Management Plan
2009 - 2014
Inspiring Landscapes, Thriving Communities

Northumberland National Park

www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk
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The Cheviot Hills in Northumberland National Park
Foreword

Northumberland National Park is a special place. It is a valuable resource for North East England and the nation as a whole and contributes to the health and quality of life of those who live in and around the National Park and those who visit.

This Management Plan sets out a vision and framework to guide the future of Northumberland National Park until 2014. The Management Plan marks a continued shift of approach from focusing simply on the place, to working with the people who help shape Northumberland National Park and sets out to define the role for Northumberland National Park in the 21st Century. The Management Plan therefore challenges all of us who care for Northumberland National Park to contribute to a shared future for this special place.

There are many challenges to address, from the future of land management and farming to retaining and sustaining strong and resilient communities and re-connecting our urban and rural areas. We are confident, however, that this Management Plan will help deliver a sound future for the National Park and its communities. We envisage a future based on sustainable solutions to the challenges the National Park will face.

This Management Plan was the subject of a very successful public consultation exercise between January and March 2009. The contributions of a wide range of people has not only informed this management framework but has also yielded important information on what the priorities for action should be.

Not everything set out within this Management Plan is however readily achievable with the resources available to the National Park Authority and its partners. We will therefore be making ongoing use of the priorities expressed through the consultation exercise in developing the Annual Action Plans which drive the implementation of this Management Plan.

On behalf of Northumberland National Park Authority I would like to thank all those staff, partner organisations and individuals who have contributed to the development of the Management Plan.

We look forward to working with our partners, local communities and visitors to the National Park to ensure successful delivery of the Management Plan outcomes.

John Riddle
Chairman
Northumberland National Park Authority
1. Introduction

National Parks

1.1 National Parks are the most beautiful, spectacular and dramatic expanses of countryside in England, Scotland and Wales and are landscapes of national importance. They contain a wealth of nationally and internationally important wildlife and cultural heritage. The National Park designation provides the highest status for the conservation and enhancement of their natural and cultural qualities.

1.2 There are currently ten National Parks in England covering around 9.3% of the country. The vast majority of land in English National Parks is under private ownership, however some is owned and managed by public bodies such as the Forestry Commission and the Ministry of Defence or charitable organisations such as the National Trust.

1.3 National Parks are part of a family of protected landscapes in the UK including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and National Scenic Areas. In the North East region Northumberland National Park, the North Pennines AONB and the Northumberland Coast AONB cover over 30% of the land area of the region.

1.4 Northumberland National Park was designated in 1956 and the Northumberland National Park Authority was established in 1997 as a special purpose local authority with the role of delivering National Park statutory purposes.

National Park Statutory Purposes and Duty

1.5 The purposes of National Park designation are set out in national legislation. First set out in the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act and amended by the 1995 Environment Act, the two statutory purposes are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities by the public.

1.6 The statutory purposes are underpinned in law by what is known as the ‘Sandford Principle’. This makes it clear that the first purpose should take precedence over the second in cases of irreconcilable conflict.

1.7 Northumberland National Park is a living and working landscape where the characteristic qualities are the result of the interaction of human activity and natural forces. It is in the interests of maintaining the close connections between local communities, economies and environmental conservation that National Park Authorities have an additional statutory duty. That is:

- In pursuing the purposes, the Authority should seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.

1.8 The delivery of the statutory purposes and duty contributes to the Government’s agreed vision for a diverse, healthy and resilient natural environment, and helps deliver the commitment of the United Kingdom to the European Landscape Convention which came into force on 1 March 2007.
Our Approach in Northumberland National Park

1.9 The treasured landscapes and special qualities of Northumberland National Park are the product of many years of interaction between land and people. The daily decisions of those living in, working in or visiting the National Park continue to shape the quality, attractiveness and resilience of the environment, its settlements and its recreational infrastructure.

1.10 Working with and through local communities is therefore critical to both maintaining and enhancing the National Park’s natural and cultural qualities and expanding opportunities for their wider understanding and enjoyment. Communities themselves need to be thriving, vibrant and empowered to play an active role as custodians of this important national, regional and local resource. Northumberland National Park Authority is committed to leading the way in this approach, using the concept of ‘Action Area’ working.

1.11 Our ‘Action Area’ approach reflects both the central role of thriving communities in securing a sustainable future for the National Park and the fact that the natural and cultural qualities express themselves differently from one part of the National Park to another, creating areas of locally distinctive character. It recognises that broad and generalised prescriptions are unlikely to be the most effective way to maintain the rich variety of landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage and that action tailored to the local context will frequently be more appropriate.

1.12 ‘Action Area’ working seeks to use this local distinctiveness as a framework for engaging communities and other partners in the planning, care and management of local landscapes. It harnesses the knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm of local people and supports them with expert technical advice, help and funding to nurture and strengthen local connections between people and place. The National Park Authority sees this approach as a corner-stone of its activity during the Management Plan period and will seek to pursue this further, locally and regionally, through our partnership working.

1.13 The National Park is divided into four ‘Action Areas’ based on a mix of geographical and social factors which direct our way of working. ‘Action Areas’ extend beyond the National Park boundary, recognising that the ‘gateway settlements’ outside the National Park are essential to maintaining strong and sustainable communities.

The four ‘Action Areas’ are:

- Cheviot and Glendale
- Upper Coquetdale
- North Tyne and Redesdale
- Hadrian’s Wall and South Tyne
1. Introduction

Northumberland National Park Management Plan

1.14 The National Park Authority has a duty to prepare a National Park Management Plan as the framework for the delivery of the National Park statutory purposes and duty and, since 2003, to review the Plan at least every five years. However elements of the Plan may be reviewed more often if required.

1.15 The National Park Management Plan is the single most important document for the National Park, setting out the guiding principles, vision, objectives and actions for managing the National Park.

1.16 Although prepared by the National Park Authority, the Management Plan is for everyone; residents, businesses, visitors, public bodies, all organisations, and individuals with a stake in the National Park. The National Park Management Plan will seek to guide the management of the National Park in a way which will help to achieve its statutory purposes and duty, improving the quality of life for those who live or work in the National Park or are visitors to it. Therefore, not only does it set the framework for the National Park Authority’s own policies and activities but it will also shape the plans, strategies, and actions of all other bodies operating within the National Park. Legislation requires other authorities and relevant public bodies to have regard to the National Park purposes when carrying out their work.

Management Plan Review Process

1.17 The first Management Plan for Northumberland National Park was published in 1977, followed by the first review in 1984, the second review in 1994 and the third in 2003.

1.18 In September 2007, the National Park Authority agreed that a full review of the Management Plan should be undertaken and that this review should be steered by a group of key partners. The preparation of this Management Plan has, therefore, been led by a Key Partnership Group, comprising Natural England, One North East, English Heritage, Forestry Commission, National Farmers’ Union, Defence Estates, Northumberland Tourism Limited, Country Land and Business Association, Northumberland National Park and County Joint Local Access Forum, Northumberland County Council and the Environment Agency.

1.19 This review of the National Park Management Plan looks forward in establishing a vision for Northumberland National Park over the next 20 years and sets the direction for achieving this vision through a set of 5 year objectives. The Management Plan will be accompanied by a series of Annual Action Plans, the first of which will be produced in Autumn 2009.
Partnership Working
1.22 The National Park Management Plan is a plan for the National Park not just for the National Park Authority. It will, therefore, take collective effort to achieve its objectives. This will be achieved through work to:

- Involve partners in developing and sharing ownership of the Plan and its priority actions;
- Co-ordinating action, pooling resources and avoiding duplication; and
- Building strong partnership agreements which foster trust and an understanding of each partners’ strengths and abilities.

Transparency and Openness
1.23 The National Park Authority is committed to open and accountable decision making and to making information freely available. The development of this Management Plan has been progressed in an open forum of discussion and dialogue. After adoption, progress in delivery will be made public at regular intervals, and will continue to be informed through the active participation of local communities and the wider public.
Links to Other Plans

1.24 The National Park Management Plan provides the strategic framework with which other plans and initiatives must be compatible. Other statutory plans such as the National Park Authority Local Development Framework and Northumberland County Council’s Local Development Framework will, therefore, assist in delivery of the Management Plan.

1.25 At a regional level, the context for the Management Plan is set by the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East. The strategy provides the overall spatial development context for the National Park and contains some key policies relating to the National Park.

1.26 The National Park Management Plan sits alongside the Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland which was published in September 2007. Increasingly delivery of many of the actions in the Management Plan will be achieved through integration with the Northumberland Local Area Agreement.

1.27 The National Park Management Plan has also been informed by, and will assist in delivering, a variety of parish and community plans prepared by communities within the National Park and in the gateway settlements.

1.28 Increasingly as the Authority looks to develop partnership working with its neighbouring areas, the National Park Management Plan is being influenced by the plans of communities and neighbouring authorities in Cumbria and the Scottish Borders.

Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment

1.29 The preparation of this Management Plan was subject to an independent Sustainability Appraisal.

1.30 The sustainability appraisal tested the implications of the strategic aims, objectives and action plan and made recommendations in respect of achievement of sustainable development. The Sustainability Appraisal Report has been published alongside this document and is available on the National Park Authority’s website at www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk or on request.

1.31 The Authority is also required to undertake an ‘Appropriate Assessment’ of proposals which might impact on conservation sites designated under the European Habitats Directive, that is, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation and listed Ramsar sites1 which are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species. The Appropriate Assessment has also been published alongside this document and is available on the Authority’s website or on request.

1.32 An equality assessment has also been prepared to assess the impact of the Management Plan. The Equality Assessment is available on the Authority’s website or on request.

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1 A Special Area of Conservation is a site of international importance for nature conservation, classified under the EU Habitats Directive. A Ramsar site is a site designated under the European Ramsar Convention to protect wetlands that are of international importance, particularly as waterbird habitats.
2. A Vision for an Inspiring Landscape

Northumberland National Park

2.1 Northumberland National Park extends to over 100,000 hectares or 405 square miles and represents 20% of the land area of the county of Northumberland. The National Park is wholly within the region of North East England, but also borders Scotland and Cumbria.

