

# Management Plan

2010 - 2015

Draft Version 2 - June 2009

managing change together



# Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan 2010-2015

**Draft Version 2 - June 2009**

managing change together

Prepared by Dr. Bradley A. Welch,  
National Park Management Plan Officer,  
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

© Brecon Beacons National Park Authority 2009.  
Front cover images: © BBNPA  
Main image: Talybont Reservoir by Graham Hilton.

This draft Management Plan is also available electronically via the Planning section of our web site at  
<http://www.breconbeacons.org/content/the-authority/planning/strategy-and-policy/nmpm>



## Contributing Partners



### County Councils

Blaenau Gwent  
Rhondda Cynon Taff  
Torfean

### Town Councils

Brecon  
Ystradgynlais

### Community Councils

Llangadog  
Trallong Penpont &  
Llanfihangel Nant Bran  
Vale of Grwyney

### Other Organisations

Adfer Ban y Chwm  
All Bike Engineering Ltd  
All Wheel Drive Club  
Llanerchindda Farms  
Auto Cycle Union  
Black Mountains Glaziers  
Brecknock Wildlife Trust  
Campaign for National Parks  
Capital Region Tourism  
Campaign For The Protection Of Rural  
Wales (CPRW)  
Disabled Ramblers  
Dyfed Archeological Trust

Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological  
Trust, Ltd.  
Gwent Wildlife Trust  
Local Access Forum  
Mosaic & Mosaic Cymru  
Trail Rider Fellowship  
Grass Routes  
Welsh Association of Motor Clubs

# Contents

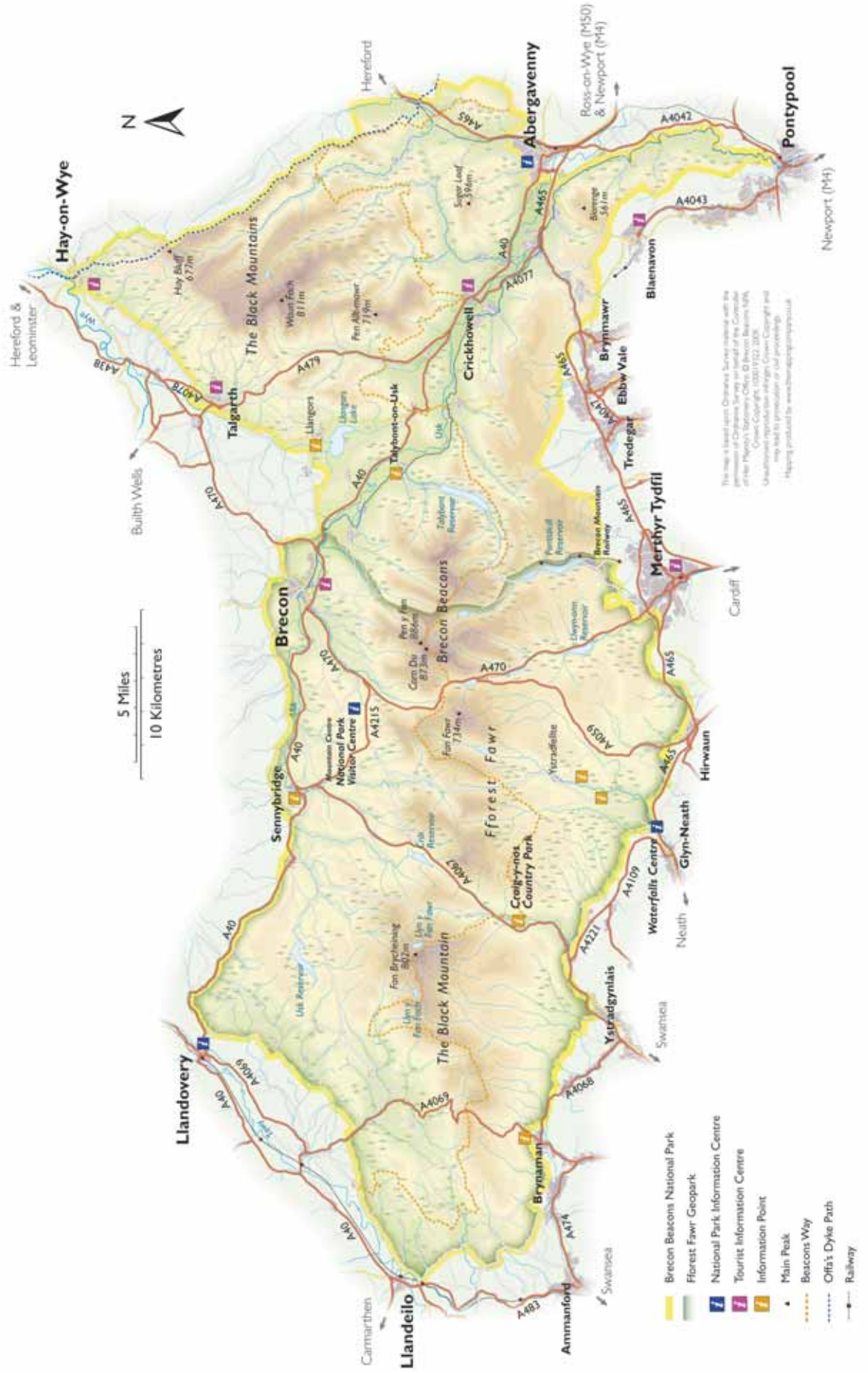
Consultation on the Second Draft Management Plan.....	7
Consultation Brief .....	8
Consultation Overview.....	8
Key Issues and Associated Changes.....	9
What's New?.....	11
Reviewer's Guide.....	13
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>14</b>
1.1. Purpose of the Plan .....	14
1.2. Statutory Purposes.....	14
1.3. Sandford Principle.....	14
1.4. Statutory Duty.....	15
1.5. Who is the Plan for? .....	15
1.6. Role of the National Park Authority.....	15
1.7. Formulating the Plan .....	16
1.8. Relationship to Other Plans .....	17
1.9. Structure of the Plan.....	19
1.10. Delivering the Plan .....	22
<b>2. Context</b> .....	<b>23</b>
2.1. Brecon Beacons National Park.....	23
2.2. Global Significance .....	26
2.3. International Context .....	27
2.4. National Context.....	28
2.5. Regional Context.....	31
2.6. Setting the Framework.....	32
<b>3. Special Qualities</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>4. Vision and Aims</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>5. Managing for Change</b> .....	<b>39</b>
5.1. Climate Change.....	39
5.2. Biodiversity.....	40
5.3. Upland Farming Practices .....	41
5.4. Population Pressures .....	42
5.5. Renewable and Non-renewable Energy .....	42
5.6. Transport.....	45
5.7. Globalization .....	45
<b>6. Guiding Principles</b> .....	<b>47</b>
6.1. Sustainability.....	47
6.2. Social Inclusion .....	48
6.3. Integrated Management.....	49
6.4. Cohesive Partnerships.....	51
<b>7. Strategic Objectives</b> .....	<b>53</b>
7.1. Conserving and Enhancing the National Park .....	53
7.1.1. Landscape .....	54
7.1.2. Biodiversity.....	57
7.1.3. Geodiversity.....	62
7.1.4. Historic Environment .....	64
7.1.5. Built Environment.....	69
7.1.6. Culture and Traditions.....	72
7.1.7. Air Resources.....	75
7.1.8. Water Resources.....	76
7.1.9. Soil Resources .....	83
7.1.10. Minerals.....	84
7.1.11. Energy.....	87

7.1.12.	Farming.....	91
7.1.13.	Woodland Management.....	95
7.1.14.	Uplands Management.....	102
7.2.	Understanding and Enjoying the National Park.....	108
7.2.1.	Outdoor Access and Recreation.....	108
7.2.2.	Promoting Understanding and Enjoyment.....	112
7.2.3.	Information.....	113
7.2.4.	Education.....	116
7.2.5.	Interpretation.....	121
7.3.	Economic and Social Well-being of Local Communities.....	125
7.3.1.	Sustainable Communities.....	125
7.3.2.	Sustainable Tourism.....	131
7.3.3.	Fforest Fawr Geopark.....	135
7.3.4.	Planning and Development.....	138
7.3.5.	Transport.....	142
7.3.6.	Waste Management.....	146
7.3.7.	Military Use of the Park.....	148
<b>8.</b>	<b>Priorities for Action.....</b>	<b>151</b>
8.1.	Managing Park Landscapes to Maximise Conservation and Public Benefits.....	152
8.1.1.	Why is this important?.....	152
8.1.2.	What are the desired outcomes?.....	153
8.1.3.	To what national policies does this contribute?.....	154
8.2.	Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity.....	159
8.2.1.	Why is this important?.....	159
8.2.2.	What are the desired outcomes?.....	159
8.2.3.	To what national policies does this contribute?.....	160
8.2.4.	Actions for Priority 8.2.....	161
8.3.	Providing Everyone with Opportunities for Outdoor Access and Recreation.....	164
8.3.1.	Why is this important?.....	164
8.3.2.	What are the desired outcomes?.....	164
8.3.3.	To what national policies does this contribute?.....	165
8.3.4.	Actions for Priority 8.3.....	165
8.4.	Raising Awareness and Understanding of the Park.....	167
8.4.1.	Why is this important?.....	167
8.4.2.	What are the desired outcomes?.....	168
8.4.3.	To what national policies does this contribute?.....	168
8.4.4.	Actions for Priority 8.4.....	169
8.5.	Building and Maintaining Sustainable Communities, Towns and Villages.....	172
8.5.1.	Why is this important?.....	172
8.5.2.	What are the desired outcomes?.....	173
8.5.3.	To what national policies does this contribute?.....	175
8.5.4.	Actions for Priority 8.5.....	177
8.6.	Building Community Pride and Sense of Place.....	183
8.6.1.	Why is this important?.....	183
8.6.2.	What are the desired outcomes?.....	184
8.6.3.	To what national policies does this contribute?.....	184
8.6.4.	Actions for Priority 8.6.....	185
8.7.	Sustainable Economic Development.....	187
8.7.1.	Why is this important?.....	187
8.7.2.	What are the desired outcomes?.....	187
8.7.3.	To what national policies does this contribute?.....	188
8.7.4.	Actions for Priority 8.7.....	189
<b>9.</b>	<b>Implementation.....</b>	<b>196</b>
9.1.	Implementation Framework.....	196

9.2.	Collaboration and Coordination.....	196
9.3.	Funding.....	197
9.4.	Adaptive Management .....	197
<b>10.</b>	<b>Research, Evaluation and Monitoring .....</b>	<b>198</b>
10.1.	Research .....	198
10.2.	Evaluation and Monitoring.....	199
10.2.1.	Annual Reports .....	199
10.2.2.	Five-year Review and SEA Monitoring.....	200
10.2.3.	State of the Park Report.....	201
<b>Annexes</b>	.....	<b>203</b>
Annex 1:	Document Maps.....	204
Annex 2:	List of Acronyms.....	214
Annex 3:	Glossary .....	216
Annex 4:	IUCN Management Principles for Category V Landscapes/Seascapes .....	223
Annex 5:	Definition of Natural Beauty.....	226
Annex 6:	Policy Context of the NPMP.....	227
Annex 7:	Draft Guidelines for the Use of Stone within the Brecon Beacons National Park .....	232



# Brecon Beacons National Park and surrounding area



## Consultation on the Second Draft Management Plan

This second draft of the Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan is the result of an extensive consultation process that began in October 2006. Information obtained from the consultation process has been invaluable to the development of this draft Management Plan.

This draft includes changes made in response to comments on the first draft Management Plan. Comments and responses are summarised briefly in the following pages, which include a "Reviewer's Guide" to help make the most efficient use of your time. Details of the consultation process will be covered more fully in the Consultation Summary that will accompany the Final Plan. This draft has also been informed by the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment processes which have been used to evaluate proposed policies against a series of sustainability and environmental objectives. The results of these processes are summarised in the Sustainability Appraisal Report.

Consultation is an on-going process; NPA members and officers continue to engage interested stakeholders to improve the quality of the Management Plan and, ultimately, improve the management of the Brecon Beacons National Park.

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and its partners are committed to promoting equal opportunities and tackling social exclusion. We are working to ensure that everyone has fair and equal access to our services. If you find that you or someone you know requires this document in an alternate format, please contact us and we will, within the resources available to us, provide you with a copy in a format appropriate to your needs.

The consultation period for this draft Plan concludes on **Monday, 14 September 2009**. Please share your comments with us so that we can continue to successfully manage this ever-changing landscape together!

Please direct comments and inquiries to:

**National Park Management Plan Officer  
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority,  
Plas y Ffynnon,  
Cambrian Way,  
Brecon, Powys.  
LD3 7HP**

**E-mail: [enquires@breconbeacons.org](mailto:enquires@breconbeacons.org)**



# Consultation Brief

## Consultation Overview

During the first two weeks of April 2008, copies of the Consultation Draft were distributed to the individuals and organisations listed in the National Park Management Plan consultation database. Approximately 650 individuals and groups were sent copies of the Draft Plan as requested. Additional copies were requested and distributed over the course of the consultation period (statutory requirement of 4 weeks), which started 1 April and ended 31 August 2008. Updates were made to the consultation database as necessary. Meetings and telephone conversations about the Consultation Draft took place throughout the consultation period with participating individuals and organisations.

Over 250 respondents representing a wide cross-section of Park interests submitted comments. Comments were made on many aspects of the Draft Plan. Most people who read the Plan read the entire document and commented accordingly. In general, comments were constructive; suggested changes were frequently offered to improve the clarity and accuracy of the text.

Comments were entered into a spreadsheet to be sorted by subject matter, section or respondent and to efficiently track responses to the comments. Most comments were incorporated into this Consultation Draft. Comments were not included if they were inconsistent with existing legislation, incongruous with the Park's purposes and duty, did not support the Park's vision, aims and special qualities (Chapter 3) or were beyond the scope of the Management Plan (some were too detailed).

Similarly, over 650 stakeholder organisations and individuals were invited to attend workshops to review and prioritise management actions to be included in the Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan. Seven workshops were held in July and August 2008. Over 350 action items were grouped by topic under seven overarching themes. These were reviewed, edited and prioritised during the workshops. Additional actions and comments on actions were made during the prioritisation workshops.

All actions were entered into spreadsheets. They were reviewed based on their priority status (as determined in the workshops) and compared to existing actions encompassed by other strategies and policies. Their compatibility with the Park's purposes, duty and special qualities has also been assessed. The resulting actions and outcomes are presented in Chapter 8.

All of the strategic items (i.e., vision, aims, strategic objectives and actions) in this Draft Management Plan have been scrutinised under the Sustainability Appraisal (SA/SEA) and Habitats

Regulations Assessment (HRA). The information from these assessments will improve the sustainability and environmental soundness of the Final Management Plan and are discussed in the accompanying reports by the same name.

## Key Issues and Associated Changes

Although a wide range of comments were received, most comments focused on a limited number of key issues. These issues are summarized below and have been addressed to the degree possible in this Consultation Draft. A more detailed discussion of consultation comments and responses will be presented in the Consultation Summary accompanying the Final Management Plan.

Please note that the terminology for Chapter 7 has changed such that "Twenty-year Aims" are now referred to as "Strategic Objectives." This nomenclature is used in the discussions below.

