

North York Moors National Park

DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

November 2021



North York Moors
National Park

This new version of the North York Moors Management Plan is being prepared at a time when a daunting set of challenges requires an urgent response from us all. These issues include recovery from the COVID pandemic, escalating climate and nature emergencies, increasing mental and physical health problems among the general population, and the need to change the way we look after our landscapes. Overcoming all these challenges requires an agreed and co-ordinated plan of action that delivers a vision for this cherished landscape within a rapidly changing world. That is the purpose of the Management Plan, and we need your views on whether this is the right approach for this National Park.

The draft plan is the result of a series of conversations with stakeholders and partners over the last year. The proposals it contains are not set in stone. Neither we nor our partners possess a monopoly of wisdom. This document invites discussion, input and feedback so that the final plan can properly reflect as wide a range of views as possible. It is an opportunity for everyone to collaborate with us to create a shared plan that will shape the future of the North York Moors National Park.

What is the Management Plan?

The National Park is a special place, designated for the nation to enjoy, and for its natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. The Management Plan is the most important document that the National Park Authority produces. It sets out a vision for the National Park and describes the objectives, policies and goals that the National Park Authority, other public bodies and stakeholders will pursue to achieve it. The Management Plan highlights the key priorities for action over the next twenty years in order to address the challenges that the National Park will face.

This new Management Plan for the North York Moors:

1. Sets out a collective ‘Vision’ for how we want the National Park to be in twenty years’ time.
2. Includes a revised set of ‘Special Qualities’ that defines the essence of what makes this National Park so distinctive.
3. Describes six main outcomes that we want to see happening over the next twenty years.
4. Sets out 22 supporting objectives that will help us achieve the vision and outcomes.

It is important that we understand the wider context in which the Management Plan is being compiled, so a brief explanation of the ‘key drivers’ that have informed the Plan is also included. The scale of these drivers, whether it’s climate change, the future of farming policy or our health and well-being after the global COVID pandemic, tells us that the National Park is facing a period of significant challenge and opportunity. Some facts and figures are also included at the end of this Plan to provide some context for the outcomes and objectives proposed.

Consultation runs for eight weeks between **29 November 2021 and 21 January 2022**.
Please send any comments via the feedback form at

<https://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/looking-after/new-management-plan/management-plan-feedback-form>

Or by email to:

managementplan@northyorkmoors.org.uk

Or write to us at the usual address: Policy Team, The Old Vicarage, Bondgate, Helmsley YO62 5BP.

About the North York Moors National Park

The National Park lies twenty miles north of the city of York and extends to the southern fringe of the Tees Valley. It's home to 554 square miles of stunning, diverse landscapes, including 36 miles of amazing coastline, with the popular coastal towns of Whitby and Scarborough lying just beyond its edges.

The high moorland plateau was forged by ancient ice to form a central backbone cut by some two dozen, deep, narrow dales. Stand on top of the moorland and extensive views are available in all directions. To the north, the edge of the Cleveland Hills drops down over Eston Nab to the flat Tees lowlands. To the east, dramatic coastal scenery and high cliffs offer views out over the North Sea. To the south the Tabular Hills offer a vantage point over the Vale of Pickering, while to the west, steep scarp slopes some 1,000 feet high look out over the Hambleton Hills and Vale of Mowbray to the distant Pennines, noted by author and local vet James Herriot¹ as the "finest view in England".

The North York Moors "contains, within a relatively small compass, an amazing wealth and variety of beauty. Indeed, there are few places elsewhere in Britain which can offer such extensive and remote tracts of wild and unspoilt scenery within such easy reach of populated areas."

- **The 1947 Report of the National Parks Committee, chaired by Sir Arthur Hobhouse, which led to the designation of the North York Moors.**

Originally designated in 1952, it is one of ten National Parks in England which collectively cover around ten percent of the country. These areas were designated to protect landscapes and enhance wildlife and cultural heritage, and also to allow and encourage their use by people from nearby population centres.

The statutory role of National Parks

The 'dual role' of English National Parks - peaceful settings and natural beauty and as a place of enjoyment for all - is enshrined by two key legal 'purposes,' set out in the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, as amended in the 1995 Environment Act:

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

Since 1995 there has been a legal duty (through the Environment Act) on the National Park Authority when pursuing these purposes:

- "To seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities."

¹ The pen name of vet Alf Wight.

The same legislation also requires public bodies and local authorities to have regard to the two statutory National Park purposes.