2.2 The National Park boundary excludes the larger settlements adjacent to the National Park. Settlements within the boundary are typified by small villages, hamlets, and isolated farm dwellings. The ‘gateway settlements’ of Bellingham, Haltwhistle, Rothbury and Wooler act as important service centres for the National Park, its communities and visitors and are important to us in planning and delivering the statutory purposes and supporting the social and economic well-being of local communities. Those elements of these settlements which provide important local infrastructure and services for the National Park and its communities are therefore considered in the National Park Management Plan.

Why Northumberland National Park Matters

2.3 The natural and cultural qualities of Northumberland National Park were defined as part of the preparation of the 2003 Management Plan. A series of community and visitor consultations and part of the current review confirm that these ‘special qualities’ have not changed and are recognised as:

Distinctive Landscape Character

2.4 Spread over the hills and valleys at the very top of England, but right in the centre of Britain, the landscape of Northumberland National Park has key distinct characteristics. To the north there are the breathtaking rolling moors and grasslands of the Cheviot Hills, with their ancient hill forts and pure rivers. In the east is the Upper Coquet Valley with the landmark Simonside Hills surrounded by beautiful villages, such as Harbottle and Holystone. To the west are the valleys of the North Tyne and Redesdale, wild, inspiring and once home of the Border Reivers. The landscape supports habitats suitable for rare species such as red squirrel. In the south is the imposing ridge of the Whin Sill with Hadrian’s Wall, a World Heritage Site, striding along its crest. These characteristics help form the basis of ‘Action Areas’ which inform the way Northumberland National Park Authority operates.

2.5 The many people who visit and live in the National Park appreciate the stunning and varied landscape. A key characteristic is its openness, with landscapes and horizons free from significant human intrusions which contribute significantly to the high levels of tranquillity.

2.6 With over 1,100 kilometres of public rights of way and long distance walking routes, and 750 square kilometres (75% of the National Park area) of open access land, Northumberland National Park offers significant opportunities for enjoyment and understanding of its special qualities.
A Landscape Rich in Biodiversity and Geology
2.7 Northumberland National Park boasts a wide range of species and habitats, for example curlew, red squirrel, upland rivers and burns, ancient woodland, upland hay meadows, blanket bog and heather moorland. Extensive areas of the National Park have been designated for their international importance for nature conservation such as Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites. Within the National Park five of the Sites of Special Scientific Interest were designated for their geological importance, from the Cheviot volcanic and glacial features in the north to the Whin Sill intrusion and escarpments in the south.

A Rich Cultural Heritage
2.8 One of Northumberland National Park’s unique qualities is without doubt its historical legacy. By cultural heritage we mean both the physical remains left to us by past societies and the living inheritance of the local people — their dialect, traditions, folklore, skills, and knowledge. From Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site in the south, to the prehistoric landscapes of the Cheviot Hills in the north, there are evocative reminders of our colourful past which survives largely undamaged by more recent agricultural or industrial activity. The many layers of historical landscapes in the National Park offer a rich opportunity for furthering understanding, appreciation and enjoyment.

True Sense of Tranquillity
2.9 Tranquillity, freedom from noise and visual disturbance in an increasingly busy world, is a key component of experiencing the Northumberland National Park. It is an emotional, spiritual quality, difficult to define by standard methods. Nevertheless it is, overwhelmingly, what people have said they value. One in three respondents to the National Park Visitor Survey (2007) stated that tranquillity was the ‘thing they liked best’ about Northumberland National Park.

1 See page 11
Factors Driving Change – Key Challenges and Opportunities

Climate Change
2.10 Climate change resulting from the emissions of carbon dioxide is widely accepted as one of the greatest challenges facing the global environment. The impact of climate change is already with us and further change is inevitable. Globally we must act to reduce carbon dioxide emissions resulting from our reliance on fossil fuel. However, we will also need to adapt to the changing climate, and this will mean change within the National Park. It is therefore an important cross-cutting theme for this National Park Management Plan, and whilst it will stimulate specific targeted actions, it must also underpin the planning for all elements of the future of the National Park.

2.11 In Northumberland National Park current predictions state that we can expect warmer, wetter winters, hotter drier summers, with an increasing frequency of extreme weather events. Consequently, it is likely that the National Park and some elements of the natural and cultural qualities may change and it is important that this change is fully understood and carefully managed.

2.12 The Government recognises that National Parks, National Park Authorities and their partners have a significant role to play in taking action on climate change through, for example, working with farmers and landowners to maintain healthy peat soils and forests which make a significant contribution to carbon storage.

2.13 Northumberland National Park will also play a key role in helping to deliver regional climate change strategies. The significant environmental resource which the National Park represents can play a key role in piloting landscape-scale and innovative approaches both in adapting to and mitigating the impact of climate change.

Renewable Energy
2.14 The National Park Authority can also serve an important role in informing the public and stimulating the changes in individual behaviour which this global challenge requires. Engagement with the public and key partners has indicated significant interest and potential in domestic and community level renewable energy initiatives. The unique geography and natural resources of the National Park lend themselves to such an approach.

This Management Plan therefore seeks to take forward renewable energy solutions within the National Park at such a level that this will, over time, become the principle source of energy for the National Park communities. Delivering this will act as an exemplar at a regional and national level, and help to stimulate new areas of the rural economy.

Working with Local Communities
2.15 Northumberland National Park is the most sparsely populated local authority area in England with an average of only two people per square kilometre. Community services within the National Park are limited with local communities often relying on mobile shopping and health services.

2.16 The communities within the National Park and its gateway settlements are vibrant communities and are actively engaged in shaping their future. The National Park divides into four distinct ‘Action Areas’. These areas are defined by the broad areas of the Hadrian’s Wall corridor, the North Tyne and Redesdale valleys, the Coquetdale valley and the Cheviot Hills. Communities within these areas have differing links and associations both within the National Park and with the gateway settlements and communities which serve them.

2.17 Recent government policy requires increasing involvement of communities in shaping policies and delivering services. The National Park Authority, working closely with local communities, has recognised these ‘communities of place’ and fostered these characteristics through the development of the ‘Action Area’ approach to engagement and delivery of its programmes and services. The four ‘Action Areas’ each have effective forums for a future co-ordinated approach to community engagement and delivery.

2.18 The ‘Action Area’ has been an effective framework for the development of the National Park Management Plan and will also help shape delivery of the Plan in a responsive way appropriate to the needs of each area.
Sustainable Rural Development

2.19 The landscape of Northumberland National Park has been shaped by rural business activity over the centuries. Today, the public’s enjoyment of the National Park is enhanced by tourism businesses. The sustainable development of rural business has a history of delivering both the National Park’s first purpose (conservation and enhancement) and its second purpose (understanding and enjoyment).

2.20 Most people who work in Northumberland National Park are employed in either farming, forestry or tourism, but even during periods of national economic growth farming and forestry have seen a decline in the numbers employed. Tourism is a growing sector for the North East region but growth rural tourism has been lagging behind.

2.21 The framework for sustainable rural development in and around the National Park is contained in ‘Northumberland Upwards’ (2008), the local development strategy for the Northumberland Uplands. This Strategy is consistent with the Rural Development Programme for England and the Regional Implementation Plan for the North East.

2.22 Local and regional partners, together with local businesses, will play a key role in ensuring businesses in and around Northumberland National Park grow in a sustainable manner by using the National Park’s special qualities to realise business benefits whilst enhancing the landscape and the visitor experience for current and future generations.

Rural Skill Development

2.23 Evidence from many local communities, businesses and other partners operating in the National Park is pointing to an increasing shortage of skills in many of the key employment sectors in the National Park and surrounding areas. These include farming, forestry, traditional building skills and tourism. These skills are essential to the maintenance of the rich fabric of the National Park, and it is therefore essential that they are maintained. New technologies also offer opportunities for the development of new skills. Recent projects have shown the National Park to be, in itself, a rich resource for training in such skills, and this Management Plan will aim to develop the role of the National Park as an ‘open air college’ for the development and retention of skills which will help sustain both the natural and cultural qualities and local communities both now and into the future.
2.24 This is our Vision for Northumberland National Park for 2029. It is ambitious, yet achievable, and was derived from workshops held with over 120 partners and key stakeholders at the beginning of the review process in April 2008.

It is embedded in five Strategic Aims and associated outcomes which will help guide the National Park and its communities towards a sustainable future. These Strategic Aims, which are not in priority order are:

- A Welcoming Park
- A Distinctive Place
- A Living, Working Landscape for Now and the Future
- Thriving Communities
- A Valued Asset
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<th>Strategic Aims</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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| **A Welcoming Park**  
To put people and their connections with the landscape at the heart of the National Park |  
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  
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  
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 |
| **A Distinctive Place**  
To manage, conserve and enhance the distinctive natural and cultural qualities of the National Park |  
2.1 A distinctive place that will maintain a sense of inspiration and tranquillity  
2.2 The natural qualities and diverse habitats that characterise the changing landscapes will be safeguarded and enhanced  
2.3 The rich historic environment and archaeological heritage will be understood, valued and cared for  
2.4 There is a strong and recognisable sense of identity which is born of the deep rooted cultural heritage yet balances this with a vibrant approach to the future |
| **A Living, Working Landscape for Now and the Future**  
To adapt to change by applying new approaches, together with traditional techniques |  
3.1 New and better approaches to sustainable land and water management have been tested, adopted and embedded  
3.2 The National Park has made an important contribution to increasing understanding about, and demonstrating the practice of, sustainable development and responses to climate change  
3.3 There is sustained and economically viable business growth in sectors which sensitively make use of the natural, historical and cultural qualities |
| **Thriving Communities**  
To ensure the thriving and vibrant communities have a strong sense of place and an economy grounded in the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park |  
4.1 The communities in and around the National Park will have a strong connection to, and appreciation of, the National Park and be fully engaged in shaping its future  
4.2 Effective infrastructure (services, facilities, networks etc.) will support socially and culturally active communities with a high quality of life and improved health and wellbeing  
4.3 People will have opportunities to work in, live in and contribute to resilient communities in and around the National Park |
| **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 |  
5.1 The National Park is widely recognised for its environmental, social and economic contribution, particularly to North East England  
5.2 The National Park has made a distinctive contribution to a broader network of protected areas  
5.3 The value of the National Park as a place that is worth looking after is clearly demonstrated by the policies and actions of all who have an influence on the National Park |
2.25 Section 3 sets out how we are going to address key challenges and opportunities, and deliver the strategic aims and outcomes in order to work towards our Vision for the National Park over the next five years.