- Farming: There needs to be an emphasis on the essential role played by farming in the management of the National Park and as a national priority. Additional emphasis is required to address the state and future of agriculture and rural community life in Wales. Changes: Text has been added throughout the Plan emphasising the role of farming to the management of the National Park. The Farming section (7.1.12) and the Uplands Management section (7.1.14) have been updated to reflect the comments received. Actions in Chapter 8 are directed toward promoting continued management of the Park's landscapes and to support small family farms and businesses which are a key component of the Park's landscape.
- Historic environment: Strategic objectives should better reflect national objectives. Terminology needs to be updated to reflect forthcoming policies and used consistently. Linkages to other subject areas should be made. Changes: The Historic Environment section (7.1.4) has been updated using the suggested comments received. Greater emphasis has been provided throughout the Plan, reflecting the linkages to other topics. Terminology has been standardized and updated. Actions highlight the need to develop stronger partnership working to implement local strategies.
- Responsible recreation: Strategic objectives and actions should be formulated to address poor behaviour (e.g., litter, trespass, property damage) and promote adherence to the Countryside Code. Changes: Strategic objectives and actions have been updated in the Information (7.2.3), Education (7.2.4) and Outdoor Access and Recreation (7.2.1) sections to promote responsible recreation and responsible use of the Park's resources.

- Tone: Several sections of the Plan, particularly the Built Environment and Military Use sections are negative or uninspiring. Changes: The tone of the Built Environment section (7.1.5) has been softened, and the Military Use section (7.3.7) has been rewritten and reviewed by military personnel.
- Mechanically propelled vehicles: Discussions of “appropriate” and “inappropriate” activities should focus on distinguishing between legal and illegal activities in accordance with relevant legislation, such as the NERC and CROW Acts, rather than singling out individual activities. Management actions should ensure that recreational activities are compatible with the Park’s purposes and duty. Changes: The tables in the Outdoor Access and Recreation section (7.2.1) listing “appropriate” and “inappropriate” activities have been removed. They have been replaced by discussion of pursuit of legal activities in the National Park, and managing these activities such that they do not detract from the special qualities characterizing a given area.
- Blaenavon World Heritage Site: The importance of Blaenavon WHS to the history and culture and landscape of the National Park should be emphasized. Changes: Discussion of the WHS has been expanded in Chapter 2 to set the context for the Park, a textbox highlighting the Forgotten Landscapes Partnership has been added and other links have been made to the WHS throughout the Plan.
- Micro-generation of energy: More discussion should be included that facilitates the development of small-scale energy production, particularly hydroelectricity. Changes: Micro-generation of energy for local energy needs has been included in the Energy (7.1.11) and Sustainable Communities (7.3.1) sections, in particular.
- Small-scale, affordable housing: Affordable housing for local need should be emphasised in the Management Plan. Changes: Small-scale, affordable housing is emphasised in the Planning section (7.3.4) and has been carried forward as an action to be prioritised in the Local Development Plan.
- Locally produced food and other products: Greater emphasis needs to be given to promoting local supply chains for food and other products, capitalising on the Brecon Beacons brand. Changes: Local production and sourcing has been highlighted throughout the Plan, particularly the Farming (7.1.12) and Sustainable Communities (7.3.1) sections. Several actions relate to this issue.
- Invasive species: Invasive species continue to present a significant hurdle to conservation and enhancement of Park resources. Changes: Invasive species management has been highlighted in the strategic objectives and has an associated action related to it.

Also note that the Rivers and Wetlands section (7.1.15) has been combined with Water Resources (7.1.8). Minor edits have been made to Special Qualities (Chapter 3), Managing for Change (Chapter 5) and Guiding Principles (Chapter 6). Most other changes to the text have included additional information to be more inclusive and accurate rather than to eliminate text or extract ideas.

## What's New?

In addition to changes made to existing text, a number of new items have been added to the Management Plan since the last consultation period.

- Priorities for Action: The most significant addition has been the inclusion of the Priorities for Action chapter (Chapter 8). This chapter includes the actions resulting from consultation that have been refined through the process discussed above, each organised by seven overarching themes. Each priority theme includes a discussion of why it is important, a list of desired outcomes, and a list of actions with identified lead and partner organisations.
- Implementation: This chapter (Chapter 9) summarises the considerations required to carry out the actions presented in Chapter 8, including a framework, funding, collaboration and coordination and adaptive management.
- Research, Evaluation and Monitoring: This chapter (Chapter 10) underscores the need to conduct sound science and long-term monitoring to ensure the sustainable management of the Park and its resources to the benefit of future generations.
- Text boxes: Several case studies have been added since the last Consultation Draft was published. Each summarises work currently being carried out in the Park that exemplifies the ambitions defined by one or more of the strategic objectives.

## Next Steps

The following steps will be required to complete the Management Plan within the given timeframe.

Activity	Timeframe
1. Consultation Period – National Park Management Plan and Sustainability Appraisal	July – Sept. 2009
2. Consultation meetings	Aug. – Sept. 2009
3. Modify Plan, including comments and Sustainability Appraisal recommendations	Sept. – Nov. 2009
4. Graphic design	Jan. – April 2010
5. National Park Authority review	March 2010
6. Final Management Plan (including Final Consultation Report)	June 2010
7. Implementation, Research, Monitoring and Review	Ongoing

This consultation document is the next step in this process.



## Reviewer's Guide

The following guide has been designed to make the most efficient use of your time Whilst helping us write a better plan.

### Where do I start?

Here's the suggested strategy:

1. Start by reading the National Park purposes and duty (Chapter 1), set out by the Environment Act 1995, Section 61. Please keep these in mind whilst reading other sections of the document.
2. Read the special qualities of the Park (Chapter 3). These attributes, which have been determined through public consultation, are what make the Park extraordinary.
3. Read the vision and aims (Chapter 4). These are the twenty-year aspirations people have for the Park and are also the result of public consultation.
4. Scan the table of contents to see how the Plan is structured and what other topics are included in it.

### What do I do next?

5. Read and comment on the proposed actions in Chapter 8 (Priorities for Action).
6. If you haven't done so already, read and critique the Strategic Objectives (Chapter 7) sections that spark your interests or relate to your experience. These provide the framework for the Priorities for Action.
7. Then move on to related material (see the cross-references).
8. Read and critique other chapters, particularly Implementation, Research and Monitoring (Chapters 9 & 10) if you have time.
9. Consult Managing for Change (Chapter 5) and Guiding Principles (Chapter 6) for cross-cutting issues.
10. Discuss the document with your family, friends and colleagues.
11. Make your constructive comments know to us, noting the page number, paragraph and specific item of concern you wish to address.

### What happens to my comments?

Your comments will be logged and included with similar comments on related issues. These comments will then be used to improve the management plan as presented in its final form.

### Where can I get additional copies of the consultation draft?

An electronic copy is available on the Park's website:

(<http://www.breconbeacons.org/content/the-authority/planning/strategy-and-policy/nmpm>).

We can also provide paper or CD copies upon request.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose of the Plan

The National Park Management Plan is the single most important document for the National Park. The Plan coordinates and integrates other plans, strategies and actions in the National Park that affect the two Park purposes and its duty. No major decisions should be taken affecting the future of the Park without reference to the Management Plan.

The Plan sets a vision for the future of the Park (20 years hence) and specifies actions and outcomes to pursue in the next five years to bring the Park closer to this shared vision. The Plan promotes coordinated implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these activities collectively across a wide range of partners and stakeholders. In essence, it creates a framework for Park management, guiding decision-making and developing priorities.

## 1.2. Statutory Purposes

National Parks were designated under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, but their current framework is the Environment Act 1995. Section 61 of this act sets out the Parks' **two purposes**:

- **Conservation and enhancement** – *“to conserve and enhance the natural beauty<sup>1</sup>, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks.”*
- **Understanding and enjoyment** – *“to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities (of the Parks) by the public.”*

## 1.3. Sandford Principle

The two purposes of the National Parks are underpinned by the Sandford Principle which states that enjoyment of the National Parks *“shall be in a manner and by such means as will leave their natural beauty unimpaired for the enjoyment of this and future generations.”* It asserts the primacy of the first purpose over the second in cases of irreconcilable conflict. In most cases, though, the two purposes are mutually supportive and share equal importance.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Annex 4 for the definition of “natural beauty.”

## **1.4. Statutory Duty**

The National Parks of Wales, Scotland, and England are Category V protected areas as defined by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) in the Guidelines of Protected Area Management Categories 1994 (see Appendix 3 for management principles). Category V protected areas are living and working landscapes with characteristic qualities, features and services that have been moulded by the interplay of natural forces and human activities over the course of time. The Park and its communities are integrally linked, but people cannot be actively engaged in the Park's management if their well-being is in question. Ensuring the vitality of local communities therefore is tantamount with the conservation and enhancement of the Park and its resources. Consequently, careful regard must be given to the linkage between local communities and economies and environmental conservation in and around the National Parks. As such, the National Park Authority (NPA), in pursuit of the two statutory purposes, has a duty to:

*"...seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities (within the National Park by working closely with the agencies and local authorities responsible for these matters)."*

The Park's statutory duty should be carried out with the Park's purposes in mind as set out by the Environment Act 1995; policies and actions designed to promote social and economic well-being should also aim to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the Park and promote opportunities for the public enjoyment and understanding of its special qualities.

## **1.5. Who is the Plan for?**

Although the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (NPA) has been given the statutory responsibility to prepare the Management Plan, it is a plan for the Park as a whole and not just for the NPA. The success of the Management Plan relies upon the cooperative interaction of all those who care for the Park and its future.

More explicitly, Section 62(2) of the Environment Act 1995 imposes a duty on all public bodies to have regard to the two National Park purposes when making their decisions or carrying out activities in relation to or so as to affect land within a National Park.

## **1.6. Role of the National Park Authority**

The NPA leads the actions and facilitates the partnerships required to fulfil the Park purposes and duty, with the aim to foster a collective sense of purpose. In so doing, the NPA's role is to facilitate, coordinate and add value to the work of others in the Park. It is not the responsibility

of the NPA to duplicate work or assume others' responsibilities except where previously agreed. To this end, responsible stewardship of the National Park rests not only upon the shoulders of the NPA and other public bodies but also upon the shoulders of all who reside, work, recreate and/or otherwise have a vested interest in the Park.

The NPA is also the planning authority for the National Park area. The Brecon Beacons National Park, as an administrative area, covers parts of 9 of Wales' 22 Unitary Authorities (see Annex 1, Map 1), which further emphasizes the need to work together in a collaborative and cooperative fashion.

## **1.7. Formulating the Plan**

Plan preparation (Figure 1.1) involves active participation of key stakeholders and the wider community which encourages shared ownership of and support for the vision, aims, objectives, policies and actions that each plan identifies.<sup>2</sup>

Between April 2006 and August 2007, a series of consultation events were convened to assist the development of the National Park Management Plan. Participants represented a wide range of interests and organisations, ranging from statutory environmental bodies to local communities. At these workshops, participants identified issues of importance for the Plan and considered outcomes in relation to these if there were to be no Plan. They also generated management goals for each issue that have been used in developing the Management Plan itself, but that will also feed into the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Recent consultation events have explored the Plan in more detail and have been used to draft priority actions for the next five years (see Chapter 8).

European Union Directive 2001/42/EC and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations (2004) require a formal SEA of all land use plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment with a view to promoting sustainable development. As part of this assessment, SEA requires the NPA to carry out consultation on the draft Plan and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Report, making sure to take into account the results of consultation in decision making.

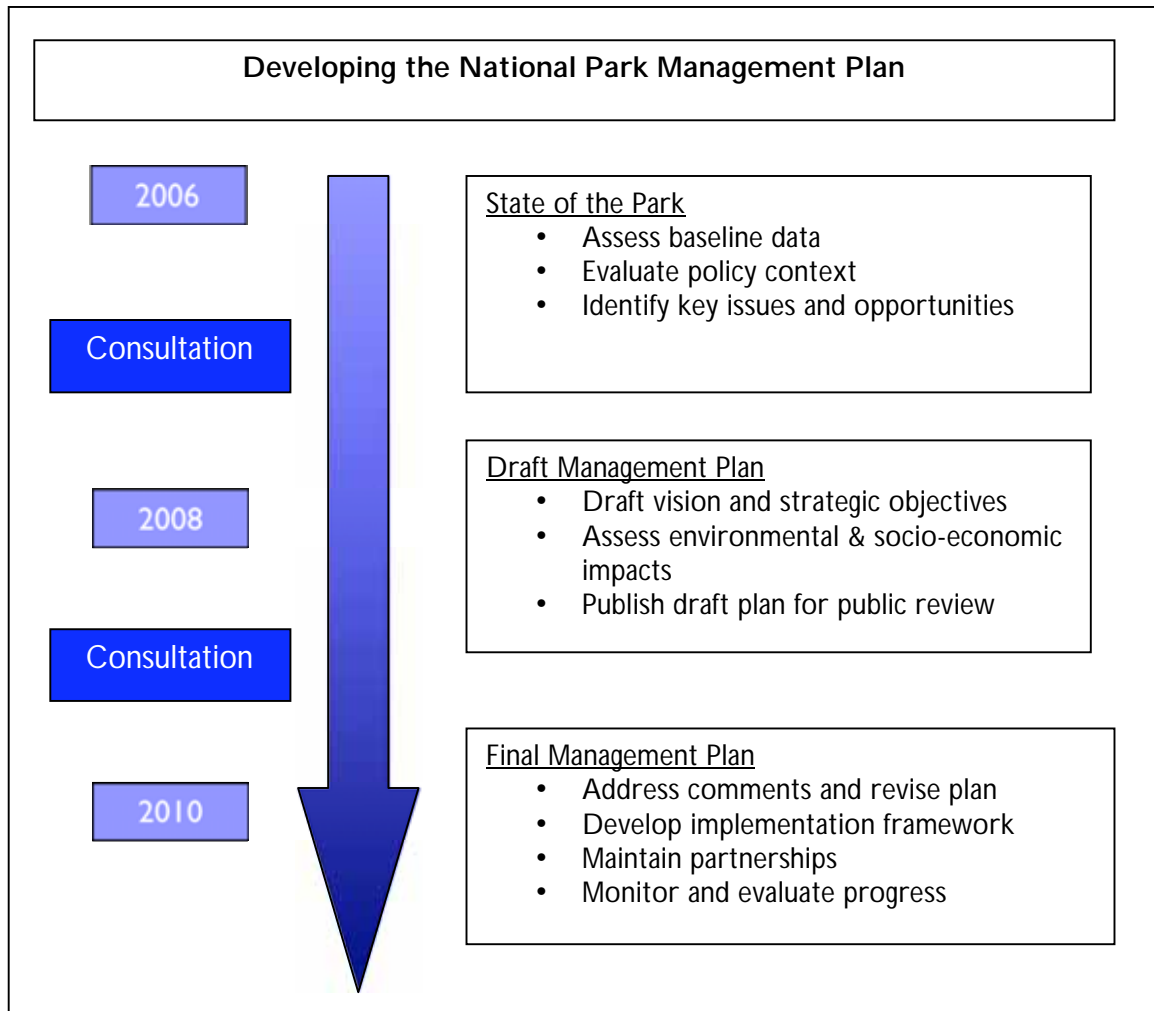
SEA is required to be undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan to which it relates to allow strategic alternatives to be formally incorporated into the Plan at the earliest opportunity. This process, in conjunction with the requirements of the Sustainability Appraisal (which has a socio-economic focus), ensures that environmental, social and economic implications are fully

---

<sup>2</sup> Countryside Council for Wales. 2006. National Park Management Plans Guidance.

integrated into the Plan's emerging policies and strategies. Not only does this approach ensure the sustainability and environmental soundness of the Plan, but it also forges long-term partnerships vital to the delivery of the actions and policies outlined in the Plan.

