

Report 6: Authority Review Meeting 11 October 2023: Historic Environment

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the findings and recommendations of the Historic Environment Review meeting held on 11 October 2023, sets out the response of Leadership Team and seeks endorsement for the actions planned to address the findings/recommendations.

2. Recommendations

The Authority is recommended to:

- a. Note the Review findings/recommendations of the Historic Environment Authority Review meeting held on 11 October 2023.
- b. Consider the responses of the Leadership Team and actions proposed or currently underway.
- c. Endorse the actions and timescale as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

3. Implications

- a. Financial: None.
- b. Equalities: One of the recommendations arising from this Review meeting seeks to ensure that access to the extensive historic environment record associated with Northumberland National Park, both physical and recorded, are made more widely available in an accessible form, particularly looking at the opportunities around utilising digital solutions to reach new as well as existing audiences.
- c. Link to Business Plan: The historic environment sits primarily within Theme 3 of the 2022-2023 National Park Management Plan, (Valuing Place, Culture and Heritage) and the aim to: Conserve, enhance and celebrate our historic environment and rich cultural heritage by connecting people and place.

The recommendations should be taken on board when delivering the four business Plan Targets associated with this area of work, namely: -

- i. Rich historic and cultural heritage of the Park is valued, cared for and enhanced.
- ii. Seek further opportunities to continue the restoration of traditional farm buildings as a key part of our upland farmed landscape.
- iii. Support initiatives which celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the National Park and its communities, and support engagement with the National Park with new and diverse audiences.
- iv. Maintain the unique levels of tranquillity and pristine dark skies in the National Park.

4. Background

- a. On 11 October the Authority review Panel met at Walltown County Park to review the Authority's work in relation to the Historic Environment.
- b. A previously circulated report supported a presentation by the Historic Environment Officer and the Head of Conservation and Land Management.
- c. Themes covered into the presentation included: Fit with Defra priorities, Performance against targets Management Plan and Business Plan), the Heritage at Risk Programme, Site Management Plans, other historic environment projects and outcomes, and the WallCAP project.
- d. A site visit followed to Sewingshields Farm to an example of the Historic Farm Buildings Scheme.

5. Key Findings and Recommendations

- a. The key findings and recommendations of the Review Panel are set out in Appendix 1 to this report, including the Leadership Team response and timescale.

6. Conclusions

- a. Members are invited to note the findings and recommendations of the Historic Environment Review, consider the responses from the Leadership Team, and endorse the actions and timescale as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

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Background papers: provide detail if applicable or delete section

Appendix 1 to Report 6

Northumberland National Park Authority Review Meeting

The table below details the Leadership Team Recommendations and Proposed Actions from HE Review on 11 October 2023

No	Review Findings/Recommendations	LT Response and Actions Planned	Lead	Timescale/Date
1	To look after features with the Park that have statutory protection and engage with local communities and statutory organizations to motivate and protect features voluntarily.	Prioritise future Heritage at Risk project in line with Business Plan and emerging Defra outcomes framework. Continue to support HE through FiPL and other emerging funding opportunities	Chris Jones HE Officer	From Jan 2024 and ongoing
2	NNPA seek to influence the design of ELMS/FiPL to secure practical historic environment components within the schemes, including solutions for long term use of historic farm buildings.	Use Historic Farm Buildings scheme and FiPL projects to help lobby for inclusion of HE in future ELMS/Stewardship Plus	CEO through NPE Farming Team/FiPL team	From Jan 2024 and ongoing
3	The Cheviot Project should be taken forward when the time is right.	Note – Not in current Three-year Business Plan. However, Cheviot Hills Heritage project remains a significant opportunity. LT shall seek to make this a priority project for development by the Strategic Projects Officer as capacity allows.	Strategic projects Officer	TBC
4	Ensure research and stories about the history of places and people is shared widely in an accessible form – there are many digital solutions, and the history of Greenlee and surrounding area might be used as an exemplar.	Oot and About (Coquetdale) exhibition at The Sill is a good example. Accept that more opportunities exist but this is limited by capacity and will rely on partnership working. Digital solutions will be explored as part of all our programmes, and future exhibition opportunities will seek to tell stories in this way.	HE Officer/Sill engagement and exhibition teams	Ongoing as opportunities allow