2.26 This section is set out under the five strategic aims and for each of these there is:

- A short introduction setting out the context, recent trends and issues;
- A series of broad objectives which address the desired outcomes;
- An assessment of the current position on each objective; and
- A set of means of achievement for each objective.

2.27 Section 4 sets out proposals for how the Management Plan will be implemented and monitored. Annual Action Plans will set out the actions to be taken in each of the next five years to implement the Management Plan. These Annual Action Plans will be published in Autumn of each year from 2009 onwards.
3. Management Plan

3.1 A Welcoming Park

In his 1945 seminal report which led to the establishment of National Parks in England and Wales, John Dower wrote:

‘National Parks are for people – especially young people - of every class and kind, from every part of the country… indeed of the world. They are not for any privileged or otherwise restricted section of the population but for all those who care to refresh their minds and spirits and to exercise their bodies in a peaceful setting of natural beauty.’

The second statutory purpose of National Park Authorities is to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public. There are many ways in which visitors experience the National Park, for example sampling local produce from one of the Farmers Markets, walking in the footsteps of the Romans on a National Trail, climbing the crags and cycling the byways.

Understanding Visitors
Currently only 3% of the UK population are aware that Northumberland National Park exists. Furthermore, many people perceive the area as remote, with unpredictable weather and too few amenities for a holiday. The findings of recent studies undertaken by Northumberland National Park Authority and its partners indicate that visitors to the National Park represent a small percentage of the national population and come from a narrow cross section of society. Understanding why this is the case will help us to develop ways to encourage more visitors and a more diverse range of people to visit.

Sport and Recreation
Opportunities for sport and recreation exist widely across the National Park, with many organised events, and team and individual sports. Physical access was fundamental to the creation of National Parks and is for many people a vital part of their visit. However it could be argued that most work on public rights of way over the years has tended to concentrate on providing access rather than ensuring ‘access for all’.

Northumberland National Park provides an excellent environment for walking, cycling and horse riding through our well developed network of rights of way, long distance trails and permissive paths. There are around 1,100 kilometres of public rights of way in Northumberland National Park including two National Trails; the Pennine Way and Hadrian’s Wall Path, and two long distance routes; St Cuthbert’s Way and the recently created St Oswald’s Way run through the Park and provide well waymarked linear routes for walkers. These are complemented by a range of other promoted walking and cycling routes for all levels of ability.

A statutory right of access on foot to the countryside for open air recreation is now provided through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000. The CROW Act was enacted in 2000 and implemented in 2005 with the publication of a map of access land. Access land, including the Forestry Commission’s dedicated estate now covers an area of approximately 750 square kilometres, around 75% of the National Park area. Together these new provisions have extended the public’s ability to enjoy the countryside, whilst at the same time providing safeguards for landowners and tenants.

Facilities and Infrastructure
High quality facilities are an important consideration for day trippers and holiday makers. The Authority works closely with its partners to encourage the development of excellent facilities and services. However; whilst the tourism offer works well for existing visitors, there is a need to broaden its scope to meet the needs of a more diverse audience.

There are three National Park Centres - Once Brewed, Rothbury and Ingram, which are well established and provide an important service. The award winning Hadrian's Wall Bus (AD122) offers a low carbon option of travelling to and in the southern area of the National Park. The provision of information and interpretive material is an important means of promoting the attractiveness of the National Park to visitors.
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.

Assessment of the current position

- Approximately 1.5 million people visit the National Park each year
- Those currently visiting the National Park are generally very satisfied with their experience, especially at the National Park Centres
- Tranquillity in the National Park is the highest in England, and is valued by visitors
- Signage, information, physical infrastructure and services vary in standards

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<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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| 1.1.1 To maintain and improve levels of visitor satisfaction | • Promote widely the notion of a ‘welcoming Park’ and celebrate what is distinctive about the National Park to create a strong and recognisable sense of identity  
• Improve and understand the nature of the visitor experience and resultant economic impact and assist businesses to design products and services accordingly  
• Promote understanding and enjoyment of tranquillity as an exceptional experience |
| 1.1.2 To achieve a high standard and broad range in facilities, information and service within the National Park | • Identify weaknesses in quality or gaps in provision of accommodation, attractions and visitor facilities, and implement improvement programmes |
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

Assessment of the current position

- The National Park is perceived to have limited appeal to particular groups and a lack of confidence in experiencing the countryside is thought to be a limiting factor
- Visitors seem to experience barriers which inhibit their fuller enjoyment of the National Park; - many tend to see a very small part of what the National Park has to offer centred around ‘honey pots’; and - people with disabilities and long-term illnesses use our National Park Centres in good numbers but many cannot or do not go on to explore the National Park further
- The existing visitor and recreation facilities and lack of well targeted information is inhibiting accessibility whilst the disability, health, obesity and lifestyle agendas provide an opportunity to engage a more diverse audience
- The Hadrian’s Wall Bus service has proved popular with visitors
- It is a current Government priority to connect people with the countryside and nature

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<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.2.1 To increase visits to Northumberland National Park by those living within the region by 10% from the 2009 baseline by March 2014</td>
<td>• Promote the National Park in well targeted and innovative ways using effective design and the best communication channels which take inspiration from the National Park’s distinctive qualities • Identify and differentiate new products including walking, cycling and riding routes and other activities that widen appeal to new and existing visitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2.2 To increase visits from currently under-represented groups by 10% by 2014</td>
<td>• Identify and where practicable remove barriers to people with disabilities and long-term illnesses from experiencing the National Park • Identify and overcome barriers to information and participation amongst under-represented groups • Develop and strengthen relationships and programmes with partners, organisations, groups and businesses that currently engage with under-represented groups, beyond the National Park boundary</td>
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<td>1.2.3 To improve information and infrastructure with more sites in the National Park accessible to all</td>
<td>• Implement a programme with partners to enhance the number and variety of facilities in the National Park which are ‘accessible to all’ • Make innovative use of technology and communication channels to support virtual access to the National Park • Support successful public transport provision by assessing need and developing new provision for areas of the National Park currently underserved • Support the delivery of an effective access information system for Otterburn Ranges</td>
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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

Assessment of the current position

- Current Government policy encourages out-of-classroom learning activities and is promoting the ‘Sustainable Schools Award’
- The successful National Park Volunteer Ranger programme with over 1,500 volunteer days achieved in 2007/2008 is a basis for wider involvement of people with the National Park
- Addressing local training and educational issues identified in the Northumberland Sustainable Community Strategy and other issues as and when identified
- Development of heritage and environment skills is being partly addressed through the current ‘Traditional Boundaries, Traditional Skills’ apprenticeship project
- Existing visitors have identified the need for enhanced interpretation of the natural and cultural heritage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1.3.1 To use the resource of the National Park to provide relevant and increased access to learning and educational opportunities for young people (primary, secondary, higher and further education) | • Deliver out-of-classroom and out-reach educational activities
• Provide resources to regional schools about the National Park which support those schools aiming to achieve the ‘Sustainable Schools Award’ |
| 1.3.2 To use the resource of the National Park to provide relevant and increased access to vocational skills and training opportunities | • To provide opportunities for learning and applying heritage and environmental skills
• Develop the role of the National Park as a ‘open air college’ |
| 1.3.3 To enhance the use of the National Park as a resource to provide relevant and increased opportunities for adults and young people to become involved in participatory learning activities and volunteering | • Support and develop the Volunteer Service including Youth Initiatives in volunteering and career pathways
• Support community based heritage and natural environment groups |
| 1.3.4 To enhance understanding of the special qualities amongst existing visitors | • Deliver a series of new interpretation facilities and services
• Encourage community-led interpretation of cultural, natural or historic environment assets
• Ensure interesting research and local studies are freely promoted through websites and other communication channels such as newspapers and local radio |
3.2 A Distinctive Place

Landscape

‘Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is as a result of action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.’
Source: European Landscape Convention

The beauty, variety and scale of the landscape, with its wild open spaces and wide horizons underpins the distinctiveness of Northumberland National Park. This encompasses and combines other qualities, for example the geology, biodiversity and cultural heritage and is always evolving due to human intervention and natural processes. The landscape of Northumberland National Park we know today has changed and evolved over time and will continue to do so in future. The role of the National Park Management Plan will be to develop a framework within which this will happen in a way which does not erode what is special about the National Park landscape, but rather secures a living working landscape that reflects the way we live today, while respecting and protecting natural features and cultural aspects from the past.

The main landscape character areas in Northumberland National Park are:

Cheviot Hills - rounded volcanic uplands with extensive grass, heather and blanket bog habitats with isolated farmsteads;

Sandstone Hills - flat topped sandstone ridges supporting heather moorland occurring in an arc around the east and south of the Cheviots;

Border moors and forests - the central area of Northumberland National Park including the Rede and North Tyne valleys with substantial areas of plantation forestry;

Hadrian’s Wall corridor - forming the southern part of Northumberland National Park is dominated by the Whin Sill, an escarpment landscape (cuesta’s resembling ‘frozen waves’) with lakes, called loughs, and bogs, called mires, in the hollows. This area contains part of the Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site.
Tranquillity

A survey by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) in 2006 identified Northumberland as the most tranquil local authority area in England. Tranquility is overwhelmingly what people have repeatedly said they value about Northumberland National Park.

A pilot study undertaken by Northumbria University in 2004 investigated the mapping of tranquillity in the National Park and the former West Durham Coalfield, two contrasting areas. This study revealed that the National Park offers a vast potential to experience tranquillity, and identified those areas of the National Park with the highest levels of tranquillity.

Some areas of Northumberland National Park are clearly more tranquil than others and the management response will need to be tailored to the specific characteristics of each area. The results of the Northumbria University study provide an opportunity to look at those areas identified as being the least tranquil and to assess whether there are opportunities to enhance tranquillity in these areas.

Geology

The geology of the National Park forms the basis of everything that can be seen today. The shape of the landscape from the rounded Cheviot Hills to the dramatic Whin Sill ridge is formed from the solid geology and the effect of glaciers and weathering in the more recent past. Underlying geology also has a profound influence on where habitats and species are found. It has also had an important impact on the economic activities, history and design of settlement in the National Park. Conservation, sustainable management, educational use and interpretation of the geology are thus as important as those of biodiversity or archaeology and need to be considered as an integral part of the future of the National Park.