Figure 1.1. Steps to developing the National Park Management Plan.



## 1.8. Relationship to Other Plans

The National Park Management Plan is the primary conduit between broad-scale international and national policies, and Park-specific decision-making processes (Figure 1.2). It ensures that the NPA, in cooperation with its partners, contributes and adds value to national policy objectives. As a result, the Plan sets the framework for the Corporate Business Plan and for more detailed Park strategies and programmes, including the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, the Sustainable Tourism Strategy and other Park-related strategies.

Delivery of the land use planning dimension of the National Park Management Plan occurs by way of the Local Development Plan (LDP). Whilst the Management Plan provides the broad-



scale policy context for the LDP, consultation on and formulation of the LDP influences development of the Management Plan (Figure 1.2).

The Management Plan aims to integrate local activities across the entirety of the National Park. The National Park Management Plan functions as the Community Strategy for communities within the Park boundary and therefore must reflect the policies of the relevant strategies for the Park area.<sup>3</sup> A measure before the Welsh Assembly's Environment Minister recommends *"that a Community Strategy that relates to a National Park should have to take into account, and embrace, the policies of the National Park Management Plan."* If enacted this requirement will become a statutory obligation on County Councils, and so embed National Park Management Plan policies (and their statutory purposes), to the benefit of each Welsh National Park.

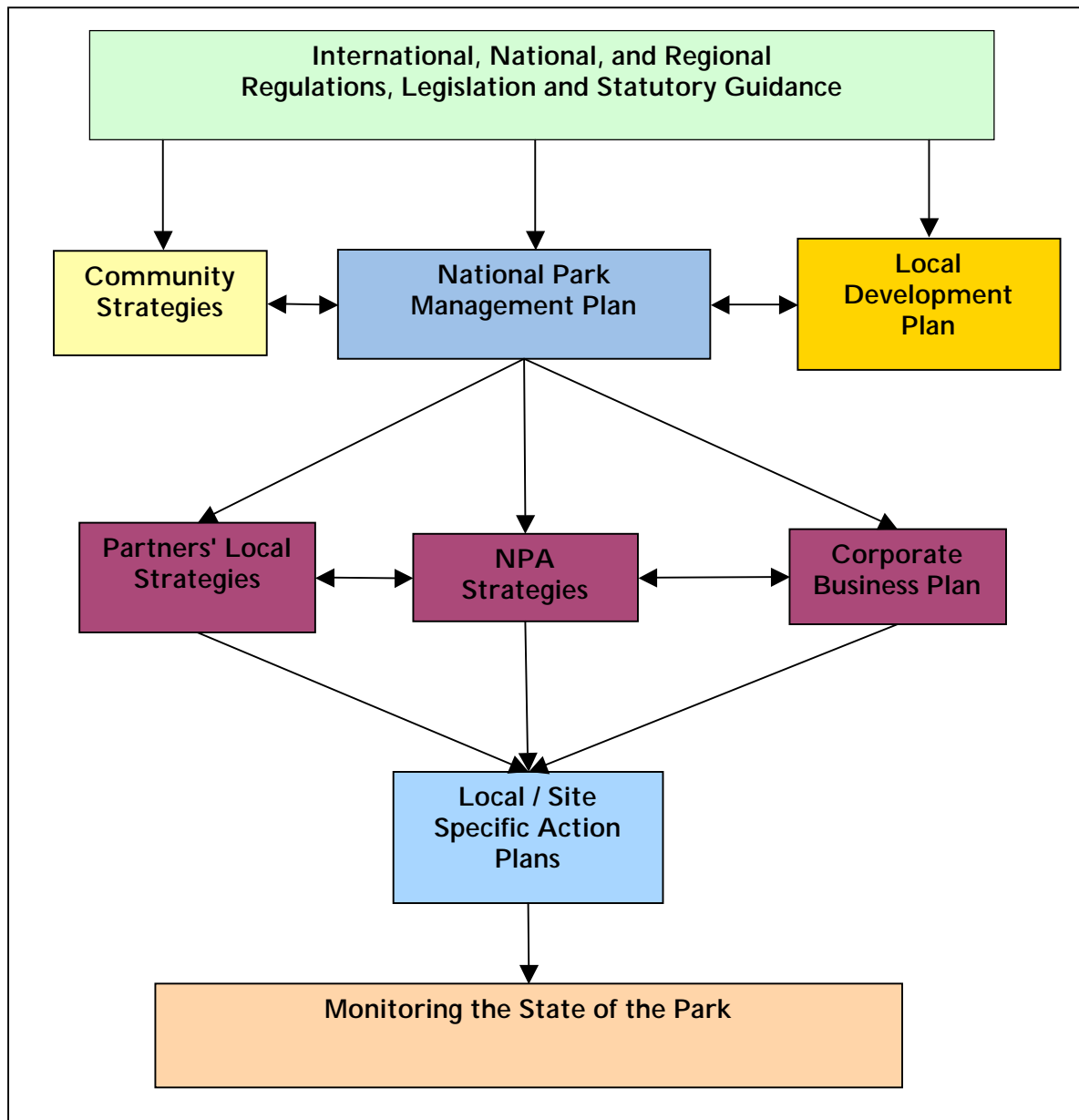
The Plan serves as a mechanism by which priorities are set, actions are monitored and outcomes are evaluated. To this end, the Management Plan provides a firm foundation for assessing the state of the Park's resources. These assessments are summarised in the State of the Park Report (see Chapter 10).

Formulation of the National Park Management Plan is an iterative process. Knowledge gained from evaluating the Plan's progress and through monitoring the state of the Park informs the Plan's future policies and priorities.

---

<sup>3</sup> Countryside Council for Wales. 2006. National Park Management Plans Guidance. p. 5.

Figure 1.2. Relationship between the Management Plan and other policies.

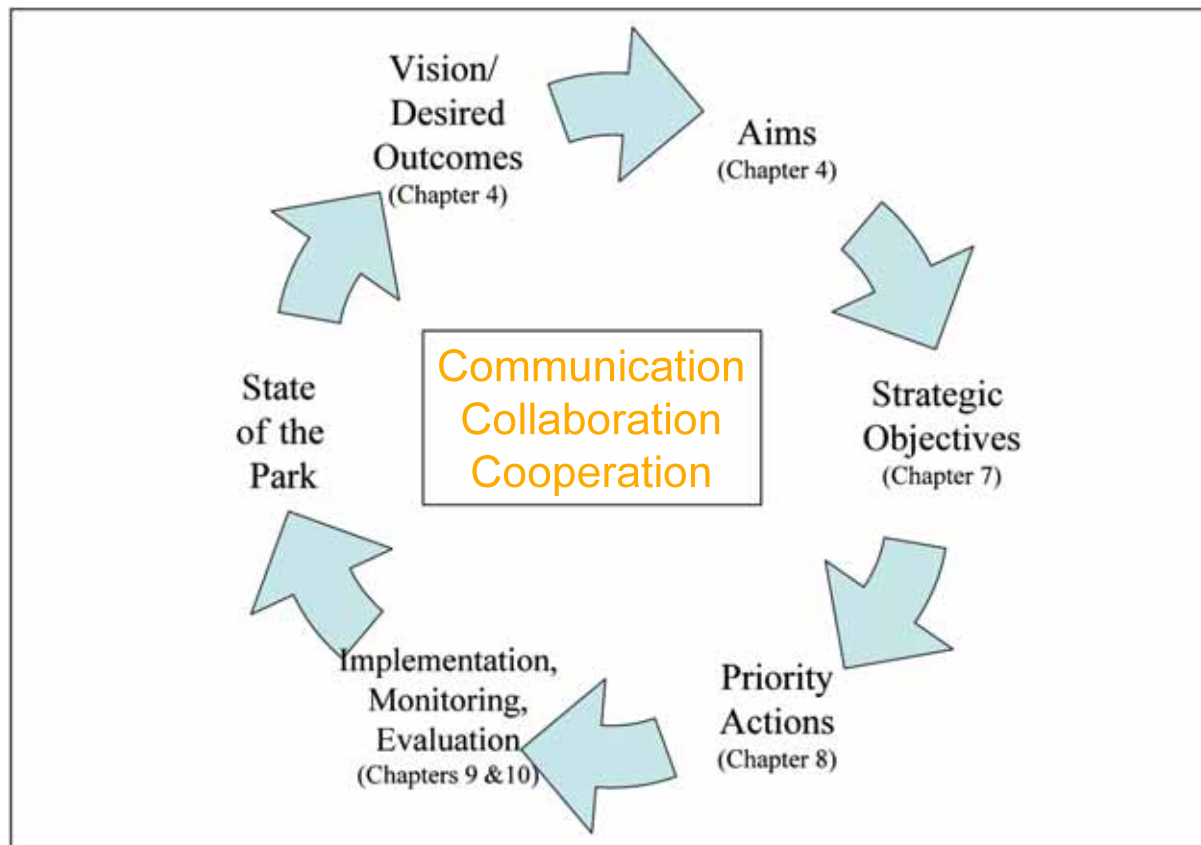


## 1.9. Structure of the Plan

The Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan becomes increasingly more specific as one reads further into the document. This is true for both the information presented and the time scale on which the Plan operates. The Plan is a strategic document; it must be, on the one hand, forward-thinking, setting long-term visions and aims for the Park 20-25 years into the future which the NPA and its partners will strive to achieve. It must, on the other hand, set targets that are more realistic and achievable in the short term. Consequently, the Plan also outlines desired outcomes and actions to be completed over the course of the next five years, at which

time the Plan will be reviewed and revised as required. The general contents of each of the Plan's chapters are highlighted below.

Figure 1.3. National Park Management Plan cycle.



**Chapter 1** introduces the Plan, its purpose, how it has been developed and its structure. With respect to Park management, it also establishes the relationship between the NPA and its partners and between the Management Plan and other relevant documents.

**Chapter 2** describes the landscape and the Park's natural resources as well as basic facts about the Park's people and communities. This chapter also sets the international, national and regional context of the Park.

**Chapter 3** describes the special qualities of the Brecon Beacons National Park. These are the characteristics and attributes that in concert define the "sense of place" that is inherent and unique to the Brecon Beacons National Park. These are the qualities of natural beauty, cultural heritage and community well-being that the NPA and its partners are trying to maintain through effective and cooperative management.

**Chapter 4** sets forth the 20-year vision and aims for the Brecon Beacons National Park. These are the collective aspirations toward which the Park Authority and its partners are aiming.

**Chapter 5** identifies cross-cutting issues and drivers of change (e.g., climate change, biodiversity and agricultural policies) that affect or are likely to affect the National Park. This chapter is not a comprehensive review of all the challenges. Rather, it summarizes the key implications associated with the sustainable management of the Park's resources, special qualities and communities.

**Chapter 6** presents a series of guiding principles that have been fundamental to the development of the vision, aims, strategic objectives and actions included in this Plan. These are the central threads running throughout the Management Plan that bind it together. These guiding principles should be reflected in the delivery of the outcomes detailed herein. They address the delivery process just as much as they do the proposed outcomes.

**Chapter 7** identifies the strategic objectives for the National Park. Strategic objectives operate on a twenty-year time scale but are meant to be more realistic and achievable than the vision and aims. They are organized according to traditionally recognized disciplines and/or topics under each statutory purpose and duty, respectively. This approach allows for a simplified explanation of each topic's relevance to park management, although it is recognized that there is considerable overlap among the disciplines when it comes to on-the-ground implementation. Links are made to other aims and to predominant policies where appropriate.

**Chapter 8** outlines the action plan for the NPA and its partners for the next five years. This chapter does not include all possible actions and outcomes that could be pursued in the course of Park management. Instead, it recognizes that management resources (i.e., time, funding and personnel) are limited. Priorities, therefore, need to be set so that those responsible for Park management can realize tangible and meaningful outcomes in the next five years. In so doing, the individual disciplines or topics discussed in Chapter 7 are brought together under common management themes. This reflects the interdisciplinary and integrated nature of land management and land use planning. The importance of each theme as a priority is outlined, along with expected five-year outcomes, proposed actions and responsible parties and links are made back to the strategic objectives presented in Chapter 7.

**Chapter 9** outlines the steps required to develop a framework for implementing the priorities discussed in Chapter 8. This framework will be used to create a plan which details the methods for implementation, key funding sources, research needs and collaborative strategies that will be required to implement the proposed actions and achieve the desired outcomes.

**Chapter 10** provides a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress toward achieving the outcomes described in the priorities for action described in Chapter 8. All partners associated with the delivery of the priority actions in this Management Plan have a role to play in monitoring progress and the state of the Park. This chapter summarizes how this can be done most effectively.

**Text boxes** are used throughout the Plan to provide snapshots of exemplary efforts occurring across the National Park that capture the essence of what the Management Plan is designed to achieve and what the Park has to offer.

The **annexes** provide additional, useful information such as a list of acronyms, a glossary, a description of the management principles governing IUCN Category V landscapes and a list of contributors to this Plan.

## **1.10. Delivering the Plan**

The National Park Management Plan is the principal vehicle for ensuring that the statutory provisions of the Environment Act 1995 are met.<sup>4</sup> The central role of the management plan, then, is to guide the delivery of the statutory purposes and duty, assisted by the NPA's statutory planning function. Successful implementation of the Management Plan is a task shared by all, and, therefore, requires active partnerships between all those involved or with an interest in (often referred to as "stakeholders") the Brecon Beacons National Park.

---

<sup>4</sup> Countryside Council for Wales. 2006. National Park Management Plans Guidance.



## 2. Context

### 2.1. Brecon Beacons National Park

The Brecon Beacons National Park contains some of the most spectacular and distinctive upland landforms in southern Britain. The highest point in the Park is Pen y Fan in the Brecon Beacons, at the centre of the National Park. Its distinctive table-topped summit stands at 886 metres, and it is climbed by hundreds of thousands of people each year.

The Park covers 1346 square kilometres (520 square miles) and lies between rural Mid Wales and the industrial South Wales Valleys. It is a diverse landscape, where sweeping uplands contrast with green valleys, with dramatic waterfalls, ancient woodland, caves, forests and reservoirs.

Despite its name, the National Park is much more than the Brecon Beacons. The bulk of the Park is underlain by Old Red Sandstone rocks of Devonian age. These form the characteristic north and north-east facing escarpments of Y Mynydd Du (The Black Mountain), Fforest Fawr (Great Forest), the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains, giving the Park its highest peaks.

The older Ordovician and Silurian rocks of Mid Wales cross into the north-western corner of the Park, giving a landscape of south west - north east trending ridges and valleys. In the south of the Park lie Carboniferous rocks, with limestone forming a conspicuous escarpment in some places. The Park's limestone pavements and cave systems are of European significance. South of this are Millstone Grit scarps and plateaux, whilst Coal Measures outcrop along the Park's southern boundary.

