outcome 4.1 – The communities in and around the National Park have a strong connection to, and appreciation of, the National Park and are fully engaged in shaping its future.

Target – To increase understanding of the distinctive natural and cultural qualities of the National Park, so that communities have strong connections and a recognisable sense of identity and to ensure greater levels of community engagement in local decision-making so that people can contribute to the future well-being of the National Park.

Performance – Good

Trend – Improving

Impact – The adoption of the Local Plan in 2020 aims to have a lasting positive impact on the ability of communities to develop and grow in a sustainable manner. The Authority continues to work with community groups that wish to develop neighbourhood plans, most recently in Wooler. In the latter half of 2020 and throughout 2021 we welcomed back the support of our volunteers who aided our Rangers through site monitoring, maintenance and visitor engagement. Our increased presence on the ground during this time received very positive feedback from our new and returning visitors.

During 2021, the next iteration of our Management Plan has been developed through consultation with partner organisations and the general public. The revised Management plan is set to be published in December 2022.

Key points:

- The publication of the Local Plan adopted in 2020 sees strong policy support for more people of working age living within the park.
- The Authority is also working with communities that wish to develop Neighbourhood Plans.
- Visits to the National Park website have increased 24% year on year.
- We continue our work with community groups, regional schools and business groups to ensure they recognise the importance of NNP. The Authority has a £20,000 community fund to contribute towards Covid-19 recovery and climate change projects within the National Park.
- Increasing number and diversity of volunteering opportunities with the National Park.

Outcome 4.2 – Effective infrastructure supports active communities with a high quality of life and improved health and well-being.

Target – To ensure a balanced range of housing that meets local needs and the retention of rural services; to enable an integrated transport network which offers an attractive alternative to the car; to increase the use of renewable energy by communities in the National Park by 20% by 2021 whilst continuing to work on increasing energy efficiency; and to increase levels of public health and well-being.

Performance – Acceptable

Trend – Static

Impact – Improving infrastructure remains a challenge in NNP. Investment in physical infrastructure continues and the updated Local Plan aims to help address the provision of housing to meet local need and an additional 9 houses have been approved over 2020 and 2021. Improvements to rural broadband in some areas are improving the capabilities for home working in NNP but public transport use continues to decline, and this has been exacerbated following the pandemic. Storm Arwen has shown how vulnerable important aspects of the infrastructure of the park are.

Key points:

- Uptake of public transport on the AD122 has improved since 2015, on a 'per operating day' basis. Due to the pandemic the service did not run during 2020 and we await the passenger report for the 2021 season.
- Public transport use continues to decline and this has led to further budget cuts with providers.
- Renewables have been installed in 14% of buildings in NNP post codes and broadband uptake continues to improve.
- 10% of properties in NNP are still off-grid and rely on separate power generation.

Outcome 4.3 – People will have opportunities to work and live in resilient communities in and around the National Park.

Target – There are more young people and people of a working age living in the National Park; more opportunities for employment and training in the park and its gateway settlements; and the impact from commuting out of the Park, or its gateway communities, is reduced by encouraging more home-working.

Performance – Acceptable

Trend – Declining

Impact – The population of NNP continues to be older than the Northeast and England average and demographic forecasts suggest this trend will continue. Census data from 2021 show Northumberland's population generally continues to age. High employment and limited housing may restrict the ability for new people to move to NNP, although there are more new dwellings being approved. The changes in the Local Plan in 2020 place more emphasis the use of homes within NNP as a primary residence.

Key points -

- The NNP population has remained relatively static in previous years with little evidence to suggest young people are moving to the National Park.
- Improved information will be available in early 2023 as the 2021 census data is published.
- Agriculture remains the dominant industry, comprising 48% of the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) list of 170 registered businesses.
- Home working continues to be encouraged through Northumberland County Council's 'Get Digital' campaign and the i-northumberland broadband roll out. It remains to be seen if the rush to home working in rural areas has had a positive impact on the communities of the National Park.
- Currently 51% of properties in NNP have access to superfast broadband against a Northumberland wide target of 95%.

Aim 5 – A Valued Asset

Outcome 5.1 – The National Park is widely recognised for its environmental, social and economic contribution, particularly to Northeast England.

Target – To optimise opportunities for the National Park to contribute to the social and economic regeneration of Northumberland and the wider region; and to sustain its natural, cultural, social and economic infrastructure as a local and regional asset.

Performance – Good

Trend – Improving

Impact – Environmental programmes aimed at making space for nature and landscape restoration are at the forefront of national improvements and exemplified by the launch of the Farming in Protected Landscapes grant scheme, Cheviot Peat Project, Natural Capital Accounts and Carbon Footprint Baseline. Our work with partners to develop digital communication and data collection continue at pace. Our social contribution is being supported by our engagement team as illustrated by Aim 1 above.

Key points:

- Tourism contributed £78m to businesses in the National Park from 1.27m visitors in 2021 according to the most recent STEAM⁹ report.
- The Farming In Protected Landscapes scheme was launched in 2021 and supports a range of initiatives to address nature recovery, climate action and public access.
- Annually, over £4.4 million in agri-environmental payments are granted to maintain and improve traditional upland farming practices in the National Park as part of approved stewardship schemes.
- We maintain key partnerships including the boards of the Northeast Cultural Venues and Northumberland Culture Network and are actively engaged with the development of the Destination Management Plan for Northumberland 2022 – 2032.
- We have been working with JET, Chrysalis Dementia Support and Black Nature in Residence to provide target opportunities for people to visit and enjoy the National Park.
- The Borderlands growth deal which has a natural capital theme within it.
- A new ‘Rural Investment Plan’ for Northumberland has been approved in principle by the North of Tyne Combined Authority. This could see £6m investment in a ‘stewardship and growth’ approach to economic regeneration through stewardship of natural and cultural assets in rural Northumberland, leveraging significant additional investment.