The Management Plan must deliver against both statutory purposes and the duty if it's to be successful. This will require a careful balancing exercise – especially as regards changing land use in the National Park – and it will be the role of this Management Plan to consider how best to achieve that balance.

The Special Qualities of the North York Moors

The statutory role of the National Park refers to the promotion of opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the ‘Special Qualities’ of the National Park.

Special qualities define what makes the North York Moors distinctive and unique - its landscape, its character, its culture and heritage. Put simply, they’re the reason why this place deserves its status as a National Park. The special qualities help promote the National Park and paint the canvas on which National Park policies are set. Our Special Qualities are:

1. A surprising range of contrasting landscapes, with extensive views.

No other English National Park has such a range of contrasting landscapes in such a defined area. Our ‘nation in a nutshell’ is home to dense forests, leafy glades, deeply cut dales, meandering rivers and a dramatic, wrinkled coastline, all linked by open heather moorland unique in its extent in England.

- One of the greatest concentrations of veteran trees in northern England – ancient woodland and recreational forests create ribbon-like lungs across the National Park.
- Steep hills rise dramatically from surrounding lowland vales and valleys. These define the edge of the National Park and provide exceptionally far-reaching views from the moorland tops – across the green dales, the surrounding lowlands and coastal cliffs, and out to the North Sea.
- The Jurassic-era coastline combines high cliffs, wooded bays, sandy coves, sheltered harbours and jutting headlands. The coastal villages are bywords for tradition and distinctiveness; the coastal geology is exceptional.

2. A diverse mix of upland, lowland and coastal habitats, home to a rich variety of wildlife.

The landscapes are full of life, from shoreline rockpool to moorland pond. Our geology and geography have helped create a mosaic of habitats that support many rare and internationally important wildlife species.

- The upland plateau is important for moorland-nesting birds such as merlin, golden plover and curlew. Rare butterflies, such as the Duke of Burgundy, can be found in the limestone grasslands in the south, while fens, bogs, flushes and springs support very rare soldier flies and whorl snails.
- Our rivers and streams teem with life, from mayflies to Atlantic salmon. The River Esk has its source in the high moorland and runs to the North Sea. Valuable work on the Esk and the Rye rivers helps support threatened species, such as white-clawed crayfish and the freshwater pearl mussel.
- The coast is more than just its shoreline, where woodland, scrub, heath and flush vie for space. Marine creatures abound, but this is also an environment for grazing cattle, flowering yellow gorse and tree-clad ravines.

- Our woods and forests provide an important refuge for shy species like nightjar and goshawk and support the only breeding population of turtle dove in the north of England. And in the ‘windy pits’ (a network of roofed-over fissures) there are nationally significant numbers of bats, including the Alcathe bat.

3. A place with strong, visible links to its past.

For over three hundred generations, and thousands of years, people have shaped our landscapes. Whether farming, fishing or mining – or managing the moorland or planting the dales – you can see the story of people’s lives and labours played out across the land.

- The physical evidence is dramatic and overwhelming – Iron Age forts, Bronze Age burial mounds, ancient stone crosses and boundary walls, medieval castles, ruined abbeys and Victorian industrial relics are found across all corners of the National Park.
- Archaeology helps tell the tale of former human activity, from Mesolithic hunters and Roman occupation to monastic sheep-farming and 20th-century wartime training.
- The past also has a way of intruding on the present in local traditions, songs, festivals and folklore, from sword-dancing to the summer show. And the very story of the landscape continues to inspire creative endeavour, with artists and artisans alike immersed in the natural fabric of the North York Moors.

4. A variety of distinctive towns and villages, creating a sense of identity, tradition and pride.

Where people have settled, they have built strong local communities with a distinctive character. These towns and villages are rooted in the curves and folds of the landscape: they blend in with the surroundings.

- The buildings reflect the local geology, with limestone used to the south and sandstone in the north. Traditional roofing materials are widely used – predominantly red clay pantiles, but also thatch, and Welsh or Westmorland slate.
- Geography, agriculture, industry and heritage also play their part in establishing a particular identity. Isolated farmsteads sit at the heart of a network of stone walls, maintained hedges and enclosed pastures and meadows. Small coastal villages cling to the cliff sides, with buildings jostling for space. Terraced workers’ houses or estate villages provide some communities with a pleasing, uniform character. Georgian and Victorian buildings reflect periods of wealth and growth.