The Park was glaciated during the last Ice Age, as shown by the characteristic U shape of the valleys and the presence of moraines, kames, drumlins and outwash sand and gravels. The drainage pattern is generally north-south or *vice versa*, reflecting the dip of the strata, although the major rivers have west – east courses in the Park area. The broad valley of the River Usk, for instance, cuts across the Park's mountains, whilst the rivers Tywi and Wye border the Park.

The National Park has many rich habitats for wildlife, such as upland heaths, bogs, unimproved grasslands, hay meadows, ancient woodlands and watercourses. But no part of the Park is totally 'natural': more than 90% is agricultural or pastoral land, including hedged fields and the upland commons, grazed mainly by sheep. Human influence can be seen everywhere, from Neolithic long cairns, Iron Age hill forts, Roman roads and Norman castles, to disused quarries

and ironworks, managed woods and forest plantations, former railways, a canal and reservoirs, as well as the many farmsteads, villages and small market towns.

National Park status does not mean that all the land within the Park is in public ownership. In fact, over 65% of Park lands are privately owned by estate owners, farmers and, to a lesser extent, householders. There are several large public and charitable landowners too (Table 2.1). The NPA itself owns 14% of the Park, more than any other park authority in the UK. It is the single largest landowner in the National Park. NPA-owned lands comprise mainly upland common land purchased with the help of grants to manage it for the benefit of the public. Much of the NPA-owned lands are managed directly by local farmers and graziers. The BBNPA are committed to working closely with graziers and other users of the land owned and/or managed by the Authority for the continued provision of public benefits and in the interest of sustainable management of these resources.

Table 2.1. Area and percentage of National Park land by owner category.

Land Owner	Landowner Area Owned (hectares)	% of the Park
Privately owned	87598	65
Countryside Council for Wales	1049	0.8
Dwr Cymru Welsh Water	5197	3.9
Forestry Commission land*	6401	4.8
Forestry Commission forests**	9622	7.1
National Park Authority	19791	14.3
National Trust	4942	3.7
<b>Total area of Park</b>	<b>134600</b>	<b>100</b>

\*excludes land on long lease from Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water.

\*\*includes land on long lease from Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water.

The Park is home to 33,000 people, and has a strong Welsh heritage and rich economic, social and cultural life. The largest settlement is the cathedral town of Brecon (population 7,900). Together with Brecon, the settlements of Crickhowell, Gilwern, Hay-on-Wye and Talgarth account for approximately 46% of the Park's inhabitants.

The western part of the Park supports many scattered farmsteads and just a handful of villages – Llanddeusant, Myddfai, Gwynfe, Bethlehem and Trapp. In the central and eastern part the population is mainly concentrated in the Usk Valley, the Hay/Talgarth area, the Hirwaun/Penderyn area and the Clydach Gorge. These patterns arise from a mix of traditional farming areas, mineral extraction and more recent commercial, administrative and commuting areas.

### Brecon Beacons National Park Fast Facts

The Park covers 1346 square kilometres (520 square miles).	Fforest Fawr Geopark is the first European/ UNESCO Geopark in Wales and the first in a UK National Park.
33,000 people live in the Park.	19 geological SSSIs exist within or partly in the National Park, covering 12% of the Park's area.
Approximately 3.6 million people visit the Park each year.	64 biological SSSIs exist in the Park, covering 26047 hectares or 15% of the Park area.
The BBNPA owns more land (14%) than any other NPA in the UK.	There are 1711 listed buildings.
More than 200 farm holdings are in Tir Gofal (agriculture conservation) schemes, covering 15.6% of the Park.	There are 268 scheduled ancient monuments, four registered historic landscapes and 17 registered historic parks and gardens.
More than £126 million was spent in 2004 on tourism-related activities within the Park.	There are 5376 kilometres of hedgerows.
The Park contains 21 UK priority habitats and 48 UK priority species.	There are 1983 kilometres of public rights of way in the Park: 1415 kilometres footpaths, 367 kilometres bridleways and 200 kilometres byways and roads used as public paths.
There are 11 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) covering 3,311 hectares or 2% of Park.	Approximately 35 local cultural events and food festivals are held in the Park each year.
The Park comprises 9 Unitary Authorities and 50 Community Councils.	The World Heritage Site at Blaenavon which commemorates landmarks of the Industrial Revolution lies partly within the Park's south-eastern boundary.
Four of the five longest caves/cave networks in the UK are in the National Park.	The deepest and third deepest caves in the UK are in the National Park.
The 'Main Entrance' to Porth yr Ogof is the largest cave entrance in Wales.	The greatest collection of waterfalls in one small area in the UK is around Ystradfellte/Pontneddfechan.
Brecon Agricultural Show is believed to be the oldest of its kind in the UK, the Brecknock Agricultural Society having started in 1755.	The 2,400m long tunnel by which Hill's Tramway travelled under the mountain at Pwll-Du, north of Blaenavon, was the longest ever constructed for a horse-operated railway in Britain.
Llangorse Lake (Llyn Syfaddan) is the largest natural lake in South Wales. It contains the only crannog (early medieval man-made island) in Wales.	Llyn y Fan Fawr is the highest natural lake in South Wales.

Public administration, education and health professions account for 33% of the Park's employment opportunities, which is not surprising considering Brecon is an important administrative centre for Powys County Council, Dyfed Powys Police, the NPA and the Ministry of Defence. Other significant employment sectors within the Park include: distribution, hotels and restaurants (21%); manufacturing (11%); and banking, finance and insurance (10.5%).

Over three and a half million people a year come to the Brecon Beacons National Park to enjoy this unforgettable landscape. The mountains, uplands and valleys are all excellent walking country. Other activities include horse riding, cycling, mountain biking and water-based activities. There are major tourist attractions such as the Dan-yr-Ogof showcaves, and festivals such as the Brecon Jazz Festival, the Green Man Festival, the Hay Festival of Literature and celebrations of locally produced food.

## 2.2. Global Significance

There are more than 100,000 protected areas worldwide. Each contributes in its own way to sustaining life on Earth, including the health and well-being of humans. Protected areas provide a wide range of values and benefits to people and the environment, including: protection of biodiversity for its own sake (intrinsic value); soil and land productivity (on-site goods and services); climate regulation (off-site goods and services); local culture and identity (community value); and recreation leading to health and well-being (individual value). Despite their significance, collectively protected areas cover only 12 per cent of the Earth's land surface and 0.5 per cent of marine systems.<sup>5</sup>

The continued provision of benefits and values to society and, indeed, our very survival, therefore, hinge upon the successful stewardship of a small but precious portion of our world. The urgency of this responsibility becomes infinitely more critical when we consider that natural areas are being lost or modified at an alarming rate across the globe.

Consequently, the Brecon Beacons National Park has national, international and local importance as a protected landscape. The Park's funding and specialist staff help it serve as a test-bed for sustainable, innovative development and management that may be applied in a broader context. Some examples of the benefits to society provided by the Park include:

- Contributions to international food security through local food production;
- An understanding of the past and context for today's culture through ongoing conservation of the historic environment;
- Maintenance of the quality and flow of regional water resources;
- Opportunities to reduce stress through recreation, leisure and culinary experiences;
- Awareness and understanding of the integral link between people and their environment; and;
- Innovative approaches to renewable energy generation and energy efficiency practices that can be adopted elsewhere.

Many other benefits and values associated with the National Park have been identified by its stakeholders. These are captured in the Park's special qualities (Chapter 3), in text boxes throughout the Plan and in the text describing the topics in Chapter 7.

---

<sup>5</sup> G.L. Worboys and C. Winkler. 2006. Natural Heritage, in M. Lockwood, G.L. Worboys, and A. Kothari, eds. *Managing Protected Areas: A Global Guide*. Earthscan, London.

## 2.3. International Context

Brecon Beacons National Park was established in 1957. With its designation as a UK National Park, the Brecon Beacons joined a growing international family of protected areas. Protected areas fall into two general categories: those designated for the strict protection of the natural world and those designated for the purposes of maintaining sustainable relationships between humans and nature. National parks of the UK belong to the latter category, otherwise classified as IUCN Category V Protected Landscapes. Parks in the UK also differ from national parks in other parts of the world because the former are largely privately owned whilst many of the latter are owned by the State.

IUCN Category V landscapes/seascapes are protected areas managed mainly for both conservation and recreation. Unlike IUCN Categories I-IV, this designation recognises and encourages active, sustainable human presence as part of the evolution and maintenance of the area. These ideals are embodied in the 12 fundamental principles which have been designed to guide management of these areas for the long-term benefit of the environment, society, culture and the economy (see Annex 4). The National Park – via this Plan – also functions to deliver international policies and objectives. The Park must conform to European Union (EU) directives in relation to: Special Areas for Conservation (SACs), biodiversity, sustainable development, water quality, noise suppression, greenhouse gas emissions and waste. Adherence to and delivery of these objectives present cascading benefits and challenges both regionally and locally. For example, Common Agricultural Policy reform will influence the Park's landscape, agriculture, biodiversity and economy through farmers' compliance with it. Agricultural policy, in turn, must be reconciled along with enhancement and maintenance of SACs in and around the Park. Currently, there are 11 SACs in the Park covering 2% of its area. Most notable of these is the River Usk which runs nearly the length of the Park from East to West. Because its waters are fed by a large catchment of the Park, the Usk constantly reflects in its waters the activities which occur across the Park. As the Usk travels further downstream, these activities are realized outside the Park's boundaries.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) Regulations in England & Wales place a duty on public bodies to have regard to River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs). The Park is covered by two RBMPs for the Severn and Western Wales River Basin Districts (RBDs). The WFD seeks to: prevent deterioration in and improve water status; ensure water and waste water capacities; mitigate the effects of floods and droughts; and ensure sustainable water use.



The UK National Parks, Areas of Natural Beauty (AONBs) and other landscape designations also are governed by the European Landscape Convention (signed in 2006) which promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues (see Annex 3 for the definition of landscapes). Along with its aforementioned aims, the convention encourages the integration of landscape into all relevant areas of policy, including cultural, economic and social policies and the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies.

Other designations also recognise the importance of the landscapes in and around the National Park. The Blaenavon Industrial Landscape was inscribed as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site (WHS) in November 2000. As noted by UNESCO, *"the area around Blaenavon is evidence of the pre-eminence of South Wales as the world's major producer of iron and coal in the 19th century. All the necessary elements can still be seen - coal and ore mines, quarries, a primitive railway system, furnaces, workers' homes, and the social infrastructure of their community."* The Blaenavon Industrial Landscape is one of the most significant examples of industrial growth during and after the Industrial Revolution. For this reason, it serves as an exemplar and gateway to the wider Heads of the Valleys area, which collectively fuelled the fires of development for Great Britain and the international community during this era.

In 2005 the Fforest Fawr (Great Forest) Geopark was established as the first European/ UNESCO Geopark in Wales and the first Geopark in any UK National Park. This international recognition acknowledges the area for its scientific quality, stunning landscapes, educational value and historical or cultural interest. The area covers the western portion of the Brecon Beacons National Park, including the Brecon Beacons, Fforest Fawr and Black Mountain. The main objective of the European Geopark Network is local economic development based on geo-tourism in local communities. Whereas the designation is international, the benefits are truly local.

The National Park Authority (NPA) also belongs to Europarc, the Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe, which is the voice for European protected areas.

## **2.4. National Context**

The Brecon Beacons was the tenth National Park in Wales and England to be designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. This action confirmed its importance nationally, conferring the UK's highest status for conservation of landscape and natural beauty. The Welsh Assembly Government has further emphasised the Park's

importance in the national context through its Vision for the Welsh National Parks in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

*"The Welsh National Parks are protected landscapes of international importance which capture much of what is distinct and special about rural Wales, environmentally and culturally. Although predominantly rural in nature, the Parks contain a resident population of over 80,000, are close to important urban communities and have significant potential to enrich the lives of the people of, and visitors to, Wales and to contribute positively to public health and well-being and to the Welsh economy. They are living landscapes, moulded by their communities over thousands of years. They are places where sustainable development is promoted for the benefit of the environment, the economy and for Park communities. They are places that experiment with new approaches in sustainable development and environmental conservation, providing exemplars of best practice for wider Wales, and helping to shape and lead future rural policy and practice. They are also places where all who can influence the future of the Parks work together to conserve and enhance their natural beauty, biodiversity and cultural identity, in line with sustainable development principles. Guided by the Park Authorities, these special areas are becoming progressively richer and more diverse in terms of landscape, wildlife and heritage and are enjoyed and cherished by a full cross-section of society."*<sup>6</sup>

Working together with the other two Welsh National Parks (and sister parks in Scotland and England), the Brecon Beacons will pursue this vision through its contributions to such national objectives<sup>7</sup> as:

- Mitigating and adapting to climate change;
- Conserving and enhancing Wales' biodiversity;
- Embracing integrated approaches to resource conservation and land management;
- Supporting sustainable use of natural resources within the Park;
- Ensuring that all sections of society have ample opportunities to enjoy and understand the Park's special qualities;
- Integrating sustainable development principles into all areas of Park management;
- Encouraging socio-economic vitality, healthy lifestyles and strong sense of place – inclusive of the Welsh language – across the communities in and surrounding the Park;
- Engaging and working together more effectively with the Park's local communities; and
- Providing a high quality planning service which inspires confidence in the local communities and is efficient, effective, consistent and sound.

Again, as an example, the National Park Management Plan – in conjunction with the Local Development Plan – helps deliver the outcomes of the Environment Strategy for Wales:

---

<sup>6</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. March 2007. Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities in Wales: "Working together for Wales".

<sup>7</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. March 2007. Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities in Wales: "Working together for Wales".

integrating environmental considerations; providing environmental education and information; encouraging responsible behaviour; minimising greenhouse gas emissions; minimising waste generation; promoting reuse and recycling and providing for waste management; managing water resources; safeguarding soil; and minimising the impact of mineral working. It does this in the context of the Wales Spatial Plan, the Rural Development Plan, other national policies and the local Community Strategies.<sup>8</sup>

The Welsh Assembly's White Paper, Heritage Protection for the 21st Century (WAG 2007), provides three core principles guiding the heritage protection system in preserving local heritage for people to enjoy now and in the future. These core principles are to: develop a unified approach to the historic environment; maximise opportunities for inclusion and involvement; and support sustainable communities by putting the historic environment at the heart of an effective planning system.

The Park also contains a number of natural designations of national significance: biological Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); National Nature Reserves (NNRs); geological SSSIs; and Local Nature Reserves. These designations help support 21 UK priority habitats and 48 UK priority species. The Park also contains nationally important cultural and historic designations, including Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Landscapes of Historic Interest, Historic Parks and Gardens, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (see Annex 1, Map 7 and 8 and the appropriate sections of the Plan).

Not only does the Blaenavon WHS hold international significance but it is also listed in the register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales as described by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), in CADW's Welsh Historic Monuments and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS UK).

The English and Welsh NPAs also work together through the Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) to strengthen the voice of the Parks nationally, raising awareness of issues, tackling widespread problems and sharing information. This work is supported by the Society of National Park Staff, and also by the Campaign for National Parks, an umbrella body for concerned voluntary organisations.

---

<sup>8</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. March 2007. Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities in Wales: "Working together for Wales".