In 2006 the British Geological Survey and Northumberland National Park Authority produced, in partnership, a Geodiversity Audit and Action Plan for the National Park. The Plan extends beyond the National Park boundary to include those communities which lie on or near the boundary and which have a direct stake in the National Park, and aims to improve the conservation and understanding of the geological resource of the National Park. The Geodiversity Action Plan identifies projects for the Authority and others to work on.
In the United Kingdom the first species and habitat action plans were published in 1995 and reviewed in 2007 and have three main objectives; to maintain, restore, and enhance the nation's biodiversity.

Regional lists of important habitats and species have been compiled from the UK lists and targets for the whole region have been set. Local Biodiversity Action Plans are considered the best way of taking forward action towards the national targets. These regional lists have been used to create a Northumberland county-wide Action Plan and a specific Biodiversity Action Plan for the National Park. There are currently five habitat action plans and twelve species plans in the National Park.

The conservation and enhancement of biodiversity is now enshrined in European and UK legislation. As a result every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

**Habits**

- Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland
- Blanket / Raised Bog
- Rivers and Burns
- Upland Hay Meadows
- Upland Heathland

**Species**

- Aspen
- Black Grouse
- Bog Orchid
- Chives
- Freshwater Pearl Mussel
- Jacob's Ladder
- Juniper
- Large Heath Butterfly
- Pipistrelle Bat
- Ring Ouzel
- Water Vole
- White-Clawed Crayfish
Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage of Northumberland National Park includes all evidence of past human activity over 10,000 years. It influences regional, cultural and local identity and is a key element in the social, economic, cultural and environmental development of the National Park. Northumberland National Park is special because of its numerous multi-period landscapes and the opportunities for furthering understanding, appreciation and enjoyment which this offers. The important and dramatic central section of Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site spans the southern boundary of the National Park.

There are 430 Scheduled Monuments in Northumberland National Park, 75 of which are at high risk and 182 at medium risk. There are 225 Listed Buildings (Grade I, II* and II), 259 including all structures (milestones, boundary stones etc) and 4,054 entries in the National Park’s Historic Environment Record. Furthermore, we know that this most northerly and remote part of England has not been researched and studied to the same extent as the rest of the country and so many more important historical features remain unknown and unrecorded.

The role of the National Park Authority and its partners is to manage change so as to conserve and enhance the archaeological, historic and cultural landscape for the benefit of current and future generations by increasing the relevance of our heritage to society today and into the future. The National Park’s sites of special archaeological, historic and architectural interest need to be considered within a landscape of human inhabitation in order to foster better understanding and to engage communities in their protection and celebration. The nature of land management over time has contributed to the richness of the National Park’s cultural heritage. It is essential that these remains continue to be protected from the principal causes of damage to and loss of archaeological remains in the countryside, namely ploughing and quarrying.

An important contribution to the National Park’s local distinctiveness are its cultural traditions including dialect, music, folklore, poetry and prose. These cultural traditions are prized among many local people, and there is a need to enhance opportunities for those living in and visiting the National Park to take part in cultural activities which foster a deep sense of belonging and enrich experiences.
### 3.2 A Distinctive Place

**Outcome 2.1**

A distinctive place that will maintain a sense of inspiration and tranquillity

**Assessment of the current position**

- Major infrastructure or the cumulative effect of new developments within or near to the edge of the National Park (e.g. wind farms, telecommunications masts, electricity pylons) can have a significant impact on the openness and tranquillity
- Since the commencement of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, the use of certain unsealed routes by motorised vehicles in the National Park is unlawful; however, in some areas it continues at a level which adversely affects ground conditions and tranquillity
- Balancing the needs of military training on the Otterburn Ranges with conservation of the natural and cultural qualities and provision of opportunities for public access and recreation, is essential to maintain the unique character of this part of the National Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 To protect and enhance tranquillity levels as the highest in England</td>
<td>• New development to take place in line with the agreed Planning Policies set out in the Northumberland National Park Local Development Framework</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• To monitor the levels of tranquillity using the Campaign to Protect Rural England’s agreed methodology</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.2 To conserve and enhance the sense of place of each of the distinct areas of</td>
<td>• Ensure all policies and programmes are tailored to the distinct character needs and opportunities of each ‘Action Area’</td>
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<tr>
<td>the National Park in line with the objectives identified for each area</td>
<td>• The distinct areas of the National Park influence the decision making of other partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3 To ensure that all new development within or on the fringe of the National</td>
<td>• Ensure all local and national planning policies and development control functions effectively address the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park will conserve or enhance the natural and cultural qualities of the National</td>
<td>• Ensure effective design guidance is available and promoted and good design is celebrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>• Assess developments on the fringe of the National Park in accordance with agreed criteria to protect and enhance the distinctive place and sense of tranquillity</td>
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<td>2.1.4 To ensure that visitor and recreational use complements the character</td>
<td>• Work with user groups, partners and local land managers to implement effective recreation plans for the areas of the National Park suffering from inappropriate use</td>
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<td>and capacity of the locations in which it takes place</td>
<td>• Positively promote and enhance low impact recreational access to tranquil areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.5 Ongoing integration of the Otterburn Ranges to conserve and enhance</td>
<td>• Review, develop and implement an agreed Integrated Rural Management Plan for the Otterburn Ranges</td>
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<tr>
<td>natural and cultural qualities and tranquillity</td>
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</table>
Outcome 2.2
The natural qualities and diverse habitats that characterise the changing landscapes will be safeguarded and enhanced

Assessment of the current position

- Changing land management practices can have a significant impact on natural qualities and diverse habitats
- Existing National Park boundary can restrict integrated landscape management approaches
- There is currently a lack of some important baseline information on biodiversity in the National Park
- Currently 60% of the farms in the National Park are managed in line with conservation purposes
- 92% of SSSIs within the National Park are in favourable condition or are now recovering from having been in an unfavourable condition
- The Biodiversity Action Plans for Northumberland County and the National Park are in place, however implementation is limited by available resources

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 2.2.1 To encourage and support land management practices to deliver measurable improvements in natural environment | • Deliver Environmental Stewardship and the English Woodland Grant Scheme  
• Establish effective evidence base for priority habitats and species  
• Targeted projects to enhance priority habitats and species |
| 2.2.2 To enhance locally and regionally important geology and habitats to ensure resilience and to ensure that habitats are linked | • Pilot initiatives on climate change adaptation  
• To work across the existing boundary of the National Park to enhance resilience by ensuring that habitats are linked  
• Positively promote and enhance low impact recreational access to tranquil areas |
Outcome 2.3
The rich historic environment and archaeological heritage will be understood, valued and cared for

Assessment of the current position

- There is a rich cultural heritage of all types and periods within the National Park
- The finite archaeological resource is in danger as 60% of the ancient monuments in Northumberland National Park are at risk
- Much of the archaeological heritage is still hidden and not recorded which places it at potential risk
- There is a successful track record of traditional skills training which could be rolled out to develop other heritage skills
- Successful community archaeology projects have helped develop understanding and engagement in the historic environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 2.3.1 To protect the historic environment and archaeological sites within the National Park | • Produce and deliver an action plan for the historic environment  
• Develop a heritage skills programme with partners to raise building and repair standards  
• Pilot new initiatives for landscape-scale heritage protection  
• Review, develop and implement an agreed Integrated Rural Management Plan for the Otterburn Ranges |
| 2.3.2 To develop further understanding of the cultural heritage of the National Park | • Improve baseline research of the cultural assets through a co-ordination of programmes based on the National Park and Hadrian’s Wall research frameworks  
• Engage, support and promote local community based archaeology and heritage activities |
Outcome 2.4

There is a strong and recognisable sense of identity which is born of the deep rooted cultural heritage yet balances this with a vibrant approach to the future

Assessment of the current position

• Northumberland National Park has a rich and evolving living history in areas of music, arts, literature and other cultural traditions which is important far beyond the National Park’s boundary

• The ever changing demographics and lifestyles in the communities in and around the National Park provide challenges and opportunities to care for and enhance the cultural vibrancy

• There are few venues or events within the National Park to promote cultural traditions

• Web enabled media and community radio are starting to grow in the area

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<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 To perpetuate the vibrant living traditions of the National Park and its gateway communities as part of the distinctive character of the area</td>
<td>• Support activities which promote cultural traditions through community and visitor events and activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Support activities which develop links with the wider region and provide opportunities to promote the cultural traditions of Northumberland</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Develop a programme of events and network of venues to promote cultural traditions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Maximise opportunities from new media and technology advances</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3.3 A Living Working Landscape for Now and the Future

Farming

Farming is the dominant land use in the National Park occupying in the region of 80% of the land area. It is widely recognised that farmers contribute significantly to the quality of the landscape, the biodiversity and the economic well being of the National Park: the latter both directly through their own economic activity and indirectly by their stewardship of the landscape. There are currently 234 farm holdings in the National Park. In the last fifteen years the numbers of large farms (over 100 hectares) has increased threefold and they now account for over half the farms. This has been at the expense of medium size farms who now account for only one in seven farms in the National Park. The size of farms varies with the terrain; in the Cheviots the average farm size is four times that of the Hadrian’s Wall area. The average farm size is significantly larger than in other areas of Northumberland and England as a whole.

Most of the farmers in the National Park rent the land (70%) whereas in the rest of England the position is the opposite as nearly 70% of farmers own the land they manage. Half of the farmed land is owned by four large land owners: the Northumberland Estate, the Ministry of Defence, Lilburn Estate and the College Valley Estate. Often the rented farms have passed down through the same family of tenants for many generations. Farming in the National Park is based on an extensive, low input system of livestock rearing, cattle and sheep, that is largely in sympathy with the environment.

For over 30 years government policy has recognised the need to provide support to hill farmers, paid through the EU Common Agriculture Policy and other subsidies. Recent and ongoing reforms of the Common Agriculture Policy mean that the overall value of support has been falling and is no longer linked to production. These reforms are central to England’s Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food, the aim of which is that farmers will have greater freedom to farm according to the demands of the market. Positive enhanced opportunities have been provided instead for farmers to provide environmental benefits through Environmental Stewardship and other grant schemes. Agri-environment schemes have also changed with Environmental Stewardship replacing both Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Sensitive Area payment schemes.