5. A place of escape from crowded towns and cities, offering a true sense of remoteness and the darkest of skies.

So close to populated areas, yet so far from the madding crowd – our wild and unspoiled landscapes provide easily accessible places to escape and star-filled, dark, night skies.

- Even a short moorland walk from a popular village soon thins out the crowds. The big-sky views are irresistible, while the purple blaze of late-summer heather is one of England’s natural glories.

- Jump off the bus or park the car to find quiet riverside meadows, hidden waterfalls and moorland ponds full of darting dragonflies. Cycle into the forest on woodland trails, where deer move silently among the trees and birds nest, sing and soar.
- Come at night, when the darkest of skies offer a different kind of escape. In this International Dark Sky Reserve, you can often see 2,000 stars – far more than in the nearby towns – including spectacular views of our own galaxy, the Milky Way.

6. A source of physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

The National Park isn't simply a place, it's a state of mind. Here – in these landscapes, surrounded by nature, within this living heritage – is somewhere to take stock; somewhere to breathe.

- It's a place for calm solitude, where the distinctive wing-clap of a grouse taking flight or the curlew's call can be heard on the wind.
- It's a place to relax – to picnic on a village green, eat ice cream on a sandy beach, stroll through the heather to a rocky outcrop, paddle in an ice-cold stream or look out over a wildflower meadow.
- It's a place of challenge – cycling, hiking, running and horse-riding on thousands of miles of public bridleways, footpaths, country lanes and forest tracks.
- It's a place of enrichment, for artists, volunteers, teachers, enthusiasts, children and retired people – for anyone whose health and well-being benefits from being outdoors in nature.

A Vision for the National Park

The proposed Vision for the North York Moors National Park is:

“By 2040 the North York Moors National Park will be a resilient landscape at the forefront of addressing climate change. It will be a biodiverse, beautiful and varied place which helps enrich the nation’s health and well-being. It will be a home to thriving local communities and a place with a diverse, innovative, net zero carbon economy.”

The Vision for the North York Moors is based on six key outcomes that we and our partners aspire to bring about:

Outcome 1 – A resilient landscape at the forefront of addressing climate change.

Outcome 2 - A more biodiverse landscape.

Outcome 3 - A more beautiful and varied landscape where our key Special Qualities are conserved and enhanced.

Outcome 4 – A place that lifts the nation’s health and well-being.

Outcome 5 - A place of great beauty where local communities thrive.

Outcome 6 - A place that supports a more diverse and flourishing net zero carbon economy.

Outcomes and Objectives

Outcome 1 – A resilient landscape at the forefront of addressing climate change

“This defining year (2020) for the UK’s climate credentials has been marred by uncertainty and delay to a host of new climate strategies. Those that have emerged have too often missed the mark. With every month of inaction, it is harder for the UK to get on track.”

- The Climate Change Committee, 2021 Progress Report to Parliament.

Why do we want to work towards this outcome?

Mitigating accelerating climate change is clearly a priority, if not the priority for this plan. Warmer, wetter winters, hotter, drier summers, more extreme weather events and increased risk of wildfire, drought and floods, declining soil health and loss of critical habitats and species are all a consequence of a warming planet. Climate change is an increasing source of concern for most people – the Government’s public attitude tracker showed that in March 2019, 80 percent of people surveyed were fairly concerned or very concerned about climate change, while 2020 was the year that children went on a school strike to highlight the urgency of the issue and lack of action from generations before them. At the recent COP26 summit in Glasgow represented nations also agreed to accelerate plans to reduce CO² emissions by 2030.

To help drive action, the UK's independent Climate Change Committee recommends a seismic shift in rates of tree-planting and peatland restoration. Regionally, the York and North Yorkshire Local Economic Partnership has set out an ambition for the area to be the UK's first carbon-negative region by 2040. The English National Park Authorities have also committed to work collectively towards becoming 'net zero'² by 2030.

We are proposing the following objectives as the priorities for action:

Objective 1 - The National Park should play a significant part in achieving the regional ambition of being a carbon negative economy by 2040.

Objective 2 - Capture and store carbon by creating at least 2,500 hectares of additional wooded habitat by 2032.

Objective 3 - Place all degraded blanket bog and peat habitats in the National Park under active restoration by 2032.

Objective 4 - Protect, restore and improve soils across the National Park.

Objective 5 - Achieve good status on at least 40 percent of water bodies by 2027³ and support the improvement of the marine and coastal habitat.