## 2.5. Regional Context

Administratively, the Brecon Beacons National Park includes 50 Community Councils and nine Unitary Authorities comprising Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath/Port Talbot, Powys, Rhondda/Cynon/Taf and Torfaen. Powys Council accounts for 66 per cent of the Park's area Whilst Caerphilly and Neath/Port Talbot have such small holdings within the Park that they do not take up any direct involvement in the Authority. The National Park Authority (NPA) is the planning authority for the National Park area, whilst the constituent Unitary Authorities retain responsibility for all other local government services within their areas of the Park. The NPA therefore works in close partnership with these authorities and communities, who appoint members to serve on the Authority.

The Brecon Beacons National Park is the principal gateway between the populated and urbanized Welsh valleys and the more pastoral landscapes of Mid Wales. Residents, visitors and those seeking recreation, farmers, trades and business people, and members of special interest organisations all live their lives and pursue their work or pleasure here. Likewise many public and voluntary organizations and statutory bodies also pursue their functions within the Park. Each has a key role to play in the Park's management. Much of the NPA's work also involves developing, coordinating and maintaining partnerships with and among these groups. As it is a statutory duty for all of us to have regard to this Management Plan Whilst carrying out various functions where they pertain to the National Park, it is hoped that this will be reflected in the collective endorsement of this Plan and in our actions thereafter.

The Unitary Authorities' Community Strategies have provided context for this Management Plan, and relevant aspects of these have been incorporated into it. The Community Strategies share in common five central themes: health and well-being, lifelong learning, community safety, a better environment and local economic development. These themes are addressed in appropriate sections of this Plan. Similarly relevant parts of other regional strategies have informed this Plan such as the Environment Agency's Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies, Flood Management, Soil Protection Strategy and River Basin Management Plans. The strategic objectives from these plans are reflected in the strategic objectives and priorities for action detailed herein.

Approximately 48% of the Blaenavon WHS "cultural landscape" lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. The Park Authority has an obligation under the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention to assist in the management of the site through the oversight of the Blaenavon Partnership. The Blaenavon Partnership has worked effectively to achieve remarkable results in

protecting and managing the WHS and continues to advance projects that benefit the region such as the "Forgotten Landscapes" project.

### **Forgotten Landscapes**

The Forgotten Landscape Project will help conserve and restore the built features that create the historic character of the landscape and natural landscape features around the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site. Access into the wider landscape will be improved and high quality information on the area's important cultural heritage and wildlife made available to visitors.

The project encourages people to become involved in their heritage landscape, to learn more about it, contribute to ideas about its future and to enjoy it! It was originated from a small number of interested organisations led by Gwent Wildlife Trust and Torfaen County Borough Council, will cover over 40 square kilometres round Blaenavon.

Through a strong local partnership approach it will bring tremendous benefits for local people, farmers, the business community and visitors. It could bring significant long term benefits for the management, preservation and presentation of the historic industrial landscape.

In October 2008 the Project received more than 1.6 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This funding will ensure that projects such as conservation and restoration of buildings, post-industrial features and ancient monuments, conservation of natural habitat and wildlife, improved access to the wider area and educational projects are delivered to the benefit of the wider community.

The Wales Spatial Plan identifies Brecon as the "hub" of the Brecon Beacons Cluster (primary key settlement) to serve the needs of the surrounding communities. Talgarth and Hay-on-Wye are identified as key settlements, serving both the resident population and surrounding settlements whilst providing links to larger service areas outside of the Park. Ystradgynlais and Crickhowell provide links within the cluster and externally to Swansea Bay and South East Wales.

## **2.6. Setting the Framework**

The Brecon Beacons National Park is a special landscape, exhibiting qualities that collectively cannot be found elsewhere. The context described above provides the framework for defining these special qualities and has guided the formulation of our shared vision of the Park's future. Our vision has been translated into 20-year aims and strategic objectives to direct our management of the Park so that local strategies can be implemented to achieve our 5-year outcomes, actions and policies in the short-term.

### 3. Special Qualities

The Brecon Beacons National Park covers a broad geographical area, encompassing an impressive diversity of natural and cultural landscapes within its boundaries. The Park provides a wealth of opportunities to enjoy outstanding natural beauty, varied flora and fauna and local flavour. Whilst pursuing these opportunities, one also gains a better understanding of the Park's communities, their history and time-honoured traditions and a sense of what it means to be Welsh.

It is the richness and variety of experiences that the Brecon Beacons have to offer that make it such a valued natural and cultural resource for so many people. There is something here for everyone. Though each individual's impressions of the Park are forged by his or her own personal experiences here, there are commonalities that emerge from these experiences which are shared by a variety of audiences. The broad appeal of the Park's diverse qualities is reflected in the comments we received from participants attending our consultation workshops. Participants representing a wide range of interests and viewpoints identified Park qualities sharing several common threads.

Collectively these qualities apply to the Park as a whole. Specific localities within the Park, however, are characterised by different combinations of the qualities listed in Table 3.1. These special qualities, as referenced in the Park's Second Purpose, are what we strive to conserve and enhance through our ongoing management of the Park's resources so that present and future generations may continue to benefit from them. Consequently management activity must take into consideration the potential effects on special qualities specific to a given locality.

Table 3.1 captures the most common themes identified by stakeholders as special qualities, although it is not an exhaustive list. With these special qualities in mind, there is no wonder why this marvellous place has been designated as a National Park.

Table 3.1. Special Qualities of the Brecon Beacons National Park.

Special Qualities	Stakeholder Quotations
A National Park offering <b>peace and tranquillity</b> with opportunities for quiet enjoyment, relaxation and spiritual renewal.	<i>"Isolated from 'commercial bustle' of everyday life in the UK."</i>
<b>Healthy lifestyles and community well-being</b> promoted by the Park's fresh air, clean water, rural setting, open land and locally produced foods.	<i>"A place that is relatively free from the roar of traffic and has 'clean' air."</i>
<b>A sense of place and cultural identity</b> — "Welshness" – characterized by the indigenous Welsh language, religious and spiritual connections, unique customs and events, traditional foods and crafts, relatively unspoilt historic towns and villages, family farms and continued practices of traditional skills developed by local inhabitants to live and earn a living here, such as common land practices and grazing.	<i>"Breathing space close to home for those who live in the Park and for those in the industrial valleys."</i>  <i>"A sense of timelessness."</i>  <i>"The back garden of the Valleys."</i>
The <b>mysterious and intriguing allure</b> of discovering the Park's hidden secrets and stories such as genealogical histories, prehistoric ritual sites, relic medieval rural settlements, early industrial sites, local myths and legends and geological treasures from time immemorial.	<i>"A rich archaeological resource – still to be explored and understood."</i>  <i>"A cultural landscape where history, people, culture and activity are obviously linked."</i>
The Park's <b>sweeping grandeur and outstanding natural beauty</b> observed across a variety of harmoniously connected landscapes, including marvellous gorges and waterfalls, classic karst geology with caves and sink holes, contrasting glacial landforms such as cliffs and broad valleys carved from old red sandstone and prominent hilltops with extensive views in all directions.	<i>"Stunning views!"</i>  <i>"Brecon Beacons National Park has great variety of beautiful geography in a compact area."</i>
A working, living "patchwork" of <b>contrasting patterns, colours, and textures</b> comprising well-maintained farmed landscapes, open uplands, lakes and meandering rivers punctuated by small-scale woodlands, country lanes, hedgerows and stone walls and scattered settlements.	<i>"Outstanding landscapes and countryside and well-maintained agricultural land."</i>
Easy access to the Park's <b>diversity of wildlife and richness of semi-natural habitats</b> , such as native woodlands, heathland and grassland, natural lakes and riparian habitats, ancient hedgerows, limestone pavement and blanket bogs including those of international and national importance.	<i>"The variety is special, particularly the vast difference between the park's eastern and western areas."</i>
In the context of the UK, geographically <b>rugged, remote and challenging</b> landscapes.	<i>"Outstanding and beautiful natural environment to be treasured, respected, and preserved."</i>
<b>A source of inspiration</b> where innovative renewable energy projects, waste reduction schemes, local business ventures, community regeneration ventures and carbon conservation initiatives benefit communities and the environment.	<i>"A place where local people and visitors can learn about the environment."</i>
<b>Enjoyable and accessible open countryside</b> with ample opportunities to pursue walking, cycling, fishing, water-based activities and other forms of sustainable recreation or relaxation.	<i>"Opportunities for all ages to engage with the natural landscape."</i>
An <b>intimate sense of community</b> where small, pastoral towns and villages are comparatively safe, friendly, welcoming and retain a spirit of cooperation.	<i>"Seeing it stay as it is but accepting there may have to be change."</i>

## 4. Vision and Aims

The following vision statements set the overarching ambitions for the Park for the next 20 years. These statements are the result of an extensive consultation process which investigated the Park's current state and its desired future condition. The vision and aims are based on the collective views of the participants as well as policy directives and ambitions from governing bodies. They answer the question, "What should the Brecon Beacons National Park be like in 20 year's time?"

The aims listed on the following pages describe particular aspects of the vision statements. They provide links back to the statutory purposes and duty and are organised as such. They also make direct connections between the vision and the topics and strategic objectives presented in Chapter 7 (see Figure 1.3).

### Managing Change Together

**means in 2030 the Brecon Beacons National Park will be:**

- ◆ Recognised internationally and nationally for its value as a protected area, whose character continues to be shaped by the long-standing interactions between people and the processes of nature.
- ◆ Widely acclaimed for its natural beauty, geodiversity, biodiversity and cultural heritage which are being conserved and enhanced by its stakeholders through traditional and innovative means.
- ◆ A sought-after destination providing an outstanding variety of sustainable opportunities for all to understand and enjoy its tranquillity, rural character, Welsh way of life, sense of remoteness and other special qualities.
- ◆ Resilient, open and responsive to change - particularly climate change - and its stakeholders proactive in mitigating and adapting to the effects of undesirable change through local action.
- ◆ Less dependent upon external supply chains leading to increased food and energy security locally, improved quality of life, community cohesion and conservation of natural capital.
- ◆ A living landscape where people can earn a living from the land in an innovative and sustainable manner, for examples though farming, but also in new ways such as renewable energy production for the benefit of the environment, economy and local communities.
- ◆ Managed sustainably<sup>9</sup> through active partnerships among the Park's stakeholders so that it continues to be a source of inspiration and enjoyment for future generations.
- ◆ Monitored over the long term to improve future policy and management practice.

---

<sup>9</sup> Sustainably: respecting the limits of the planet's natural resources, its environment and its biodiversity Whilst having regard for social and economic concerns such that all actions taken to meet our needs today do not compromise the needs of future generations.



This vision will be achieved through pursuit of the following aims:

<b>Conserving and Enhancing the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Park</b>	
<b>2030</b>	
NCH1	The beautiful and varied character of the landscape will continue to be well-managed and cared for. Landscape change will be encouraged to benefit the Park's biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural heritage.
NCH2	The upland commons will be managed for the benefit of habitat conservation, grazing productivity, archaeological features, energy, public accessibility and to the provision of other public benefits.
NCH3	Woodlands will be integrated with other aspects of countryside management. They will be extended and diversified where possible and as appropriate. They will be well-managed for their landscape, economic, ecological and social values and as a renewable resource.
NCH4	The Park's stakeholders will encourage biodiversity to flourish and adapt to climate change. Improved habitat connectivity and exemplary management of all statutory and non-statutory designated nature conservation sites will enhance the condition and diversity of species and habitats in the Park.
NCH5	Experimentation with novel approaches to sustainable development and environmental conservation on NPA-owned lands will provide examples of best practice.
NCH6	The traditional pattern of farmed land and its characteristic, historic features and habitats will be conserved and enhanced, providing the basis for a thriving agricultural economy.
NCH7	Air, water and soil resources will be used sustainably to integrate the needs of wildlife with the demands from human use. Their quality will be brought up to and maintained at a high standard as appropriate.
NCH8	The Park's internationally-renowned geological and geomorphological features will be conserved and interpreted.
NCH9	The Park's historic settlement patterns and buildings will be conserved and enhanced. New development will adhere to sustainable design principles and complement the existing built heritage of the Park.
NCH10	Historic landscapes and archaeological features will be protected, conserved and enhanced.
NCH11	Local traditions, community events and the Welsh language will flourish and evolve as part of a living culture that cherishes the past and embraces the future.

<b>Understanding and Enjoying the Special Qualities of the Park</b>	
<b>2030</b>	
UE1	Everyone will have abundant opportunities to learn about and experience the Park's special qualities. They will understand why this living landscape is an internationally important protected area and sustainable tourism destination.
UE2	The sense of tranquillity, peace, and remoteness experienced throughout the National Park will be conserved and enhanced.
UE3	People will better understand the contributions geodiversity and biodiversity make to the landscape, economy and environment.
UE4	The historic environment will be better understood and valued as an important link among past, present and future generations.
UE5	People will come to the Park to enjoy a wide range of sustainable activities. They will understand and practice responsible behaviour.
UE6	The facilities, information, and interpretation used to enhance peoples' experiences of the Park will exceed their expectations. A full range of interpretation, education and communication tools will be used.
UE7	People will better understand the implications of climate change on their daily lives and how they can mitigate and adapt to its effects.
UE8	The Park will be much-admired as a place to pursue healthy lifestyles, relaxation and spiritual renewal as "One of Britain's Breathing Spaces."
UE9	Everyone will have equal opportunity to enjoy and understand the Park's natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage via an integrated network of routes. Public confidence as to where to recreate will be high.

<b>Economic and Social-well-being of the Local Communities</b>	
<b>2030</b>	
LC1	The Park's people, Welsh heritage and rich economy will continue to thrive, supporting healthy communities and the environment Whilst providing a welcome for visitors.
LC2	The Park's communities will have pride in their place and a sense of ownership of the Park.
LC3	Sustainable transport initiatives will enhance accessibility across the Park Whilst reducing the reliance on private motor vehicles.
LC4	The Park will be supported by an exemplar sustainable tourism industry which contributes to the public's enjoyment of the area's special qualities and to the local economy.
LC5	Good quality, well designed and sustainable affordable housing of all types will be accessible to the Park's communities.
LC6	A mixture of farmers, small rural businesses, traditional land-use businesses, local services and sustainable tourism industries will maximise the economic potential of the Park's special qualities Whilst promoting resource conservation.
LC7	Individuals will have access to employment opportunities and modern amenities appropriate to the context of the Park's purposes and duty.
LC8	The contributions that historic landscapes, local distinctiveness and vernacular buildings make to the economy and environment will be recognised and promoted.
LC9	Local communities and businesses will experiment with and adopt new approaches to waste reduction, localised food production through market gardens, effective recycling, reduced energy consumption and renewable energy generation and use.
LC10	The Park's communities and businesses will reduce their reliance on fossil fuels Whilst minimising their contributions to global climate change.
LC11	Local communities will establish collaborative projects for food production, income generation, energy generation and travel that maximise social, economic and environmental benefits for all.
LC12	New development and regeneration projects within the Park will provide exemplars of best practice for Wales with regard to climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.
LC13	Everyone will understand and appreciate how the planning process helps to achieve the Park's purposes and duty.
LC14	All those with an interest in the Brecon Beacons National Park will understand and embrace the vision of this special place and work together to sustain it.