As a result the last ten years have seen a decline in the number of farms; the numbers employed on farms; and the amount of livestock in the National Park. Farmers are looking into ways to add value to their product in an increasingly competitive market.
Forestry

Forestry occupies almost 20% of Northumberland National Park, with roughly 20,000 hectares forested. There are substantial opportunities through sympathetic management to complement the landscape character, increase biodiversity, protect and enhance the cultural heritage, to provide facilities for public enjoyment and opportunities for economic development. Forest management represents a considerable economic resource through the provision of local employment and the procurement of goods and services. The forests in the National Park also have an important role in relation to climate change through absorption and storage of carbon.

The majority of the forests in the National Park are state owned and are managed by the Forestry Commission. The remaining forested areas range in size from some fairly large privately owned commercial woodlands to small shelter belts (many less than a hectare in size) on farms. Most of the forests were planted between 1950 and 1980 and have therefore either been felled and replanted or are approaching economic maturity.

In 2007 Defra produced ‘A Strategy for England’s Trees, Woods and Forests’. This strategy sets out the Government’s vision for England’s trees and woodland resource, in both rural and urban areas, over the next 50 years. It identifies five aims for government intervention in trees, woods and forests:

i. to secure trees and woodlands for future generations;

ii. to ensure resilience to climate change;

iii. to protect and enhance natural resources;

iv. to increase the contribution that trees, woods and forests make to our quality of life; and

v. to improve the competitiveness of woodland businesses and products

A Delivery Plan for this strategy has been produced by the Forestry Commission and Natural England (2008).

The UK Forestry Standard (UK FS) and the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UK WAS) continue to underpin the sustainable management of woodlands and forests in the UK. Recent revisions of the UK WAS, the current review of the UK FS and grant aid provided by the Forestry Commission, provide an up to date basis to and encouragement for sustainable forest and woodland management.

The North East Regional Forestry Strategy and Action Plan recognises that the trees, woodlands and forests of the Region are a renewable natural resource which makes a significant contribution to the Region’s economic growth, to our quality of life and towards protecting and improving our environment. There are over 100,000 hectares of forest in the Region (12% of the land area). The 20,000 hectares in the National Park is therefore important in the regional context.
Country Sports

Country sport, particularly shooting, is an important activity in Northumberland National Park having a significant impact on the economy, land management and biodiversity. On the lower ground on the edges of the National Park pheasant shoots are important, utilising the small woodlands and shelter belts. On the moorland areas, particularly on the large estates in the Cheviots and Simonside, grouse shooting predominates. The main areas of heather moorland in the National Park are intensively managed to provide suitable habitat for red grouse. In order to supplement the income from grouse a number of the estates now also have partridge shoots, releasing large numbers of red legged partridge. As priorities change, jobs for shepherds are being replaced by jobs for game keepers.

There are substantial populations of deer, mainly roe deer, in the National Park. Whilst not a major contributor to the economy, deer stalking is carried out largely in the forests of the National Park with overseas visitors often participating.

Fishing is also an important activity, with the pristine rivers of the National Park being some of the best for salmon and sea trout in England. There is considerable scope for product development and economic benefit linked with tourism.

Military Training

The Otterburn Ranges extend to 22,803 hectares, approximately 22% of the National Park. In addition, the adjoining forests of Kielder and Kidland are licenced for military training for a limited number of days per year. Live firing takes places within the two danger areas of Otterburn and Redesdale and whilst primarily designated as artillery ranges many other military training activities take place including dry training; training with no live ammunition, and live firing with a wide variety of weapon systems from small arms through to air-to-ground attack.

The Defence Estate Strategy directs the strategic management of the MOD Estate. It identifies the key role of Integrated Rural Management Plans (IRMP) to sustainably manage the rural estate balancing the primary military training activity with its agricultural use and interests of nature conservation, historic environment, landscape and public access. The Otterburn IRMP was produced in 2002 and is to be reviewed in 2009.

From 2001, significant infrastructure developments took place to enable training with heavy tracked artillery, the AS90 self-propelled gun and the Multi-Launch Rocket System. Alongside these developments, initiatives aimed at enhancing conservation, recreation and access to the Ranges have been implemented. In recent years the overarching need to support operational deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan has altered the complexion of training with increased emphasis on pre-deployment training, particularly combined all arms live fire exercises, and a consequent reduction in specific artillery firing. Whilst the nature of training changes to reflect national need, the level of training at Otterburn remains high.
Tourism

Tourism is an important and growing business sector in and around the National Park which receives approximately 1.5m visitors annually. Day trips account for the highest proportion of visits, followed by domestic staying visitors and inbound staying visitors (Northumberland Tourism, 2007). Together, visitors to the National Park and its surrounding areas contributed £94.8m to the Region’s economy in 2006 (STEAM, 2007). The revenue generated by the tourism industry is an important part of a diverse rural economy and helps to sustain many local businesses.

Nevertheless, Northumberland National Park remains a tranquil and quiet area due its size. It remains the second least visited National Park in England. The current tourism offer is limited. The National Park’s tourism industry is comprised of micro-businesses, the vast majority of these being accommodation providers. Recently there has been a small growth in the number of activity businesses and the establishment of The Outdoor Network. The tourism industry is shaped by market forces and the limited product almost certainly reflects the expectations and needs of the narrow customer base (day visitors or short-breaks going for walks or sightseeing by car).

Recent research highlights that a number of existing tourism businesses are considering diversifying into new markets and products and most aim to expand. Their success will enhance the appeal of the National Park to a wider audience.

The North East Region sees tourism as an economic driver, and changing macro-economic conditions suggest that in coming years more people will be taking their holidays in the UK and that more foreign visitors are expected. As visitors look to reduce the impact of their visits on the environment, opportunities are being created for green (nature based and low impact) tourism. The National Park has the capacity to accommodate increased visitor numbers and provide excellent opportunities for ‘green tourism’. However, this needs to be carefully planned so as not to erode the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park and to ensure that tourism makes a positive contribution to the local economy.
## Outcome 3.1

**New and better approaches to sustainable land and water management have been tested, adopted and embedded**

### Assessment of the current position

- Farming and forestry sectors are facing longer term pressures on their business practices. Opportunities exist to add value to the local produce and for financial support towards conservation works.
- Increased regulation is adversely impacting on viability and profitability of land based businesses.
- The changes to policy and agri-environment schemes have resulted in a shift towards support for conservation and enhancement works.
- Changing land management practices need to be managed to ensure they conserve and enhance the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.
- The Rural Development Programme for England provides important opportunities to financially support sustainable land and water management.
- As a result of the topography of the National Park flooding is not a very common occurrence. As the climate continues to change the National Park is not immune to future incidences of flooding.

### Objectives to 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.1.1</th>
<th>To encourage and support the uptake of better and more sustainable land management practices which conserve and enhance the National Park’s distinctive qualities</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Ensure effective targeting and high levels of engagement by farmers in environmental stewardship and woodland grant schemes</td>
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<td>Increase the percentage of farmland in the National Park in environmental stewardship</td>
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<td>Support further the development of commercially viable sustainable farming, fishing, forestry and grouse moor management practices which conserve and / or enhance the National Park and do not detract from the natural and cultural qualities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encourage an increase in the area of well managed native woodlands</td>
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<td>Support the redesign of forestry plantations where necessary to achieve a better contribution to the landscape and other environmental benefits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Maintain the integrated rural management planning for the Otterburn Ranges</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>3.1.2</th>
<th>To ensure that all the National Park’s rivers are of the highest quality and minimise the flood risk and impacts to communities and businesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of the England Catchment Sensitive Farming Delivery Initiative to mitigate against diffuse pollution in priority catchments, and apply lessons learnt in other parts of the National Park</td>
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<td>Manage flood waters through interventions designed to retain flood waters in the upper catchments, and restore and enhance water-depandant habitats (e.g. blanket bogs)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop systems to alert businesses and communities to the dangers of flood waters</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Outcome 3.2
The National Park has made an important contribution to increasing understanding about, and demonstrating the practice of, sustainable development and responses to climate change

Assessment of the current position
- Climate Change may result in a changing landscape within the National Park and adapting to climate change is likely to result in changes in the way people live and work in the National Park
- The National Park has a unique opportunity to act as a test bed for new approaches to sustainable development and responses to climate change, especially through landscape-scale initiatives
- The National Park Authority’s Sustainable Development Fund is facilitating a variety of local approaches to sustainable living and working
- There is an active framework in place to inform understanding of climate change and action at a regional, sub regional and National Park level

Objectives to 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3.2.1 To promote and implement sustainable land management practices which contribute to effective carbon sequestration and storage | • Implement pilot initiatives in land management, recreation and public engagement in relation to sustainable development and climate change  
• To undertake research and better understand and measure the impact of climate change on natural and cultural qualities of the National Park and its economy  
• To ensure that work on climate change is joined up to contribute to sub regional, regional and national programmes on climate change |
| 3.2.2 To encourage the production of renewable energy from sources compatible with the National Park’s distinctive qualities | • Audit the potential for and support the uptake of micro-renewable schemes across the National Park  
• Use the land use planning system to deliver high levels of energy efficiency and appropriate forms of renewable energy in the National Park  
• Highlight issues of fuel poverty and promote energy efficiency across the National Park |
| 3.2.3 To work towards a carbon neutral National Park                               | • Establish and monitor a carbon calculator for the National Park  
• Raise public awareness of sustainable development and climate change through a branded carbon neutral programme  
• Encourage communities and businesses to reduce energy consumption  
• Mobilise the public sector to lead in areas of market failure to develop new renewable energy initiatives |
Outcome 3.3
Sustained and economically viable business growth which sensitively makes use of the natural, historical and cultural qualities

Assessment of the current position

- The local economy is changing. Currently some parts of the economy are unsustainable with underdeveloped markets and supply chains (for example local farm produce, use of wood fuel)
- Significant opportunities for economic growth and innovative development exist through the sensitive use of natural, historical and cultural qualities
- There is a strong demand for local food and local branding is seen as adding commercial value to products and services
- The potential of the tourism economy has not been fully realised. There is a limited tourism 'offer' (poor visitor infrastructure, low participation in grading schemes)
- The National Park has recently been identified as one of the top three destination brands for North East England
- The impact of the carbon emissions of predominantly day or short-stay visitors who tend to use a fossil fuel private car needs to be considered in the context of climate change objectives
- There is a need to have a flexible and well-qualified workforce to add value to local products and services and to address skills gaps shortages (for example craftspeople and technical expertise to carry out built heritage conservation work)
- Many communities in and around the National Park have low levels of workforce skills. There is a particular skills shortage in land based businesses
- The National Park 'brand' is beginning to be recognised by businesses

Objectives to 2014

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<tr>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify and promote products (such as foods, arts, crafts) which are traditional to the National Park and surrounding area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of local supply chains (for example food, timber) to retain added value in the local economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve and increase access to business support and training targeted at growth in key sectors and skills gaps</td>
</tr>
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<td>Undertake research to better understand why visitors come to the National Park and use the results to inform actions to encourage longer stays and more visits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better establish the nature of the visitor experience and the resultant economic footprint and assist businesses to design products and services accordingly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish why people don't come to the National Park and where practical implement actions to overcome this</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop and cross-promote a clear National Park brand through its tourism offer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure training and development opportunities exist for young entrants into the labour market to join the dominant land based business sectors and the growth sectors (tourism and cultural businesses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus skills development at existing and predicted skills gaps in the local labour market</td>
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</table>
3.4 Thriving Communities

The 2001 Census revealed that the National Park had a resident population of 1,936 people, making it the most sparsely populated local authority area in England. Northumberland National Park also has a relatively old population (67% over the age of 45) compared with the North East (60%) and England (61%). The lack of young people in the labour market (age 20 to 34) is only 14% in the National Park against a national figure of just over 20%.