Outcome 2 - A more biodiverse landscape

“Look closely at nature. Every species is a masterpiece, exquisitely adapted to the particular environment in which it has survived. Who are we to destroy or even diminish biodiversity?”

- American Biologist EO Wilson.

Why do we want to work towards this outcome?

The UK is committed to supporting the United Nation's target to protect 30 percent of the Earth's land and sea for nature by 2030 and led the G7 commitment to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. These are enshrined in the 2021 Environment Act which brings into UK law environmental protections and requires the creation of a national Nature Recovery Network. It also proposes a system of 'net gain,' with new development expected to deliver at least a 10-percent improvement in the quality of habitats.

The Glover Review of Protected Landscapes also recommended that strengthened Management Plans should set clear priorities and actions for nature recovery including wilder areas, and that nationally protected landscapes should form the backbone of the national Nature Recovery Network. In response, National Parks England has created a Wildlife Delivery Plan setting ambitious targets across the English National Park family to deliver 20 percent of the government's target for nature recovery on the 10 percent

² Net zero refers to the amount of greenhouse gas emissions removed from the atmosphere being the same as the amount emitted. Carbon negative is where more carbon dioxide is removed than emitted.

³ In 2021, 23% of surface water bodies assessed under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) within the National Park were of high or good status compared with 16% in the UK. Source: DEFRA, A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services, Biodiversity indicators: 2021 assessment

of England that is designated as National Parks. Each National Park has developed a nature recovery prospectus which identifies local priorities which will sit at the heart of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

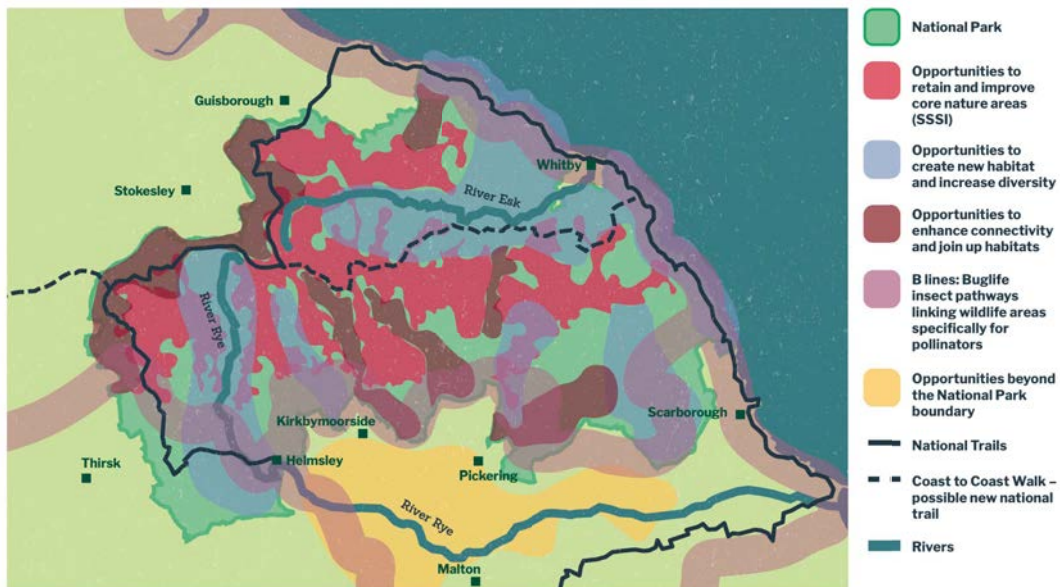


Figure 1- Nature Opportunities Map

The map above illustrates the areas of the National Park that could be best used to stimulate nature recovery in the North York Moors. Some areas are where new habitat can be created, others are where there are opportunities to link habitats together to improve the network and make habitats more resilient. The map also shows areas for improvement that extend beyond the administrative boundary of the National Park. This mapping exercise will be used as the baseline for the forthcoming North York Moors National Park Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

We are proposing the following objectives as the priorities for action:

Objective 6 - Create bigger, better and more joined-up habitats, with nature-rich wildlife corridors extending beyond the National Park boundaries.

Objective 7 - Support low-intervention management on at least 2,000 hectares of high-quality habitat to restore a wilder and more naturally functioning ecosystem through two landscape recovery schemes from 2023.

Objective 8 - Work with our moorland community to support the sustainable management of moorland to ensure it retains a natural remoteness which supports a greater variety of species and habitats.