## 5. Managing for Change

### 5.1. Climate Change

Our climate has always changed on both local and global scales. In the past, change was predominantly a result of natural causes. The most recent changes, however, are proving to be the result of human impact, mainly from the emission of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane and other greenhouse gases. There are now major concerns about future changes in our climate. Scientific evidence suggests a future increase in temperature especially in the summer when high temperatures are expected to become more frequent. South Wales is expected to have amongst the highest summer temperatures. The pattern of rainfall is also expected to change, with summers becoming drier and winters becoming wetter. Winter rainfall is also predicted to fall in more intense storm events than at present.

There is no doubt that climatic change will continue. However, the degree of change will be influenced by the level of global carbon emissions as demonstrated in the various scenarios developed by the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP). Climatic change will provide a serious challenge to the future and have implications for most aspects of life, from wildlife to planning decisions such as building development in flood plain areas.

This change in Climate will have serious implications for all sectors of the Park. Biodiversity could be affected with some habitats becoming extinct and others altered, resulting in some species moving elsewhere if possible to more suitable areas. The risk of flooding induced by an increase in rainfall will have an adverse effect on areas built on the flood plains, with flooding becoming a bigger issue. Farmers may also be affected as they see a change in the crops they grow, where they can grow them and the efficiency of grazing land.

As well as reacting to these challenges the National Park can also adopt proactive approaches to reducing the local "carbon footprint". The Beacons Bus project is one way in which overall vehicle CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are reduced whilst encouraging enjoyment of the Park by visitors. Schemes such as the Talybont community's hydroelectric scheme demonstrate how the use of these renewable resources need not adversely affect the special qualities of the National Park. By undertaking renewable resource schemes in particular hydroelectric schemes the Park will be in a strong position for adaptation if the climate changes as predicted.

## 5.2. Biodiversity

The term biodiversity is used to encompass the whole range of living organisms that inhabit the Earth. Millions of years of evolution have produced a huge variety of different species. These species live together to form distinct habitats and each individual is different from others of the same species. This variety of species, habitats and individuals can all be described in one word: biodiversity. It is all around us, we are part of it and dependent on it. Our most basic needs of oxygen to breathe, soils and nutrients to grow crops and insects to pollinate them are provided by biodiversity.

Our influence on biodiversity can be seen in our landscape. The habitats and species that exist here today are due to our management of the land to produce food, timber, minerals and our living space. We don't live within a natural environment, but a semi-natural one, a place where naturally occurring habitats and species still exist but their form and location is dependent on where human activities have allowed or encouraged them to be. We have created the landscape of fields, hedgerows, woodlands and settlements, the product of thousands of years of human habitation, farming, forestry and water management.

Our landscape may be modified from a natural state but it is still rich in biodiversity. This biodiversity appeared and was maintained as a by-product of our land management. However, the farming and forestry practices that created this biodiversity have changed immensely. Mechanisation, artificial fertilisers, land drainage, pesticides and specialised production of a single crop or livestock has revolutionised farming. These agricultural methods increased production but in doing so reduced the extent of habitats relied upon by many species. Just as surely as biodiversity is a product of farming, the declines in species are a response to modern farming practices. This creates an enormous challenge for the future: our biodiversity would not and cannot exist without farming but suitable space for wildlife is ever more scarce within the modern, intensely farmed environment.

Our landscape provides us with a place to live as well as providing food. Our population has grown; we require more space for housing, roads, workplaces and the other aspects for our modern lifestyles. These developments require space, land that would otherwise serve as semi-natural habitats supporting many species. Our second big challenge is ensuring that declines in habitats and species resulting from development do not continue.

We must now conserve biodiversity within a changing climate. Our native species are here because the climate has suited them. As the climate changes, species will move elsewhere or disappear and new species will arrive. Allowing species to move through our highly modified

landscape is essential so that enough species remain to form functioning ecosystems. As well as responding to climate change, our natural systems help us to cope with climate change. Whatever the effects of climate change will be they will be more profoundly felt in environments with impoverished biodiversity.

### **5.3. Upland Farming Practices**

The landscape of the Brecon Beacons is dominated by pastoralism – both enclosed lowland pastures and wide open uplands. It is an area that has been shaped by pastoralism over thousands of years. The well-being of the farming community is therefore fundamental to the future of the landscape and communities of the National Park. If livestock grazing were to decline, the uplands would scrub over in places, which would change the identity of the landscape without further intervention. Whilst the visual nature of the landscape would change, opportunities for improving both habitat diversity and grazing quality would arise.

Over time any changes that have take place have been influenced by personal circumstances and prevailing economic conditions. At present the livelihood of the farming community is under significant pressure from a number of challenges. Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has adjusted the money paid to farmers to enable farm businesses to respond better to market trends, Whilst delivering more public benefits such as biodiversity conservation. Post 2013 it is probable that the CAP will be further adjusted with a major shift of emphasis from direct payments to farmers in favour of environmental or community based assistance and public benefits. Vital skills, difficult to replace, are being lost through farmers leaving or retiring from the industry. It is also difficult for new people to enter the farming business. This leaves an ageing farming community that it is naturally risk-averse and less receptive to innovation, at a time when innovation is essential to survival in this changing economic and environmental climate. Some farm businesses are responding to the changes by buying up neighbouring farms, resulting in fewer but larger farms. Whilst this may be good business sense for the farm involved, it could be counter-productive within the National Park because small, family farms have characterised the farming community in the Park for generations; frequently it is these farms that support most biodiversity. Diversification has helped but it is not a solution for every farm.

Farming, the community and the landscape are all interdependent. The challenge is to maintain a viable farming community to ensure the protection of the traditional landscape and communities. However, as mentioned in the report “Sustainable Farming and Environment: Action Towards

2020," the need for change is easy to recognise but harder to deliver. Nevertheless, the need for sensitive land management by and for the local farming community must be a priority.

#### **5.4. Population Pressures**

Predictions indicate that the Park's population will increase in the foreseeable future. Whilst there is an anticipated decline in the natural population, an overall increase is expected via in-migration. The intrinsic quality of the Park combined with easy access to the M4 corridor has made it a popular destination for commuting from and retirement to. This has increased the cost of housing in an area with an already high ratio of house price to income. This scenario has become a particularly difficult problem for young people wishing to remain living and working in the National Park. The housing problem is accentuated by the current trend towards more but smaller households. A key housing issue, then, is the provision of affordable, low environmental impact and energy efficient housing for local people with access to fundamental services. This can help maintain sustainable communities in high quality environments. Another challenge is the in-migration of retired people– one of the causes of the Park's above average ageing population and below average birth rate.

These pressures have a range of implications for the National Park, from energy consumption to planning to social services. Consideration of national planning guidance in concert with climate change predictions, for example, indicates that no further development should occur in the floodplain, the area in the Park where development has historically occurred. Where then should future development be located to meet population pressures, given the limited environmental capacity for development that exists in the National Park? A fine balance will obviously be required to meet population pressures, satisfy the Park purposes and address climate change scenarios.

#### **5.5. Renewable and Non-renewable Energy**

The world's supply of fossil fuels (i.e., non-renewable resources) will become economically depleted in the foreseeable future. A growing number of scientists believe that demand has already surpassed potential supplies for oil worldwide, for example, leading to depletion of supplies within the next 50 years. Although oil resources will never disappear completely, they will become too expensive or too difficult to recover, affecting fuel prices in the near term. At this point, we will have five choices: 1) recycle or reuse existing supplies; 2) waste less; 3) use less; 4) find a substitute; or 5) do without. We will need to consider these scenarios carefully as we plan future management options for the National Park.

The production of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from conventional energy production has increased society's focus on the provision of renewable energy options. When the UK Government signed up to the Kyoto Protocol, it set itself a domestic target of a 20% reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, below 1990 levels, by 2010. Locally the NPA has an important part to play both through a practical and an advisory role. Reducing the problem can be achieved through energy conservation and also through the production of alternative, renewable energy.

Reducing energy can be achieved in a number of ways. The NPA as a planning authority is in a unique position to assist through giving energy saving advice through the planning service as well as technical advice on installation capacity and feasibility. Policies can be designed to encourage renewable energy generation and energy conservation in old and new buildings and on a district and commercial scale. Assisting in reducing the amount of travelling carried out through schemes like the Beacons Bus or recycling schemes can also reduce energy requirements. One of our most promising means of reducing all transport is through more efficient and effective use of the internet and other forms of computer technology. These tools are currently underutilised, but their potential will be investigated and harnessed over the next 20 years.

#### **Talybont-On-Usk Energy – Community Hydro Electric Turbine**

A feasibility study in 2001, undertaken for the Sustainable Development Fund backed "Three Parks Energy Project," identified Talybont-on-Usk as a suitable location for a renewable energy project in the Brecon Beacons National Park and a project to restore hydroelectric generation from the compensation flow at Talybont Reservoir as a feasible community scheme.

Public meetings resulted in the formation of Talybont-on-Usk Energy, a limited company with charitable objects. The objects are:

- To advance the education of the public into renewable energy sources, uses of alternative energy, and related ecological and environmental issues;
- To promote renewable energy schemes in and for the benefit of the community of Talybont-on-Usk including provision and maintenance of a hydro-electric generating turbine at Talybont-on-Usk reservoir;
- To advance the relief of poverty and the preservation and protection of health, primarily but not exclusively in the Talybont-on-Usk Community Council Area, by promoting the efficient use of energy (including energy for heating purposes) and utilisation of renewable sources of energy.



## **Talybont-On-Usk Energy (continued)**

### **Hydro Project**

The hydro project involves the re-installation of an electricity generating turbine, using the compensation flow from Talybont reservoir (water which is released to maintain the Caerfanell River ecosystem. This discharge varies over the year according to a schedule stipulated by the Environment Agency). The turbine and all the associated controls and meters are housed in the existing Turbine House below the dam, constructed at the time the dam itself was built by Newport Borough Council in the 1930s.

The new 36kw Valley Hydro crossflow turbine will produce an annual energy output in the region of 240Mwh valued at around £17,000. The electricity generated will be sold under the Renewables Obligation to a Public Electricity Supplier via the National Grid. Talybont-on-Usk Energy will re-invest the proceeds from the sale of the electricity in a range of further energy projects in the Talybont-on-Usk community council area. All this will be managed by and for local people, and has the potential to be a model for small-scale renewable energy generation.

The project will result in greatly enhanced community awareness about energy efficiency and the benefits of generating energy from renewable sources. The hydro site will incorporate display materials – aimed at the local community, schools, and visitors. Panels will demonstrate the current and cumulative energy generation of the scheme over time, describe the history of the scheme, and illustrate how the hydro works.

The Sustainable Development Fund supported the initial feasibility study and the purchase of the new turbine. Talybont recruited a development worker in June 2007, with the help of SDF, to take renewable energy, energy efficiency, and carbon footprinting to a higher level within the village. Talybont hopes to become the first carbon neutral village in Wales!

The Talybont-On-Usk Energy Project is a prime example of what The Green Valleys Initiative is trying to achieve.

The Park can also assist through the promotion of alternative energy. Small scale renewable energy schemes will generally be accepted as long as they fit in with environmental and design factors and do not degrade the Park's special qualities. The NPA's Renewable Energy Assistance Programme (REAP) offers advice and grants for most forms of micro renewable energy sources including solar thermal, hydro-electric, wood-fuelled heat systems, heat pumps and wind. The hydro-electric scheme at Talybont illustrates a way forward to provide energy at a larger scale. It is less intrusive than wind farms, conserving the natural beauty of the landscape. Modern wood fuel heating systems can provide a highly efficient source of renewable energy. Fuel can be easily stored and produced locally, thereby reducing transport costs. Growing wood for fuel locally can also provide employment in the area and give local residents an opportunity to manage the land in a sound environmental way, Whilst providing woodland habitat and better absorption of rainfall to reduce flooding. In some areas the production of crops for biofuels may also be an option for renewable energy generation. However, biofuels are not well-suited to the majority

of the Park's landscape and soils. Large-scale biofuels production on the lowland areas would further reduce the biodiversity of the area, reduce the amount of land available for food production, require high energy inputs and continue to add to greenhouse gas emissions. For these reasons, wood fuel is preferable to the production of crops for biofuels, though the NPA does not wish to limit a farmer's option for economic gain by way of biofuel production so long as it conforms to the Park's purposes, duty and planning regulations.

## **5.6. Transport**

The transport infrastructure forms an important element in both the local economy and in the recreational use of the National Park. The dispersed pattern of the settlement of the Park has created a rather unsustainable network. Whilst some parts of the area have reasonable service, most of the Park is not well served, increasing a dependence on private vehicles. The reduction of the number and length of journeys as well as the development of a more sustainable form of transport would have a number of benefits. Reducing the number of car journeys in the Park would decrease its "carbon footprint" improving the quality of the Park's environs and the tranquillity of the area, thereby contributing to enhanced special qualities.

An integrated transport system could also encourage a more healthy and active lifestyle. Some improvement has been made with a new cross-Wales transport service and the NPA's Beacons Bus, a summer Sunday and Bank Holiday service which enable people to visit the Park without a car. Ultimately, though, to be more sustainable, significant investments need to be made toward safe and efficient walking and cycling networks in the National Park.

## **5.7. Globalization**

Humans have a long history of altering the Earth's environs to suit their needs. In fact there is nowhere in the world that cannot be reached through human ingenuity and nowhere that is free from human impact. People have driven to the North Pole, climbed Mount Everest, and flown to Antarctica. We can buy food in local supermarkets from anywhere in the world at any time of year. We can grow Chilean strawberries in our gardens in Wales.

But, our globetrotting and conveniences come with a price. Species and habitats are becoming less diverse on a global scale as a result of human activities, primarily through habitat fragmentation and destruction and introducing non-native species (most of which have been wilfully transplanted). Cultures, traditions and economies, too, are becoming more uniform because of our global activities, with a loss of skills and knowhow the result. Even climate change is really a symptom of globalization of three escalating factors – population, affluence and

technology. Our influence on the world around us is so great that geologists and historians are dubbing the current period in Earth's history the Anthropocene.<sup>10</sup>

There are over 6.7 billion people on this planet today. If all these people lived the lifestyle of the average Westerner, it would take the resources of three Planet Earths to support them.<sup>11</sup> Nonetheless, the United States and Western Europe continue to consume disproportionate amounts of resources. Simultaneously, the emerging economies of China and India, with 1.3 billion and 1.1 billion people each, respectively, continue to expand their rate of development (e.g., increasing coal-fired power plants, airports, automobiles, consumer goods) and will soon dominate global economic and political agendas.<sup>12</sup> How long the Earth can sustain this level of consumption is uncertain. The message is that our planet cannot support current trends in global development; we must find innovative solutions to slow the momentum, reducing consumption and increasing self-sufficiency.

With respect to the Management Plan, the mantra "think globally; act locally" rings true now more than ever. The NPA and its partners must place the Park's communities in the wider realm of global citizenry. In so doing, we must consider these trends as we plan for the management of the National Park twenty years hence, and act accordingly.

---

<sup>10</sup> The term "Anthropocene" implies that humans now shift more surface geology and affect the fate of more biodiversity than all other natural forces combined.

<sup>11</sup> Miller, G. T. 2002. *Living in the Environment: Principles, Connections, and Solutions*, 12<sup>th</sup> Ed. Thomson Learning, Inc., Belmont, CA, USA.