The communities of Northumberland National Park are largely characterised by the river valleys in which they live and are defined as those communities within the National Park boundary and the gateway market towns of Wooler, Rothbury, Bellingham and Haltwhistle which serve the people of those valleys and look to the National Park and its special qualities as key assets for the wider community. There are four ‘Action Areas’ through which the National Park Authority interacts with these communities: Hadrian’s Wall and South Tyne, North Tyne and Redesdale, Upper Coquetdale and the Cheviots and Glendale. The two northern ‘Action Areas’ have many associations with the Northumberland Coast, Alnwick, Berwick and Morpeth, whereas the two southern ‘Action Areas’ associate more with Hexham, the Tyne Valley, Newcastle and Carlisle.

The Government defines ‘sustainable communities’ as those which meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents and other users, contribute to a high quality of life; and offer opportunity for advancement. Communities are expected to achieve this in ways which make effective use of natural resources, protect and enhance the environment, promote social cohesion and strengthen the economy.

Key characteristics of a ‘thriving’ Northumberland National Park community have been defined (in the Local Development Framework: Core Strategy and Development Policies, March 2009) as:

- **active, inclusive and safe**: tolerant and cohesive, with a strong culture and other shared community activities;
- **well run**: with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership;
- **environmentally sensitive**: providing places for people to live that are considerate of the environment;
- **well designed and built**: locally distinctive, featuring quality built, historic and natural environment;
- **well connected**: with access to jobs, schools, health and other services;
- **thriving**: with a diverse local economy;
- **well served**: with access to public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate for people’s needs and accessible to all; and
- **fair for everyone**: including those in other communities now and in the future.

These characteristics are closely aligned to the vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland (September 2007), which aims to release the strength of the county’s communities so that they can: **enjoy a good standard of living, live safely and in comfort, lead healthier lifestyles, readily access the things they need, take part in cultural activity, care about the environment and get involved and bring about change.**

The Northumberland National Park Management Plan will complement the Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland and will serve an important role in highlighting the challenges and opportunities for the retention of sustainable communities in the National Park.
Well connected and engaged communities

Experience from the National Park Authority’s ‘Action Area’ working has demonstrated an interest from the communities in the unique opportunities that living in or in a gateway to Northumberland National Park offers. Furthermore, recent approaches to rural development have demonstrated the coherence of the communities in the National Park with those living in the rest of the Uplands in Northumberland. Communities value the expertise within the National Park Authority and its partners which has been used to deliver joint projects, and which can provide important advocacy for rural communities.

Housing

Within the National Park there has not been significant pressure for housing development. This low level of new house building arises from a combination of the National Park’s small population and its remote location. There are only 799 houses within the boundary. Thus growth in the supply of houses has been small.

A high percentage of houses within the National Park are used as second residences or holiday homes (13.89%), compared to 0.04% in the North East and 0.69% in England, (all figures from the 2001 Census). While the number of holiday homes is low compared to the Lake District (18%) it is nevertheless high compared to the Peak District (4%) and Dartmoor (3%).

Between 2000 and 2007 house prices in Northumberland National Park increased by 263%, compared to 159% in England.

Government policy identifies the provision of affordable rural housing as a significant issue. The National Park Authority’s Housing Needs Survey 2007 has confirmed the demand for housing exceeds housing completions and in particular there is a lack of affordable housing for younger adults and for retired people within the National Park.

Access to Services

A Local Facilities Survey was undertaken by the National Park Authority during February 2008 which assessed the services available within settlements in the National Park. Although physical buildings providing shops and other local services are limited in number the survey indicated that particularly within the National Park’s main settlements, residents have access to a number of services that will meet their basic daily needs without having to travel. This is particularly as a result in the growth of online and mobile shopping and health services. In addition, the gateway settlements of Rothbury, Haltwhistle, Bellingham and Wooler provide access to a wider range of services for National Park residents.

People living in and around Northumberland National Park do not have access to mains services such as gas and in some areas electricity. The National Park is surrounded by rich sources of renewable energy such as timber; yet it has the highest levels of fuel poverty in the Region and beyond.
Transport

The 2001 Census indicated that rates of car ownership within the National Park are very high, with 95% of households owning at least one car, compared with regional and national averages of 64% and 73% respectively. There is also a high number of cars per household (1.59, as compared to 0.90 in the North East and 1.11 in England), due to the dispersed nature of residential dwellings and the very limited availability of public transport. The Census also illustrates that a slightly higher proportion of residents of the National Park either travel to work by car or van (48.31%, compared to 35.22% of Northumberland residents), however many more residents work mainly from home (37.62%, compared to 6.54% of Northumberland residents).

In March 2008 there were 12 bus routes which serviced the settlements within Northumberland National Park; these routes lead to market towns and cities, their frequency varying with the type of route and between seasons. For example, National Express runs a daily service between Newcastle and Edinburgh through a small section of the National Park compared with the 714 Tyneside to Kielder bus which runs only on Sundays in the summer season.

Economic Wellbeing

The 2001 Census revealed that there were 1,061 people in employment; the largest employment sector (28.37%) was agriculture, hunting and forestry and 7.54% for hotel and catering. There is a high level of economically active residents within the National Park, 70% are in employment, compared with 59% for Northumberland and 61% for England. There is also a low unemployment rate of 2% compared with 4% for Northumberland and 3% for England.

However, areas in and around the National Park suffer from low wage rates, under-employment (high levels of part-time working) and the whole of the agricultural land is classified as severely disadvantaged, that is it is very difficult to farm profitably.

The 2007 Housing Needs Survey established that there is a wide range of net household income within the National Park, with around half of households receiving less than £1,300 and over a quarter receiving more than £2,167 per month. The average income in autumn 2005 was £1,798 and £2,028 per month for the North East and England respectively.

The National Park Authority's 2006 Business Needs Survey asked businesses within the National Park to describe their business type. The majority described their businesses as farming (48%), followed by tourism (37%), and accommodation (12%). Of businesses on the fringe of the National Park, the highest business type was tourism (33%), followed by farming (32%), and recreation (15%). Given the high percentages of farming and tourism sectors, any change in these areas could potentially have a significant impact on the economy of the National Park. 88% of respondents (95% inside the National Park, and 84% on the fringe of the National Park) employ less than 10 people, illustrating that small businesses are most common within and surrounding the National Park.
### Outcome 4.1

The communities in and around the Park will have a strong connection to, and appreciation of, the National Park and be fully engaged in shaping its future.

#### Assessment of the current position

- Communities in the National Park are defined by the river valley in which they sit, their connection with gateway towns and their wider associations beyond the National Park. They are largely aligned with the four ‘Action Areas’ which extend beyond the existing National Park boundary.
- Agriculture based on less productive land and small scale tourism businesses are dominant in the local labour market and local economy.
- Progress has been made in engaging local communities and businesses in decision making and action (for example through the implementation of the ‘Action Area’ approach).
- There is a high level of employment but low wage rates related to high levels of part-time working result in a wide range of net household incomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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</table>
| 4.1.1 To increase understanding of the distinctive natural and cultural qualities of the National Park so that communities feel they have strong connections to the ‘landscapes’ and a recognisable sense of identity. | • Implement initiatives which engage communities in understanding and interpreting the special qualities.  
• Use National Park Centres as a community and local business resource to showcase local goods and house local services. |
| 4.1.2 To ensure greater levels of community engagement in local decision-making and action so that people can contribute to the future wellbeing of the National Park. | • Further develop the framework for community engagement through a continued focus on the National Park’s four ‘Action Areas’.  
• Engage and listen to young people to understand what can be done to help them enjoy their lives in and around the National Park.  
• Provide effective advocacy for the National Park and its communities.  
• Consult, engage and listen to take account of local views in determining policies and priorities for the National Park and beyond. |
### Outcome 4.2

**There is effective infrastructure (services, facilities, networks etc.) to support socially and culturally active communities with a high quality of life and improved health and well-being in and around the National Park.**

**Assessment of the current position**

- There has been a loss of local services and amenities (including shops, village halls and schools).
- Much of the public and private sector infrastructure is located in larger settlements outside the National Park.
- There is an increase in internet shopping services which may threaten local services.
- Fuel poverty and the reliance on private transport mean that dramatic price changes in the cost of energy can have huge unsettling impacts on the lives and livelihoods of those living and working in the National Park.
- Local communities and their local organisations and partnerships have been inventive and are creating new infrastructure solutions for themselves often based on shared usage of facilities and services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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</table>
| 4.2.1 **To ensure a balanced range of housing that meets local needs, enabling people to live and work in and around the National Park** | - Develop and implement planning policies to meet the needs of local communities and businesses which are in harmony with the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.  
- Deliver affordable housing initiatives to meet identified needs within the National Park. |
| 4.2.2 **To ensure the retention of rural services which keep communities thriving and provide better access to a wider range of services and infrastructure through innovative, integrated and sustainable solutions** | - Advocate for the retention of important rural services on an evidence basis.  
- Encourage innovative solutions and sharing of best practice in the provision of key local services and infrastructure.  
- Support the development of shared business, public and community services and infrastructure within the National Park.  
- Monitor provision through an annual community facilities survey. |
| 4.2.3 **To enable an integrated transport network which meets the needs of those who live, work and visit the National Park and offers an attractive alternative to the car** | - Produce and implement a travel plan for the National Park to reduce the energy use of travel and extend the availability of public transport. |
| 4.2.4 **To increase the use of renewable energy by communities in the National Park by 20% by 2014 while continuing work on increasing energy efficiency** | - Pilot and evaluate community based projects which exemplify low carbon lifestyles.  
- Support the increased use of wood fuel harvested from within the National Park as a renewable source of energy.  
- Target action towards those experiencing fuel poverty. |
Outcome 4.3
People will have opportunities to work in, live in and contribute to resilient communities in and around the National Park