Outcome 3 - A more beautiful and varied landscape where our key Special Qualities are conserved and enhanced

“It’s not until you’ve been somewhere like the North York Moors that you truly appreciate the beauty – and rarity – of a genuinely dark sky. To stand there, in the middle of a big field, with a huge sky above you, dwarfing you, pressing down on you under the weight of the stars.”

- **Stuart Atkinson, author of the award-winning ‘Cat’s Guide to the Night Sky’.**

Why do we want to work towards this outcome?

The North York Moors was designated as an International Dark Sky Reserve in 2020, one of only eighteen in the world. The 2020 Local Plan for the North York Moors also introduced planning policies on tranquillity and the concept of ‘remote areas.’ Surveys of residents and visitors alike point to consistently strong feedback that people enjoy the ‘getting away from it all’ aspect of the National Park and value the peace, quiet and solitude that it offered.

The buildings and archaeology of the North York Moors also continue to form an essential part of the National Park’s appeal to visitors, combining with the landscape to give the area a unique identity. Far fewer historic monuments and buildings are now classed as ‘at risk’ - down from 62 buildings and 332 monuments in 2012 to 36 buildings and 44 monuments in 2021 - and we would like to continue this work.

We are proposing the following objectives as the priorities for action:

Objective 9 - Increase the intrinsic darkness of the National Park International Dark Sky Reserve by expanding the current dark sky core zone⁴ by twenty percent by 2027.

Objective 10 - Ensure the best examples of heritage are conserved, explained and under appropriate management, and improve the condition of at least 25 identified Designated Heritage Assets at Risk by 2027.

Outcome 4 – A place that lifts the nation’s health and well-being

“Allow nature's peace to flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop away from you like the leaves of autumn.”

- **John Muir, ‘Father of the American National Parks’.**

“No one will protect what they don’t care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced.”

- **Sir David Attenborough.**

⁴ As set out in the Authority’s successful application for International Dark Sky Reserve status - <https://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/discover/dark-skies/North-York-Moors-National-Park-International-Dark-Sky-Reserve-Application.pdf>

Why do we want to work towards this outcome?

The COVID pandemic has brought about a seismic shift in people's attitudes to nature. Successive lockdowns inspired more people and new audiences to enjoy the countryside and the great outdoors, kindling new interest in National Parks as destinations. According to Natural England's People & Nature survey⁵ 42 percent of people said they had spent more time outside since COVID pandemic restrictions began and almost 89 percent of people strongly agreed or agreed that nature and wildlife are important to their well-being. The challenge now is to sustain and develop this interest, and work with all visitors so that the National Park's Special Qualities continue to be enjoyed, valued and respected.

Access to nature can improve people's health outcomes and play a preventative role in reducing illness. Extensive research has shown that engaging with the natural environment has positive outcomes for wellbeing for both people and communities, helping to prevent ill health. A 2021 report commissioned by Defra, featuring Middlesbrough as one of four case studies, highlighted that "In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, there is an even greater imperative to fully realise the contribution that access to nature can make to wellbeing". This also has financial benefits. An evaluation of the North York Moors Explorer Club and Young Rangers programmes shows that for every £1 of investment there is a £6 return.

In 2016, a report for the NHS estimated that £34 billion is spent each year on mental health and the cost to the economy is estimated at £105 billion per year – roughly the annual cost of the entire NHS⁶. The Government is committed to helping people improve their health and well-being by using green spaces to encourage people to be close to nature, with particular focus on disadvantaged areas. The move by health bodies to roll out Green Social Prescribing is directly supportive of this commitment.

Enabling young people to experience the special qualities of National Parks inspires a deeper relationship with nature. Research shows that people with a positive connection to nature are more likely to demonstrate positive behaviours towards the environment. Adults who experience nature as children are likely to be motivated to protect the environment, as Dr William Bird notes in his work for the RSPB, "the critical age of influence appears to be before 12 years. Before this age contact with nature in all its forms, but in particular wild nature, appears to strongly influence a positive behaviour towards the environment".⁷

Access to the countryside is key to improving health and well-being but is dependent on having a high-quality network of public rights of way. The National Park maintains an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and other route classifications totalling around 1,500 miles which includes routes for specialist use such as easy access and cycling. Walking and cycling are among the key reasons why people visit the National Park.