<sup>12</sup> Shenkar, O. 2006. *The Chinese Century: The Rising Chinese Economy and Its Impact on the Global Economy, the Balance of Power, and Your Job*. Wharton School Publishing, New York, USA.

## 6. Guiding Principles

### 6.1. Sustainability

Adherence to the principle of sustainability ensures that all actions taken to meet our needs today do not compromise the needs of future generations. Sustainability is about respecting the limits of the planet's natural resources, its environment and its biodiversity whilst having regard for social and economic concerns. The two statutory purposes for which National Parks are designated – conserving and enhancing their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, and promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities by the public – are inextricably linked to the principle of sustainability. But, this relationship does not make the task of putting sustainability into practice in today's global society any less challenging. Broad-scale drivers of change such as global population growth, climate change, fossil fuel depletion, water pollution and acid deposition exacerbate regional and local concerns. Closer to home issues such as changing agricultural policies and practices, social inclusion, farm diversification, affordable housing, alternative energy options and disabled access to the countryside continue to weigh heavily on the minds of local people. Goals, objectives and actions, then must be designed to operate at the scale most likely to address the problem directly. Broad-scale issues such as climate change require international action but can be addressed within the Park via landscape-scale actions. Upland and common land management techniques, for instance, designed to deal with the predicted effects of climate change will be most effective and will require the collaboration among multiple stakeholders to ensure success. Local issues such as affordable housing may be better addressed on a site-by-site approach involving local communities, Housing Authorities and relevant non-profit organisations. Biodiversity must be considered on landscape or larger scales, involving National Park Networks and the collaborative efforts of multiple agencies and organisations.

The Brecon Beacons National Park must be managed in such a way that promotes the essence of this idea of sustainability. Sustainability is essential if we wish to enable the successful transition of the Brecon Beacons into the future and provide future generations with a National Park that can be at the very least equally enjoyed and utilised as we do today. In order to achieve this transition, the various needs of those enjoying, living and working in the Park must be integrated with the requirements of the National Park's special environments and resources.

A sustainable transition into the future means the National Park Management Plan will be in keeping with this sustainability concept. To facilitate this, the Management Plan is subject to

appraisal in order to assess potential social, economic and environmental impacts resulting from proposed aims, goals, policies and actions. Every attempt is made to ensure a correct equilibrium exists between pressures and needs, conservation and enhancement and opportunities and enjoyment.

## 6.2. Social Inclusion

The WAG envisions that the three Welsh National Parks will be enjoyed and cherished by a full cross section of society. This requires the NPA's and their partners to engage more effectively with the socially and physically disadvantaged, ethnic minorities, urban communities and children and other groups which have not traditionally enjoyed the Parks. However the park will show no bias towards any particular group and does not wish to disadvantage one party to the benefit of another.

In 2005 the three Welsh National Park Authorities agreed to a strategy for furthering social inclusion in all aspects of their work. The strategy recognizes that NPA's can promote social inclusion only within the context of their statutory purposes and duty, and that detailed action plans will vary among parks. With these qualifications in mind, the strategy outlines three key aims the NPAs can embrace to promote social inclusion in the exercise of their purposes, duty and delivery of services. These are to:

- Adopt a cross-cutting theme across all NPA activities that recognises the complex and multi-dimensional nature of social exclusion (i.e., groups or individuals that may be excluded from opportunities by a range of interlinked factors, including economic, perceptual and/or physical factors), and seeks to promote social inclusion in all the NPA's work;
- Foster the economic and social well-being of local communities and seek to reduce social exclusion due to poverty, lack of employment, lack of services, poor health, disability, lack of education, psychological and cultural barriers or other disadvantage and work specifically with excluded groups and with partner organisations to these ends; and
- Broaden access for the wider community of people of Wales, the UK and beyond, who may be excluded from the understanding or enjoyment of the special qualities of the Parks as a result of the barriers listed above.

Further to these aims, the WAG emphasises an additional three points for the NPAs to consider in the context of social inclusion:

1. That the Parks are there for everyone to enjoy. Whilst the Assembly Government wants the NPAs to reach out to a wider cross section of society, this should be undertaken on the

basis that people from all walks of life should be encouraged and made to feel welcome in these special areas.

2. That the Parks' special conservation and other features mean that visitor numbers will need to be effectively managed. Not all parts of the Parks may therefore be equally accessible – or appropriate for recreational activities – throughout the year. The joint NPA/Visit Wales initiative on sustainable tourism can play a part here.
3. That, as noted in the vision, each of the Parks is close to important urban communities and has significant potential to enrich lives.<sup>13</sup>

These aspirations for social inclusion are reflected in the vision statement for Brecon Beacons National Park, and, consequently, social inclusion is one of the guiding principles underpinning the policies emanating from this Management Plan.

### **6.3. Integrated Management**

Traditionally, conservation and protected areas management have been carried out in a fragmented or isolated manner. In the past, wildlife management often has been focused on species conservation without due regard to landscape and ecosystem processes. Woodlands and wetlands have not been considered as vital components of agriculture. Interpretation and education have been seen merely as “add-ons” to resource conservation and planning services rather than integral to holistic resource management.

This disjointed approach to conservation and resource management is not sustainable. As John Muir (1869) said, *“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.”* All the components of our natural and cultural environments are interdependent. Soil erosion in the BBNP uplands not only affects the immediate environment but also influences water quality and quantity in the South Wales Valleys, for example. Scenarios such as this have even greater implications for the Park and its surroundings in light of current climate change predictions.

The good news is that our view of the world is changing. The EU's Water Framework Directive requires European countries to take an integrated approach to river basin management. This system is more in tune with natural drivers of change, can be used to consider issues in addition to water and promotes active partnerships across political boundaries. Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places public bodies, including the BBNPA, under a duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity in the exercise of their functions.

---

<sup>13</sup> WAG. 2007. Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities in Wales.

For the National Park, this duty extends beyond nature conservation to include planning services, tourism, outdoor recreation, community well-being and other focal areas. Likewise, the WAG is taking steps to support integrated management through the Tir Gofal and Tir Cynnal agri-environment schemes, which assist the Park in achieving its overall conservation aims. Other international, national and regional policies and plans are following suit.

Even these agri-environment schemes are only a part of the solution. With respect to the BBNP where the principal landowners and managers are farmers, viable, sustainable farming must be considered more holistically. Farming is integral to the long-term maintenance of the Park's special qualities and therefore should be recognised and supported as a keystone component in the long-term sustainability of the Park.

Local implementation of integrated management strategies can prove to be challenging, particularly since the political and economic infrastructure do not encourage this mindset and are inconsistent in the long term. Integration, therefore, requires that partners work together more closely, think more holistically, manage functional components of the landscape (e.g., catchments) rather than political boundaries and foster active community participation in local resource issues. These ambitions can best be achieved through the implementation, research and monitoring of well-designed demonstration projects. This approach allows the NPA and its partners to experiment with innovative solutions to practical problems in a controlled fashion – solutions that help local communities meet their energy needs, adapt to climate change, develop sustainably and simultaneously enhance biodiversity, for instance. In so doing, the Brecon Beacons National Park will lead the way by example whilst satisfying the WAG's keen interest to have the Welsh National Parks explore and exemplify best management practices for Wales.

The Park's natural and cultural resources also extend beyond its political boundaries, for example through the flow of drinking water in rivers to communities downstream of the Park. Consequently, integrated management also implies reaching beyond the Park's borders to include communities and resources that affect or are affected by Park management. Consideration of the Park's "catchment" now and in the future will ensure sustainable management of these resources and continued provision of benefits to the wider community.

The BBNPA is working closely with landowners, local authorities, statutory bodies and communities to facilitate integrated management of the Park and its resources. This Plan is designed to promote these endeavours

## 6.4. Cohesive Partnerships

Sustainable management of the National Park involves a comprehensive understanding of a wide range of natural and cultural factors as well as an understanding of the inter-relationships between them. No single entity, however, can become expert in all of these facets of Park management; nor can any one agency or organisation act individually without affecting the actions of others. Equally, the demands associated with international, national and local policy agendas continue to increase, whereas the resources (time, money and personnel) necessary to meet rising demands do not. Consequently, partnership working is essential to effective, long-term management of the National Park, especially when the necessary expertises are not available within the BBNPA

To ensure that the Park is managed sustainably and to facilitate delivery of the Park's statutory purposes and duty, its stakeholders must maintain close and effective partnerships. For this reason, Section 62 (2) of the Environment Act 1995 places a general duty on all relevant authorities to have regard to the statutory purposes of the UK National Parks in taking decisions or in carrying out work within or near to the Park. The BBNPA's key partners include private landowners, the Welsh Assembly Government, other national parks, CCW, Cadw, Environment Agency, local authorities, the Forestry Commission, farmers' unions, business and industry.

Whilst the BBNPA already deliver much of their work in partnership with these interests, the WAG is keen for the effective application of the Section 62(2) duty to help underpin even stronger partnership working – recognising that the Park is a significant asset for Wales and the UK and not the sole responsibility of any one statutory body.

Of course, the Park cannot be managed sustainably without active involvement from local people who have been and will continue to be instrumental in shaping this protected landscape. Indeed, Category V protected area management principles (see Annex 4) state that "management must be undertaken with and through local people, and mainly for and by them."<sup>14</sup> Reference to local people here includes the wider community in and around the Park as well as others who have a keen interest in it. The BBNPA and other statutory or governing bodies have an obligation to facilitate local involvement in shaping management decisions. Likewise, local people have a responsibility to be actively involved in the management process, to take ownership of the Park. All stakeholders play an important role in delivering Park objectives.

---

<sup>14</sup> Phillips, A. 2002. *The World Conservation Union Management Guidelines for IUCN Category V Protected Areas: Protected Landscapes/Seascapes No. 9*. World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cardiff University, UK.



This co-operative approach to managing the Brecon Beacons is reliant upon:

- Informed stakeholders who are interested in the Park and wish to build their capacity to engage in decision making;
- Providing opportunities for stakeholders to be involved in shaping management decisions and making them aware of these opportunities (e.g., area advisory forums);
- Keeping stakeholders informed of progress made against the Plan;
- Working with a representative cross-section of stakeholders;
- Continued encouragement and support to get local communities actively engaged in initiatives in the Park's management and/or for the benefit of the wider community; and
- Open, transparent procedures based on democratic principles.

This consultation document is a product of these principles in action.

## 7. Strategic Objectives

The sections in Chapter 7 set out the strategic objectives for the Brecon Beacons National Park. They comprise the first steps toward achieving the long-term vision for the Park. They provide a 20-year framework which guides decision-making and management of the Park for the NPA and its partners. As such, the strategic objectives provide context for other Park plans and strategies designed to attain realistic outcomes over the short- to medium-term, including the five-year prioritised action plan (see Chapter 8).

Each of the strategic objectives is grouped into similar interdisciplinary resource management topics, for example Biodiversity or Sustainable Tourism. Whilst considerable overlap among the disciplines exists when it comes to on-the-ground implementation, this grouping allows for a simplified explanation of each topic's relevance to park management. Related strategic objectives are cross-referenced where appropriate. Resource management topics are broadly organised according to their corresponding statutory purpose or duty. In this instance, the Park's purposes and duty have been abbreviated to provide titles for the major subdivisions of this chapter as follows:

- **7.1 Conserving and Enhancing the National Park;**
- **7.2 Understanding and Enjoying the National Park and;**
- **7.3 Economic and Social Well-being of Local Communities.**

Each subsection includes a brief introduction to the topics, context and key issues, relevant strategic objectives with explanatory text and cross-references to other topics covering similar issues. The predominant international, national and regional policies are associated with each topic in Chapter 7 are listed in Annex 6.

### **7.1. Conserving and Enhancing the National Park**

This section identifies strategic objectives directly linked to the National Park's first statutory purpose: conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. Collectively these objectives set forth a framework for long-term, sustainable management of the National Park's natural and cultural resources, leading to the conservation and enhancement of the Park's special qualities. The objectives incorporate the guiding principles set out in Chapter 6 with the aim to address the key issues facing the National Park in the foreseeable future (see Chapter 5). Whilst the focus of each objective in this section relates directly to the first purpose and more specifically to the topic being

discussed, consideration has been given to the interrelationships that exist with and among the strategic objectives in this section and those covered by the second purpose (Section 7.2) and duty (Section 7.3). Long-term management of nature and culture cannot be done in isolation; it is inextricably linked to communities and economic factors, and continued understanding and awareness of what people consider special about the Park.

#### **7.1.1. Landscape**

Landscape character is made up of many layers – geology, vegetation, field and settlement patterns, buildings and historic and cultural associations. The landscape of the Brecon Beacons National Park comprises a patchwork of farmed countryside, extensive common land, prominent hilltops, lakes, canals and meandering rivers punctuated by small-scale native woodlands, country lanes, hedgerows and stone walls, and scattered settlements. Together these physical features of the landscape (or “tirwedd” in Welsh) create a harmonious picture of the landscape, known as “tirlun” in Welsh. It is the tranquillity and natural beauty imparted by the Park’s diverse landscape features – both physical and artistic – that people most often come to experience. In fact, the quality of the Park’s landscape contributes to the quality of life of both residents and visitors.

The landscape and its constituent layers are constantly changing, under natural and human influence. Fewer farmers manage the countryside. The climate is changing. Rivers meander. Whilst change is inevitable, the Government regards National Park designation as conferring the highest status of protection as far as landscape and scenic beauty are concerned.<sup>15</sup> The NPA, under the Wildlife and Countryside Acts, has prepared a Section 3 Conservation Map (see Map 6) of mountain, moor, heath and woodland that it considered particularly important to conserve. Whilst the Park and its resources are for everyone’s benefit, the land is owned and managed by many different individuals and organisations. Consequently, conservation and enhancement of the landscape – and its special qualities – are reliant upon collaboration among these key stakeholders. The Park’s stakeholders, therefore, are presented with the challenge of encouraging desirable change and discouraging undesirable change where possible. Of course, this requires a clear distinction between desirable and undesirable forms of change. This Management Plan is designed to assist with this process, particularly through the pursuit of the following strategic objectives.

---

<sup>15</sup>WAG. *Planning Guidance (Wales) Planning Policy First Revision* para. 5.3.6.

## Walls of Llangynidr

Mountain walls are an important feature of the mountain scenery of the Brecon Beacons National Park separating common grazing from in by land. Such walls form an important and striking element in the beauty and power of the landscape, and provide a testimony to the industry of those who worked the land in the past. Dry stone walls are now too expensive and time consuming for farmers to maintain. Many stretches have become piles of rubble with the gaps filled with wire or a hurdle. In some places, tragically, the wall has been removed, the stone sold for building and replaced by a wire fence.

Walls of Llangynidr(WOL) was started in 2000 as a village millennium project to try and save the mountain dry stone walls in the community of Llangynidr. Working in partnership with the Llangynidr Community Council, the Dry Stone Wall Association and Brecon Beacons National Park, Walls of Llangynidr was formed with two major aims. The first is to rebuild and replace fallen mountain walls and the second to provide training in the craft of dry stone walling.

Since 2000 Walls of Llangynidr has been funded by local trusts and the Sustainable Development Fund administered by BBNP and has been able to rebuild 800 metres of dry stone mountain wall using qualified wallers. Criteria have been carefully designed to identify which stretches of walls to work on and these include checking that there is enough stone nearby to rebuild the wall, selecting walls close to public foot paths and with a definite ecological and environmental value, and establishing the support of the local farmer or landowner.