Assessment of the current position

- The dynamics of rural communities are changing with increased population mobility
- The demographics of the National Park communities are changing. The population is ageing and young adults are leaving
- Second homes in the area are very popular but reduce opportunities for entrants to the housing market and for those wishing to live in rented accommodation
- Commuting to work is slightly higher than the rest of Northumberland and working from home is exceptionally popular in the National Park

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<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.3.1 There are more young adults and people of working age living in the National Park</td>
<td>• Deliver affordable housing to meet the identified needs of young adults and working age households in the National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2 There are more opportunities and a wider range for employment and training in the National Park and its gateway settlements</td>
<td>• Implement support programmes and encourage business development which delivers a range of training and employment opportunities in the National Park and its gateway settlements</td>
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</table>
| 4.3.3 Reduce the impact from commuting out of the National Park or its gateway communities to work and encourage even more home working | • Be an effective advocate for infrastructure and services which support effective home working  
• Support initiatives to reduce the impact of car-borne journeys on the environment e.g. access to bio-fuel and car sharing schemes |
To have an area valued for its outstanding beauty and rich natural and cultural qualities is a great recognition for any community, region or nation. Northumberland National Park is such a prized asset for its communities, the North East Region and the country as a whole. The National Park, however, is not always recognised for its intrinsic value or the important roles its plays.

National and regional planning, regeneration and environmental policy can have a significant impact on the National Park and the conservation of its natural and cultural qualities. National Parks have, in the 60 years from the legislation which created them, proven themselves to be relevant in addressing many of the challenges facing the environment, rural areas and wider society. This is no less relevant as we face significant global environmental challenges. National Parks in England work collectively through the English National Parks Authorities Association to lobby for the interests of National Parks and to ensure the needs of National Parks are properly considered in national policies and programmes.

At the regional level Northumberland National Park adds significantly to the image of Northumberland and the North East Region, as is evidenced by use of its images in regional branding and marketing campaigns. These have been used to attract inward investment and visitors to the Region.

Protected landscapes in the North East have been found to have a high economic value. Northumberland National Park attracts the most tourists staying within or on the fringes of the North East’s protected landscapes and a high percentage of day visitors from other areas of the UK. Over £94.8 million is being generated in the North East Region by tourists visiting the National Park and its surrounding areas.

Northumberland National Park provides important environmental and eco-system services to the wider region. As a key part of the catchment for a number of important rivers the National Park has an important influence on issues such as water quality and flooding. The moorlands, bogs and forests within the National Park also play an important role in locking up carbon dioxide, the key greenhouse gas which contributes to climate change.

The value of the National Park is often felt beyond its boundary in other ways, and as a part of a wider network of protected landscapes the National Park has an important role to play in helping our landscapes and habitats adapt to the impacts of climate change. The National Park therefore needs to be seen within the context of a much broader network and play its part in ensuring connectivity between such areas.
**Outcome 5.1**

Northumberland National Park is widely recognised for its environmental, social and economic contribution, particularly to North East England

**Assessment of the current position**

- The environmental and recreational value of the National Park is widely recognised
- The role of the National Park in providing a wide range of other public benefits is not fully documented or understood
- Apart from tourism, no recent assessment of the economic benefit of Northumberland National Park to local and regional economy has been undertaken
- The National Park ‘brand’ is increasingly recognised by local businesses and regional tourism bodies
- Investment in the National Park as a means of sustaining economic and social benefits is not sufficiently understood or accepted

**Objectives to 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.1.1</th>
<th>To optimise the potential opportunities for the National Park to contribute to the social and economic regeneration of Northumberland and wider North East Region</th>
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<td></td>
<td>• Assess the current economic value of Northumberland National Park to the Region and target investment to maximise its potential</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• Celebrate the value of the National Park in providing environmental, economic and social benefits by highlighting its contribution to key local, regional and national targets</td>
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<th>5.1.2</th>
<th>The natural, cultural, social and economic infrastructure of the National Park is sustained through its use as a local and regional asset</th>
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<td>• Investment programmes tailored to sustain the health of all aspects of the National Park’s infrastructure</td>
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Outcome 5.2
The National Park has made a distinctive contribution to a broader network of protected areas

Assessment of the current position

- Northumberland National Park is an important member of the England, UK and European network of protected areas
- Northumberland National Park is an important element of protected areas in the North East region
- Northumberland National Park has important links to areas in Cumbria and the Scottish Borders
- Northumberland National Park Authority and its partners have an accumulated knowledge and expertise which can be used to deliver benefits beyond the National Park boundary

Objectives to 2014

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5.2.1 To ensure the National Park has a recognised role in leading on key areas of protected area management which relate to its natural and cultural assets | • Work across borders to deliver landscape-scale or regional projects to protect wildlife and cultural heritage and ensure landscape connectivity  
  • Development of best practice approaches to military use in protected areas  
  • Development of best practice in monitoring and enhancement of tranquillity levels in protected areas  
  • Share learning with and learn from other protected areas and other relevant bodies |
Outcome 5.3

The value of the National Park as a place that is worth looking after is clearly demonstrated in the policies and actions of those who have influence on the National Park

Assessment of the current position

- There is currently supportive national and regional policy in place to protect National Parks, however, there is a need to renew guidance on National Parks through a new Government Circular
- Changes in local and regional governance present both opportunities and threats to recognition of the National Park in emerging plans, policies and programmes
- Section 62 of the 1995 Environment Act provides a basis for policy and action to support National Park purposes by other bodies, but it is not always clear whether this is adhered to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives to 2014</th>
<th>Means to achieve</th>
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| 5.3.1 To ensure national, regional and local plans, policies and programmes clearly demonstrate a commitment to delivering National Park purposes | • Ensure engagement and representations on behalf of the National Park are made on national, regional and local plans and programmes development
• Stronger requirement for public bodies to support National Park Purposes through their policies and actions
• Development of a new National Park Circular |
River North Tyne in Northumberland National Park
4. Implementing and Monitoring the Management Plan

Implementation

4.1 The National Park Management Plan sets out the long term vision, outcomes, objectives and means of achievement for the period of the Plan. The achievement of the objectives set out in the Plan will require the commitment and efforts not only of the National Park Authority, but of a wide range of partners and stakeholders.

4.2 Implementation of the Plan began in June 2009 following formal adoption of the Management Plan by the National Park Authority. The Management Plan does not attempt to identify all the partners involved in the delivery of each area of the Plan. It is, however, intended that the Management Plan will be taken forward through Annual Action Plan which will detail the role of the National Park Authority and all its partners.

4.3 The Management Plan will be used to promote the needs of the National Park within the policy and delivery documents of key public sector partners. For example, the National Park Management Plan will be integrated in the next version of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland and reviews of the Northumberland Local Area Agreement.

4.4 The Management Plan will be used to prioritise the work and resources of the National Park Authority. However, for the Management Plan to be effective its implementation will require that partners also align elements of their resources, programmes and policies.

Monitoring and Review

4.5 Northumberland National Park Authority will lead the process of monitoring and reporting progress on the Plan as a whole, and will agree with partners a set of performance measures which will monitor the condition of the National Park so that we can assess if the Management Plan is successful in achieving the vision and outcomes. In order to fulfil this role the Authority will:

- Publish an annual review of progress against the objectives set out in the Management Plan;
- Publish an annual 'State of the National Park' report.

4.6 While the National Park Authority is the statutory body required to develop the Management Plan, the Plan is for the National Park not just the Authority. Following the successful partnership working which has developed this Management Plan, the Key Partners have agreed to establish a Management Plan Partnership to develop an Annual Action Plan for implementation and to report on progress on the achievement of objectives. Partners will take the role of leading on some of the action set out in the Annual Action Plan. This lead role will involve planning, co-ordinating and reporting on the relevant targets in the Annual Action Plan.

4.7 Whilst the National Park Authority is required to review the Management Plan at least every five years, it is intended that review of the Management Plan becomes part of the annual monitoring process. In this way the Management Plan can remain current and can adapt its priorities and approach when faced with significant changes in the evidence on which it is based, or the context within which it has been prepared.
Key Partners

4.8 The following partners have committed to taking an active role in the achievement of the objectives within the Management Plan.

Northumberland County Council is the new unitary authority for Northumberland. The Council is responsible for a wide range of local government services including education, social services, highways and transport, waste management and economic development. The County Council is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Northumberland Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement. The County Council has formal agreement with the National Park Authority on the management of rights of way within the National Park.

www.northumberland.gov.uk

Natural England was established in October 2006 and brings together English Nature, the Countryside Agency and the Rural Development Service. Natural England acts to conserve and enhance the natural environment, for its intrinsic value, the well-being and enjoyment of people and the economic prosperity that it brings. There is a close working relationship between Natural England and the National Park Authorities. In Northumberland this relationship is set out in the form of a joint action plan. In future this joint action plan will be framed within the context of the National Park Management Plan.

www.naturalengland.org.uk

Environment Agency is the leading public body for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales. The agency aims to ensure that the air, land and water are looked after. The Agency is responsible for a wide range of environmental services and works closely with local authorities and other government agencies. Key functions in the National Park include protecting and improving the freshwater environment, regulating waste disposal, and flood management in the Tweed/Till, North Tyne and Rede river systems.