⁵ Natural England, People and Nature Survey for England Updated monthly indicators for 2020-2021

⁶ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Mental-Health-Taskforce-FYFV-final.pdf>

⁷ 'Natural Thinking' (2007). A report by Dr. William Bird for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, p.55

Increasing awareness of climate change is also leading to a change in how people research and book holidays. VisitScotland, in its '2020 trends' report, identified environmental sustainability as a key driver, and stated, "concern over natural resources, climate change and the natural environment has pushed its way into the forefront of many consumers' minds and individuals are increasingly aware of their personal impact of their behaviours," and that younger people in particular appear compelled to seek powerful change in their life, behaviour or situation. This trend towards 'regenerative tourism'⁸ may be in its infancy, but it is likely to grow with time.

We are proposing the following objectives as priorities for action:

Objective 11 - Create specific, targeted opportunities to improve mental and physical health and well-being by connecting people with nature.

Objective 12 - Increase awareness of, and access to, the National Park among underserved communities.

Objective 13 - Inspire the next generation to enjoy, learn about and care for the National Park, and support young people's direct involvement in decision-making about its future.

Objective 14 - Ensure that all members of the public are able to enjoy the National Park using easy-to-use, well-marked rights of way and open access land.

Objective 15 - Promote the North York Moors National Park as the premier recreational/family cycling destination in the north of England.

Objective 16 - Work with businesses to establish regenerative tourism as a guiding principle and encourage visitors to make a positive contribution to the National Park.

Outcome 5 - A place of great beauty where local communities thrive

"With an ageing population, we do need to think hard as to how we can enable younger generations to stay around - to be able to afford to live and work here and to want to."

- **Comment made during the spring engagement exercise for this Plan.**

"It's lovely to be back living in the village and the area where I grew up, where my family live and where I work, and to know there are schemes like this which enable young professionals like us to remain in our communities without it costing the earth."

- **Occupier of an affordable home at Osmotherley, quoted in Hambleton Today.**

Why do we want to work towards this outcome?

The latest set of mid-year population estimates by the Office for National Statistics show that population levels in the National Park are in decline (numbers in 2020 were down by around 3.8 percent since 2001, although the year 2019 to 2020 showed a small increase).

⁸ Where visitors have a positive impact on their destination, leaving a place, and local communities, better than they found; giving as much, or more, than they are taking. Regenerative tourism is a step further than sustainable tourism (which seeks to minimise negative impacts).

The age structure of the National Park population is also changing, with significant increases in the number of older people in recent years. In 2020, 41 percent of the National Park's population was aged 60 or more, compared to 32 percent for North Yorkshire and 24 percent for England and Wales. It is the younger 'missing generation'⁹ who are most affected by some of the key challenges facing the National Park, such as climate change, low paid jobs and housing affordability.

The average house price in the National Park is now around £297,000, meaning that someone with a ten percent deposit would need an income of £67,000 to £76,000 to buy.¹⁰ Research undertaken in 2016 also revealed that a third of all household incomes were less than £20,000, meaning that affordable rental homes are essential for many residents on lower incomes.

There has also been a decline in local services in recent years, most notably banks and post offices, but also pubs, shops and schools. Whilst many services are now being delivered online, not everyone has access to or wishes to use broadband or mobile phone connections, and there remain significant areas of the National Park without coverage. After current roll-out programmes end, around ten percent of homes in the National Park will still be without superfast broadband.

We are proposing the following objectives as priorities for action:

Objective 17 - Increase the delivery of affordable housing¹¹ above 2010-2020 levels to build at least 100 affordable homes in villages across the National Park by 2027; and lobby central government to agree to introduce a mechanism to control the conversion of existing housing to second or holiday homes.

Objective 18 - Work to establish the North York Moors National Park as a leader in low-cost, low-carbon housing design through the development of at least one new-build exemplar scheme; and promote the deployment of sustainable materials and retrofitting measures in existing historic buildings.

Objective 19 - Enable resilient communities where residents are able to meet their basic needs, by identifying any existing gaps in provision and developing community hubs to service a wider catchment or areas where services can be shared.

Objective 20 - Facilitate local solutions to ensure superfast broadband and/or mobile phone coverage is available to 100 percent of households in the National Park by 2030.

Outcome 6 - A place that supports a more diverse and flourishing net zero carbon economy

Why do we want to work towards this outcome?

Improvements in technology, together with the rapid adaptation of working patterns during the COVID pandemic, have brought about a reassessment for many about where they wish to live and work. The appeal of a high-quality environment and desire for more

⁹ A phrase used by the 2021 North Yorkshire Rural Commission Report

¹⁰ Assuming a 3.5-4 times lending multiplier on a single income.