Outcome 5.2 – The National Park makes a distinctive contribution to a broader network of protected areas.

Target – To ensure the National Park has a role in leading on protected area management which relates to its natural and cultural assets.

Performance – Good

Trend – Static

Impact – NNP continues to play a leading role across a wide network of natural and cultural management organisations. The increase in landscape scale project thinking is encouraging,

⁹ STEAM Model is based on the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model, used by organisations nationally.

particularly in relation to the government's ambition to increase 30% of land protected for biodiversity by 2030.

Key points:-

- NNP is an active member and contributor to National Parks England and its various policy and working groups. NNPA contributes to responses on the Glover review, England Tree Action Plan, England Peat Action Plan and other key national initiatives.
- NNPA represents the National Parks in the North of England on 'Nature North' a strategic alliance of public and third sector bodies enabling a strategic approach to nature recovery in the North of England.
- The National Park continues to contribute to England's largest LNP, the Northern Upland Chain. In addition, work towards a holistic environmental land management system has been explored through 'Test and Trials' and improvements are now being sought through the FIPL scheme.
- More locally we are working with a number of protected species partnerships, the Cheviot Peat Project, RSPB project and Revitalising Redesdale to make a positive contribution to protected areas.
- Future partnerships and plans are underway to ensure NNP contributes to wider regional improvements to our Natural Capital. These include the creation of a Hadrian's Wall Recovering Nature Partnership, Northumberland Peat Partnership, contributions to the Great North Bog, supporting tree planting through the Northumberland Woodland Creation Partnership and supporting the Northumberland Rural Investment Plan.

Outcome 5.3 – The value of the National Park is clearly demonstrated by the policies and actions of all who have an influence on the National Park.

Target – To ensure national, regional, and local plans, policies and programmes demonstrate a commitment to delivering National Park purposes.

Performance – Good

Trend – Improving

Impact – NNPA is taking an increasingly active role in shaping the future of protected area management at a local, regional and national level. The Authority actively and ambitiously seeks to shape future policy to ensure it adheres to National Park purposes.

Key points -

- Working through Natural England, NNPA aims to influence government policy and other statutory bodies to contribute to the objectives of the National Park, these include the Home Office, Forestry Commission, Public Health England, the 25-Year Environment Plan, the Agriculture Act and the Environment Act.
- The Authority has actively engaged in consultations and development work for:
 - The England Tree Action Plan
 - The England Peat Action Plan
 - Northumberland Woodland Creation Partnership
 - The Northumberland Peat Partnership
 - Northumberland Rural investment Plan
 - The Great North Bog
 - The Local Nature Recovery Strategy
 - The Borderlands Growth Deal
 - The Northumberland County Council Climate Change Action Plan

- The Destination Management Plan for Northumberland 2022 – 2032
- Policy Lead for the National Parks' Historic Environment
- National Park Recovery Strategy (linked to the impact of CV-19).

Northumberland National Park Contextual Information ¹⁰

Areas

Name	Area	%	Notes
Northumberland National Park	1,050 km ²		
Land in Public Ownership (Government)	406 km ²	39% of NNP	Ministry of Defence, Forestry England, National Park Authority
Northumberland International Dark Sky Park (NIDSP)	1,471 km ²	71% of NIDSP	NNP is 71% of the NIDSP area, Kielder makes the remainder
Intersecting Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA)	2,048 km ²	51% of Area 9% of Pop.	ONS Population data is typically sorted by LSOA. These areas overlap NNP which contributes more than half the area, but less than 10% of the population.

National Park Population

Date	2001 Census	2011 Census	2020 Est. ¹¹
Total Pop.	1,936	1,993	1,959
Population Density	2/km ²	2/km ²	2/km ²
Age Structure			
< 16	17.3%	14.4%	13.5%
16-59 (%)	62.3%	57.0%	52.1%
60 + (%)	20.5%	28.6%	34.3%

National Park Housing

Date	2001 Census	2011 Census	2017 Est.	2021 Census
Total Dwellings	972	1,085	1,090	To be confirmed
Households	861	871	872	To be confirmed
Households with no usual residents	111	214	218	To be confirmed

¹⁰ Contextual information is from several NNP Partner organisations, and the means of monitoring information can vary. It is not possible to compare totals from different data tables.

¹¹ Office for National Statistics (ONS) Mid-Year Population Estimate 2021

Conservation Designations

Designation	Number of Sites	Area (Ha)
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	32	12,452
Special Area for Conservation (SAC)	7	5,216
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	2	108
Ramsar sites	1	377

Habitats

Type	Area (ha)	% of NNP Area
Native Woodland	3,616	3.45%
Waxcap Grassland	395	0.38%
Species rich grassland	428	0.41%
Bog	9,978	9.52%
Heath	21,127	20.16%

Historic Environment Designations

Designation	Number
World Heritage Site	1 (Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site)
Scheduled Monuments	426
Listed Buildings	229 (12 Grade 1, 11 Grade II*, 206 Grade II)
Battlefield Sites	2
Registered Parks and Gardens	1
Conservation Areas	1

Land Use

Land Use	Area (Ha)	%
Moorland	68,980	65.8%
Woodland	23,877	22.8%
Farmland	11,482	11.0%
Water	380	0.4%
Urban	48	0.0%
Other	367	0.4%

Forestry

	Area (Ha)
Actively Managed Woodland	22,497
Unmanaged Woodland	1,557

Public Rights of Way (km):

	Lengths (km)
Public Footpath	631
Public Bridleway	347
BOAT	57
Restricted Byway	60
Area of Open Access Land	750km ²
Total	1,096