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

English Heritage works to protect and promote England's historic environment and ensure that its past is understood, valued, cared for and enjoyed. English Heritage is responsible, on behalf of the Government, for administering applications for Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent. It is also a statutory consultee in respect of proposals affecting high status heritage assets and some large scale applications affecting Conservation Areas. Within Northumberland National Park, English Heritage has worked closely with the National Park Authority and local land owners on a range of historic environment research and conservation initiatives. The relationship between English Heritage and the National Park is set out within a Joint Accord, which is accompanied by an Annual Action Plan. This action plan will continue to reflect the objectives and targets of both authorities and the National Park Management Plan.

www.english-heritage.org.uk

Forestry Commission is responsible for managing public owned forests in both rural and urban areas. It is required to make a commercial rate of return and also aims to deliver a wider range of public benefits from these forests whilst securing them for future generations. The Forestry Commission seeks to increase the contribution that trees, woods and forests make to our quality of life; to improve the competitiveness of woodland businesses and products, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural environment and increasing resilience to climate change. The Forestry Commission intends to work closely with the National Park Authority and other partners in order to help deliver the Northumberland National Park Management Plan. The Forestry Commission manages 18,000 hectares of forest and other land within the National Park, is responsible for the operation of the English Woodland Grant Scheme and the regulation of forestry in the National Park and works with the Authority on schemes to expand the coverage of native woodland, the restoration of the Border Mires and other species and habitat restoration projects.

www.forestry.gov.uk/northeastengland

One North East is the regional development agency for North East England. The Agency provides a wide range of economic development and regeneration services across the region. In the National Park key roles of the agency include leading on the England Rural Development Programme, business support and tourism development and regional marketing. One North East has worked closely with the National Park Authority on area based regeneration initiatives and is currently supporting bottom-up rural regeneration in the Park and surrounding area through the Northumberland Uplands Leader initiative.

www.onenortheast.co.uk

4. Implementing and Monitoring the Management Plan
Defence Estates is an organisation of the Ministry of Defence and has the role of providing a strategic overview of the defence estate. The organisation manages the Otterburn Ranges which cover 22% of the National Park and aims to ensure that the estate is managed and developed in a sustainable manner. Defence Estates advise the Ministry of Defence on statutory, conservation and environmental obligations with respect to the estate. For the Otterburn Ranges this is primarily achieved through the Integrated Rural Management Plan. This IRMP is due to be reviewed in 2009 and this review will be informed by the National Park Management Plan.

www.defence-estates.mod.uk

Northumberland Tourism Limited is the area tourism partnership for Northumberland and part of the Tourism Network North East. The partnership is committed to providing a range of integrated services for visitors and tourism businesses in Northumberland. Northumberland Tourism Limited works on behalf of tourism businesses and public agencies, including the National Park Authority, to ensure visitors have the best possible experience.

www.visitnorthumberland.com

Country Land and Business Association is the membership organisation for owners of land, property and businesses in rural England and Wales. The Association promotes a living and working countryside through lobbying for the development of the rural economy. The Association works with the National Park Authority to develop an understanding of the issues facing those living and working in the National Park through active participation on advisory groups and forums.

www.cla.org.uk

The National Farmers’ Union represents the farmers and growers of England and Wales. Its central objective is to promote successful and socially responsible agriculture and horticulture, while ensuring the long term viability of rural communities.

www.nfuonline.com

Northumberland National Park and County Joint Local Access Forum is an independent statutory forum, with an interest in public rights of way and access to the countryside in Northumberland. Northumberland National Park Authority works in partnership with Northumberland County Council in supporting and servicing the Forum. The Forum gives advice on three main areas; improving the rights of way network; developing strategies for recreation and access which cater for a wide range of people; and implementing the statutory right of access to the countryside.

www.nnpa.org.uk/jointlocalaccessforum.htm
Other Partners

4.9 There is much ongoing work carried out by the public private, community and voluntary sectors that is already contributing to the strategic aims and outcomes of the Management Plan. The Management Plan provides a framework for co-ordinating much of this activity and the National Park Authority is keen to engage all partners in the delivery of the Management Plan.

Funding the Implementation of the Management Plan

4.10 Not everything set out within this Management Plan is readily achievable with the resources available to the National Park Authority and its partners. At the time of preparing this Plan the resources for delivering all the action identified have not been secured.

4.11 There are many organisations currently investing in projects and programmes in the National Park that will contribute to the delivery of the Management Plan. Greater focus and co-ordination of existing investment has the potential to make a significant contribution. Partners will therefore be asked to consider how they can achieve better delivery of the Management Plan through the allocation of their resources.

4.12 The National Park Authority will target and prioritise its human and financial resources toward the delivery of key areas of the Management Plan where the Authority is to take a leading or supporting role. The Management Plan will be used to determine the medium term priorities and budget plan for the Authority and this will be detailed annually in the Authority’s Corporate Plan.

4.13 The National Park Authority will work with partners to attract additional funding and resources to the National Park. This will include funding from local, regional and national sources, European Union funds, National Lottery funding, and from other charitable sources, as well as private investment.
Daw's Crag, High Rochester in Northumberland National Park
Appendix 1

A Snapshot of Northumberland National Park in 2009

A Landscape Rich in Biodiversity and Geology
• 11% of Northumberland National Park is designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
• 87% of the SSSIs in the National Park are currently meeting Government targets, for being in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition, compared to 80% in North East England. The percentage of SSSIs meeting this target has increased by 19% in 2 years.
• 100% of the 5 SSSIs within the National Park designated for their geological importance are in ‘favourable’ condition compared to 92% of those within North East England.

A Rich Cultural Heritage
• Northumberland National Park contains 225 listed buildings (2% of the listed buildings within the North East region).
• 26 of the listed buildings with Northumberland National Park have been identified as being ‘at risk’.
• The National Park contains 430 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (32% of the North East region’s Scheduled Monuments), 75 of which are at high risk and 182 at medium risk.
• The National Park has one conservation area - Kirknewton. This has an up to date Conservation Character Area Appraisal.

A True Sense of Tranquillity
• The Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) ranked Northumberland County as the most tranquil county in England, with an average tranquillity score of 28.6, followed by Cumbria (20.6), North Yorkshire (17.1) and Durham (12).
• CPRE have also produced night blight maps in 1993 and 2000, which indicate that Northumberland National Park has the darkest skies in the region. However, over this time period it indicates that more light pollution is encroaching on the rural parts of the area.

Distinctive Landscape Character
• There are 12 Landscape Character Types and 30 Landscape Character Areas within the National Park. Currently there is no Landscape Strategy for the National Park.
• Over 50% of the dry stone walls and 90% of the hedges in the area were in need of maintenance and repair in 2004.

Income and Employment
• Average incomes within the National Park are low (half receive less than £15,600 per annum) compared to the North East region (£21,576) and England (£24,336).
• Unemployment rates within the National Park are low (2%), compared to 4% and 3% for the North East and England respectively.
• 95% of businesses located within the National Park employ less than 10 people.
• 37% of National Park residents regularly work from home.
• 95% of households in the National Park own at least one car, compared to only 64% in the North East region.
Housing
• 14% of dwellings within the National Park are second homes, compared to 0.04% in the North East and 0.69% in England.
• There has been no affordable housing developed within the National Park for many years, with only 19 new housing units (new build and conversion) being completed in 8 years.
• Between 2000-2007 house prices in the National Park have increased 263%, compared to 159% in England.

Transport and Services
• All settlements within the National Park can now access online grocery delivery, which until 2007/08 was unavailable throughout the northern area of the Park.
• There were 2 schools, 8 churches, 1 doctor, 2 post offices, 7 public houses/social clubs within the settlements of the National Park in 2008.
• In March 2008 there were 12 bus routes which serviced the settlements within Northumberland National Park.
• The 2001 Census records 95% of household in the National Park owning at least one car compared with 64% in the North East region and 73% nationally.

Farming
• The number of farms operating in the National Park has reduced by 9% in 16 years. The decrease has been in farms between 5 - 100 hectares (40%), with increases in farms less than 5 hectares (156%); and greater than 100 hectares (351%).
• 28% of residents of the National Park are employed in agriculture, hunting and forestry. Employment in agriculture is falling at about 4% per year nationally.
• 10% of the National Park is covered by Higher Level Stewardship Schemes compared to 5% in England. Stewardship Schemes attracted around £2 million to the National Park in 2007/08.
• 60% of farms in Northumberland National Park have part of their land managed under environmental/conservation schemes.

Tourism
• 90% of visitors to the National Park are ‘white British’, and only 9% have a disability.
• 43% of visitors are attracted to Hadrian’s Wall; 41% to Coquetdale; 25% to the Cheviots; 9% to North Tyne and Redesdale.
• The largest group of visitors (34%) are between 44 and 59 years of age.
• The number of visitors to Northumberland National Park Centres has increased from 111,000 in 2002 to 130,000 in 2008.
• 2.5% of visitors in Northumberland used a Tourist Information Centre, compared to 22% in Northumberland National Park.
• Northumberland National Park Centres were rated top for overall satisfaction with visitor experience (98%), in a national survey in 2008.
Trees, Woodlands and Forests
- Since 1995 over 700 hectares of new native woodland has been created in the National Park.
- In 2007/08 there was 150,000 cubic metres of commercial timber harvested within the National Park, of which half was transported to mills for production; the other half was used for fencing and panel products.

Renewable energy and energy efficiency
- Since 2001 the National Park Authority has approved 20 planning applications for small scale renewable energy developments.
- During 2007/08 planning permission was granted for renewable energy installations which could collectively produce 49 kilowatts per hour of electricity.

Minerals
- Currently only 0.02% of the National Park is quarried.
- There are two active quarries within the National Park.
- Two former disused quarries have been developed into popular recreation sites.

Military Training
- During 2007/08 live firing days on the Otterburn Ranges has reduced to 260 from 270 in 2006/07, scheduled aircraft training days have reduced from 31 to 25, and public access days have increased from 95 to 106 in the same periods.

Water
- During 2007/08 there were no water pollution or contamination incidents in the Park, which is an improvement on the 1 incident during 2006/07.
- River quality, over the 5 main rivers in the Park, between 2000-2006 has maintained 'good' to 'very good' classification.

Public Rights of Way
- 75% of Northumberland National Park (750 square kilometres) is Open Access Land, making it the second most accessible National Park after the Peak District.
- 2 of the 13 National Trails in England run through the National Park and users rate their experience as 'very good'.
- Use of the Pennine Way National Trail has increased from 1,303 people in 2007 to 1,935 in 2008. Usage of the Hadrian's Wall National Trail has increased from 6,973 in 2005 to 8,136 in 2006.
- 53% of the public rights of way in Northumberland National Park were classified as 'easy to use' in 2007/08 compared to 78% in 2005/06.