¹¹ As defined in the 2021 National Planning Policy Framework (Glossary).

space at home has the potential to both bring new people and investment into the National Park, but at the same time increases pressure on house prices. The ‘Green Growth’ agenda may also help create new jobs in the green economy, with more balanced land management opportunities. Increasing skills and opportunities in these areas through training, investment, apprenticeships and information-sharing can help those working in the National Park, or wanting to work here, deliver net zero carbon and a richer natural world.

Meanwhile, plans are also being put in place to phase out direct support payments to farmers by 2027 and replacing them with a new Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme based on the principle of offering public money for “public goods” – such as better air and water quality, thriving wildlife, and soil health. This change is likely to be one of the biggest drivers of landscape change, and given the dependency of farmers in the National Park on direct payments for income, this change in policy will result in major challenges as well as opportunities for the land management sector. As part of the transition to ELM the Government introduced a ‘Farming in Protected Landscapes’ Programme in June 2021, where funding will be open to farmers and land managers to support projects which deliver nature recovery, mitigate the effects of climate change, and provide ways for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape.

We are proposing the following objectives as priorities for action:

Objective 21 - Provide opportunities that attract, upskill and retain a local workforce working in high-value, knowledge-intensive jobs and the ‘green’ or ‘landscape’ economy.

Objective 22 - Maintain a strong and viable farming and land management community that delivers more for climate, nature, people and place.

Delivering the Plan

The Management Plan has been prepared with the help and support of many individuals and organisations who contributed to three working groups covering the following themes: ‘Nature Recovery’, ‘Landscapes for All’ and ‘Living and Working Landscapes.’¹² This partnership approach to developing the plan will also be a key feature in how the National Park Authority takes it further forward.

The Plan is essentially a call for collective action. We know that the ability to deliver the objectives and actions set out in the plan depends entirely on partnership working across statutory agencies, stakeholders and individual businesses on the ground. This requires

¹² CLA, Environment Agency, Esk Valley Farmers Group, Forestry Commission, Hambleton District Council, Historic England, Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Make it York, Moorland Association, National Farmers Union, National Trust, Natural England, Newport Community Hub, North Yorkshire County Council, North Yorkshire Moors Association, North York Moors Tourism Network, York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, North York Moors Youth Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Ryedale District Council, Scarborough Borough Council, Sustrans, Tees Health, Tees Valley Combined Authority, Welcome to Yorkshire, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, York, North Yorkshire Strategic Housing Partnership, Yorkshire Water, and the Youth Hostel Association.

a commitment from everyone that the objectives are fully reflected in the strategies and business-planning processes of not only the National Park Authority, but of everyone who has a role in delivering the vision enshrined in this document.

The objectives in this Plan will be reviewed annually to measure progress towards them, and the key organisations that have helped write this Plan will be involved in these reviews.

Responding to this document

The following questions are an attempt to spark your thinking about the Management Plan.

You don't need to answer every question, these are just prompts.

1. Do you have any views on the Special Qualities of the National Park set out in this Plan? Have we missed something that is important to you?
2. To what extent does the future vision for the National Park align with your own vision?
3. Which of the outcomes and objectives do you see as priorities for the National Park? Have any important issues been missed?
4. What contribution can you or your organisation make to delivering the Management Plan?
5. Is there anything else about the Management Plan that you would like to tell us?

Please let us know by filling out this online form:

<https://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/looking-after/new-management-plan/management-plan-feedback-form>

Or by email: managementplan@northyorkmoors.org.uk

Or by writing to us at: Policy Team, North York Moors National Park Authority, The Old Vicarage, Bondgate, Helmsley YO62 5BP.

The deadline for comments is **21 January 2022**.

Appendix- Where are we now?

This section sets out some facts and figures about the National Park to provide some context about the extent to which the National Park statutory purposes and duty are being delivered.

The source for data is the National Park Authority unless noted differently. Data for volunteering, visitor activity and education and outreach is for the year 2019-20, as data for the following year would not represent a 'business as usual' scenario because of COVID pandemic-related restrictions. A fuller picture of monitoring indicators for the North York Moors will be available in the forthcoming 'State of the National Park' Report.

The state of nature in the National Park



- 31,478 hectares or 24% of the National Park is covered by broadleaved (11%) or coniferous woodland (13%).¹³
- 4.1% of the North York Moors is covered in deep peaty soils (compared with 28% and 21.5% for the Yorkshire Dales and Northumberland National Parks).¹⁴
- The North York Moors is home to a 50,000-hectare moorland plateau - the largest continuous tract of heather moorland in England. It is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Special Area for Conservation (SAC) and a Special Protection Area (SPA) for breeding moorland birds. The area covered by these designations has not declined since 2004.¹⁵
- Although 99% of SSSIs were in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' condition in 2021 (compared to 52% in 2007) there has been a 5% decline in those in 'favourable condition' over that time. Increases have been in the 'unfavourable recovering' category.
- According to the Moorland Wader survey the total moorland wader population is thought to have fallen 14% since a peak in 2000, with a 6% fall in the last 5 years. The survey uses extrapolated data and the method by which it has been calculated has varied from year to year so some care needs to be taken when comparing years.

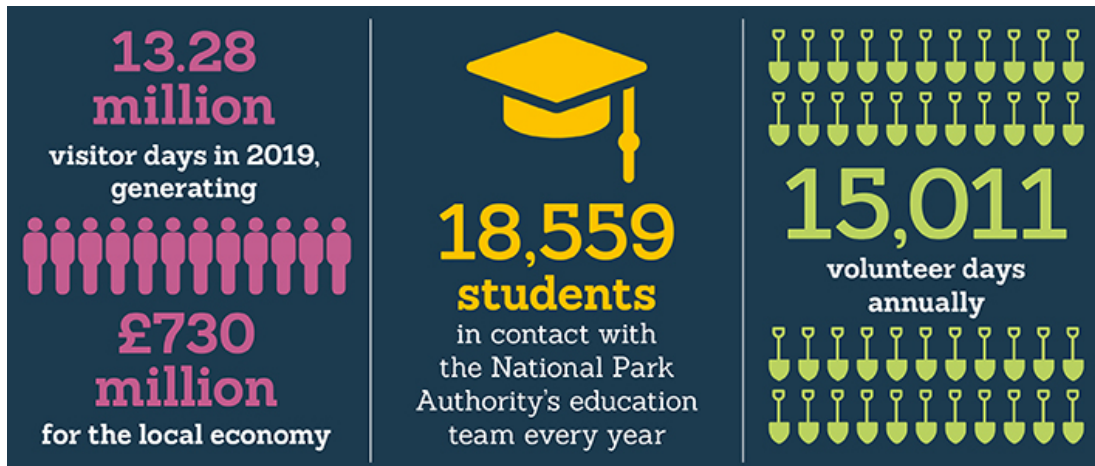
¹³ Natural England (2021) Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in Protected Landscapes (MEOPL)

¹⁴ ibid

¹⁵ Natural England

However further survey work is planned in 2021 to which will help further establish a trend.

- The status of water bodies in the National Park was assessed as only 23% being 'high' or 'good' under the Water Framework Directive, down from 26.7% in 2017.¹⁶



- Visitors spent 13.28 million days in the National Park in 2019, up from 12.68 million in 2016. Visitors contributed £730 million to the local economy in 2019, up from £712 million in 2016.¹⁷
- There has been an increase of 40% (from 60% to 84%) in the number of rights of way that are 'easy to use' since 2004.
- In the year 2019-20 volunteers contributed 8,536 days by working with the National Park Authority. A further 6,475 days were provided by associated groups, including those working with Scarborough Borough Council on the Cinder Track, Moorsbus, the Scarborough and Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team, the Thornton le Dale Community Hub, Botton Village and the Beyond Boundaries centre.



¹⁶ Environment Agency

¹⁷ STEAM data

- Population levels are in decline in the National Park. Numbers in 2020 were down by around 3.8% since 2001, although the year 2019 to 2020 saw a small increase.¹⁸
- There are significant increases in the number of older people compared to younger cohorts in recent years. In 2020 41% of the National Park's population was aged 60 or more, compared to 32% for North Yorkshire and 24% for England and Wales.¹⁹
- Average house prices in the National Park. In 2020 the average house price in the National Park was £297,753 compared with the UK average of £267,000
- Only 26% of villages contained a general village store in 2018, compared to 40% in 1995. The percentage with a post office declined from 72% to 20% over the same period. The percentage with village halls and pubs remained constant at 75% and 74% respectively.
- There were 9,082 employees working in the National Park in 2019. Of those, 86% worked for an organisation with fewer than 50 employees.²⁰

¹⁸ Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates

¹⁹ *ibid*

²⁰ Inter Departmental Business Register