Also Walls of Llangynidr has provided week long courses in dry stone walling for over 100 trainees under the direction of professionally qualified instructors provided by the South Wales Branch of the Dry Stone Wall Association, creating a local resource of qualified wallers at initial, intermediate and advanced level.

In 2007 Walls of Llangynidr became part of the Brecon Beacons Park Society. This new position provides the opportunity to work on a larger scale within the park. From the very outset it was the intention of WOL to act as a pilot project. Now it is hoped to spread the ideas to other communities within the Park. Spreading the ideas of WOL will have two major consequences: it will unlock funding for wall restoration and training, and it will give increased impetus for a Park wide strategy on the management of natural stone, including increased support for the protection and restoration of dry stone walls. It will also set clear policy on the sustainable use of stone within the Park (see Annex 7).

## Strategic Objectives for Landscape

### 1. Conserve and enhance the sense of tranquillity, peace and remoteness

**experienced throughout the National Park.** Peace and tranquillity and qualities of remoteness are consistently cited as the primary reason people come to visit and live in the Brecon Beacons National Park.<sup>16</sup> Yet, there are a variety of challenges to the Park's foremost set of special qualities, including: illegal use of mechanically propelled forms of

<sup>16</sup> Participants from consultation workshops on Management Plans up to and including this one have consistently cited peace, tranquillity and remoteness as fundamental special qualities associated with the BBNP. This trend is captured in past Management Plans, consultation documents, visitor surveys, etc.

recreation, low-flying airplanes, continued development, electricity lines and pylons, moderate increases in light pollution, increasing numbers of visitors and encroaching wind farms. These qualities are also difficult to measure and monitor, though tranquillity mapping has been conducted in England (CPRE, 2005). Management of this principal special quality will need to consider spatial issues, identifying areas best suited to "honey pots" or "adrenaline" activities as opposed to areas that are managed principally to conserve and optimise the sense of tranquillity. Data are lacking for the Park and will need to be obtained if we are to continue to manage the landscape with these special qualities in mind.

2. **Conserve and enhance the beautiful and varied character of the landscape via sustainable, integrated management.** Landscape change will be encouraged to benefit the Park's biodiversity, geodiversity, built environment, local economy and cultural heritage. Links between landscape, biodiversity, energy, historic environment and culture are important, but the landscape is more than the sum of its parts. Its elements must be managed in a holistic way, recognising that landscape changes are linked to changes in a variety of management arenas, particularly agriculture, woodland and upland management. Likewise, what may be considered an important management focus in one part of the Park may not be of concern in another. Change should be managed to conserve the landscape and special qualities of the Park without managing the Park as if it were a snapshot in time and space. To be successful in these efforts, landscape character will need to be assessed across the Park to establish a benchmark and then monitored periodically to ascertain changes –desirable and undesirable – that may occur. Management decisions should be based on this information and management plans designed to the benefit of the processes which conserve and enhance the Park's diversity of special qualities.
3. **Prevent degradation of the Park's landscape and enhance derelict land.** Portions of the Park's landscape have been degraded by illegal use of mechanically propelled vehicles, litter and fly-tipping, abandonment of vehicles, poor management of brown field sites, the erosion of upland paths and sometimes by road works and development. Other elements affect the landscape value and sensory quality associated with the landscape such as development effects – within and outside the National Park – on scenic vistas and other aspects of landscape character. Measures should be taken to minimise these types of activities where possible and improve sites where appropriate. However, enhancement work should not be at the expense of wildlife or industrial archaeological interests.

4. **Develop understanding and awareness of landscape's varied character and the processes that influence it.** The Park's beautiful and diverse landscape is dependent upon the continued interaction of natural processes and human influences. The importance of this relationship is enshrined in the Park's designation as an IUCN Category V landscape. There is a need not only to carry out the management of the National Park with these interactions in mind but also to improve the public's understanding of this dynamic landscape so that they may better enjoy it and care for it. It is through the long-term support and active participation from the Park's stakeholders that the landscape will be conserved. This support requires people to understand their connection to the world around them and how they may influence it both positively and negatively. This understanding, of course, only comes from the continued engagement of the public by the NPA and its partners.

#### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.5 Built Environment
- 7.1.12 Agriculture
- 7.1.13 Woodland Management
- 7.1.14 Upland Management
- 7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation
- 7.2.2 Education
- 7.2.3 Interpretation
- 7.3.2 Sustainable Tourism
- 7.3.7 Military Use of the Park

#### **7.1.2. Biodiversity**

The conservation of biodiversity is of critical importance to the Brecon Beacons National Park. Whilst geological processes have sculpted the land forms around us, this is clothed with a mix of natural and semi-natural habitats that contribute to the landscape character of the Park. From the wide perspective of the open uplands to the tiny details of the ferns and mosses that cling to rocky stream sides, biodiversity binds together all that the Park is and how it is perceived, valued and enjoyed.

A number of sites within the National Park have been further designated for their important biodiversity. There are 76 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (including those designated for Earth Science features), 11 Special Areas of Conservation and seven National Nature Reserves. In some cases a site may have all three designations, though not necessarily with

the same boundaries. These designated sites represent the best examples of habitats and species populations within the National Park. The biological resources contained in these sites and throughout the rest of the National Park are described more fully in the Park's Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Whilst these designated sites form a core network representing the best examples of both habitats and species, they cannot maintain important biodiversity in isolation. Loss of habitat and the fragmented distribution of remaining habitats are key challenges to address.

Species are intimately linked together through the complex relationships that build ecosystems, and so a broad vision must be applied to the management of the biodiversity resource. This landscape-scale approach accommodates entire ecosystems and is essential to providing a robust and functional natural environment in which wildlife can thrive. This approach facilitates management of biodiversity at multiple scales, particularly the concept of habitat connectivity. Habitat connectivity enhances biodiversity by removing barriers to species movements, expanding habitats and ensuring important sites are not isolated; it increases the opportunities for biodiversity to move and flourish within surrounding farmland, forestry and settlements.

A thriving biodiversity resource provides numerous benefits to the National Park. Agriculture relies on soil formation, water flow and pollination, all provided by functioning ecosystems. The uplands play a significant role in water storage and release, providing a natural defence against both drought and flood. Biodiversity also provides enjoyment and recreational opportunities. All of these services either contribute to the social and economic well-being of the Park, or would otherwise be prohibitively expensive to replace.

### **Strategic Objectives for Biodiversity**

1. **Utilise a landscape-scale approach to biodiversity conservation, built on good management of soil, air and water quality.** Soil, air and water quality underpin functioning ecosystems. Poor quality of these basic natural resources will not only affect biodiversity but also agricultural production and human health. These processes operate across large areas of land and are intimately connected. Approaches such as Catchment Sensitive Farming – already implemented by the Environment Agency Wales – can deliver wide reaching benefits by tackling root causes of environmental problems. It is essential that a broad vision be taken when managing these resources.

- 2. Deliver these strategic objectives through partnerships of appropriate bodies including the NPA, farmers and farming groups, local authorities, WAG, Government bodies, community groups, charities, voluntary bodies and recreational users.** The natural systems of the National Park are incredibly complex. With different organisations and individuals responsible for the management of different areas, a co-ordinated approach must be taken to ensure that the biodiversity resource is effectively managed. It is also clearly not possible for any one organisation to deliver these benefits in isolation. Effective partnerships and communication must be developed to ensure different organisations can work together to deliver a shared vision. Sound data on the distribution of habitats and species along with a greater understanding of species requirements, natural systems and socio-economic processes is critical to informing the decisions made by these partnerships. Storing and disseminating the data collected by individuals and organisations is a key role performed by the network of Local Records Centres in Wales.
- 3. Integrate effective biodiversity conservation into economically viable agricultural and arboricultural systems.** The drive to produce food and timber has given us a highly modified landscape mosaic but one that provides the economic, social and cultural core of the National Park and the landscape patterns for which the Park is renowned. Semi-natural habitats, particularly grasslands and heather moorland, are mainly by-products of farming and cannot be sustained without this productivity or without livestock grazing. Retaining grazing is not only sustainable but produces better wildlife habitats on many of the upland sites than would be achieved by machines alone. Replacing traditional grazing schemes with vehicular or manual management is often prohibitively costly, impractical and less effective. The skills and knowledge base, built up over generations of land management experience is an irreplaceable resource that will only be sustained by future generations of farmers and foresters. Economic viability of farming systems is essential to the local economy, to local food provision and to successful management of such a large area of land.
- 4. Maintain the extent and quality of priority habitats and the range and/or population of priority species.** It is essential to recognise that the amount of natural or semi-natural habitat has been greatly reduced over the last century. The point is fast approaching whereby what biodiversity remains will no longer be sufficient to provide a sustainable future for both habitats and species. What remains today is only a fraction of what was here in the past. To ensure no further loss of biodiversity it will be essential to retain what currently exists. This includes priority habitats and species (i.e., habitats



and species of principal importance to Wales). Beyond simply maintaining the amount of habitat, this habitat must be managed sympathetically to maintain its quality so that natural processes ensure that the habitat functions as part of a wider ecosystem.

5. **Ensure that sustainable management of designated sites maintains habitats and species populations at a favourable conservation status.** As examples of the best habitats and species within the National Park, it is critical to ensure designated sites (e.g., SSSIs, SACs, NNRs) are brought into, or remain, at favourable conservation status. The designations provide the means to ensure that these sites are managed with special regard to biodiversity conservation. Owners of designated sites work closely with CCW to agree and deliver positive management. These sites still need to be managed in a wider context, particularly if the site is large, has a number of owners or associated interests or is dependent on the quality of surrounding, non-designated habitat such as a river. Designated sites can be considered focal sites for developing functional ecosystems at a landscape scale. Their sustainable management can be a catalyst to achieving better habitat condition in the surrounding land. The Environment Strategy for Wales lists targets for the proportion of designated sites to be brought into, or maintained at favourable conservation status.
6. **Ensure that the wider countryside also contains sufficient habitat in favourable condition to provide a high quality, interconnected landscape to conserve and enhance priority species.** Designated sites were selected to represent the most valuable sites for habitats or species populations. Additional areas exist across the landscape containing habitats and species populations that are also valuable to conservation efforts even though they have not been designated as such. Just as the designated sites form a network of the most important sites for biodiversity, the wider countryside within the farmed, forested and urban landscape must support this network. High quality, non-designated sites help to expand this network of biodiversity because they provide additional genetic diversity, safe sites, a wider home range, migration routes and buffers against disturbance and other drivers of change. Sites designated for highly mobile species are particularly dependent on the quality of surrounding land. Natural features such as river corridors and semi-natural habitats such as hedgerows and linear woodlands form vital connections between areas of high quality habitat and are essential for species to move around. Without considering biodiversity across the wider countryside, the biodiversity within the designated sites will decline or become prohibitively expensive to support, especially in a changing climate.

- 7. Meet and, if possible, exceed the local biodiversity targets for the restoration and expansion of habitats and the expansion of species' distribution patterns and population sizes.** The UK has drawn up targets for the restoration and expansion of habitats and these also form targets for the Local Biodiversity Action Plan. This is to ensure that enough habitat remains to contribute to functional ecosystems and provide for sustainable species populations. The extent of key habitats needs to be expanded to help reduce fragmentation and restore the previous ranges and populations of target species. Whilst it is an objective to retain existing habitat, this may not always be possible given changes resulting from natural processes or climate change. It may also be desirable to consider the reintroduction of species previously existent within the National Park, or to introduce new individuals to increase the resilience of a dwindling population, as was performed so successfully with the red kite. This would only occur after extensive consultation with stakeholders, Government and conservation bodies.
  
- 8. To seek innovative solutions to environmental challenges which integrate biodiversity conservation with education, interpretation, other resource management priorities, and social, economic and cultural sustainability.** There are very limited resources with which to conserve biodiversity. It is, therefore, essential to direct resources toward the causes rather than symptoms of biodiversity loss. For example, biodiversity loss may be the direct result of a lack of awareness or understanding of the issues involved in biodiversity conservation and measures required to sustain it. Investing in education and interpretation programmes aimed at preventing biodiversity loss can be highly beneficial and cost-effective in the long term. As our knowledge of natural processes increases, there are opportunities to develop new solutions. These solutions can often provide wider benefits beyond biodiversity gains, such as flood mitigation and retention of soil fertility, both of which have economic benefits. In essence, a collaborative, integrated approach to biodiversity conservation provides greater benefits to a wider audience more effectively and inexpensively.

#### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.12 Agriculture
- 7.1.13 Woodland Management
- 7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation
- 7.2.2 Education
- 7.2.3 Interpretation
- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities

### 7.1.3. Geodiversity

Geodiversity is the diversity of rocks, fossils, minerals and soils (see Minerals and Soil Resources), land-forms and geological processes that constitute the topography, landscape and the underlying structure of the Earth.

The bulk of the Park is made up of Old Red Sandstone (ORS) rocks, mostly of Devonian age, which extend across its whole width. They form the north and north-east facing escarpments of Y Mynydd Du, Fforest Fawr, Brecon Beacons and the Black Mountains, giving the Park its highest peaks, and also the low plateaux to the north and the high plateaux to the south of these steep slopes.

The older Ordovician and Silurian rocks of Mid Wales are found along the north-western boundary of the Park. These rocks have formed a landscape of southwest to northeast trending ridges and valleys. Overlying the Old Red Sandstone to the south, though usually at a lower altitude due to the dip of the strata, lie the Carboniferous rocks of the northern rim of the South Wales coalfield. Most prominent is a band of limestone, which in places forms a conspicuous escarpment. South of this are Millstone Grit slopes and plateaux, whilst Coal Measures crop out in places along the Park's southern boundary. Other important geomorphological features include escarpments, waterfalls and gorges, often closely related to underlying geological structures. Evidence of glaciation is widespread, including steep rock faces beneath the northern and eastern edges of the ORS plateaux, sheets of till, bare striated rock, erratic boulders and the moraines both of large valley glaciers such as those of the Usk and Tawe and smaller glaciers that developed in the lee of dip-slope plateaux. Post-glacial features include plateaux and dip-slopes blanketed with peat, river floodplains, landslides/rock slope failures and small alluvial fans.

The Park's limestone exhibits karst features of European significance, including limestone pavements, swarms of shakeholes and some of the longest cave systems in Britain. Some caves are of archaeological or historical significance, and some, along with other geological and geomorphological features, are protected as SSSIs, NNRs and SACs for their contributions to geodiversity and/or for their biological importance. Shakeholes are a common surface expression of cave development below ground, often spectacularly developed in areas where the limestone is overlain by Millstone Grit strata.

The geodiversity of the Brecon Beacons National Park has long been recognised – a situation more recently underlined with the designation of the western half of the Park as Fforest Fawr Geopark. A key element of this recognition is the interaction of man and nature over

the last 7000 years as evidenced in archaeological and industrial archaeological remains across the Park. The post-industrial landscapes of the southern margins of the Park in particular bear considerable witness to the exploitation of natural mineral resources during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries which ensured that South Wales would become a powerhouse of the Industrial Revolution and a major contributor to the industrial growth of Britain. This story is represented at the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site, part of which lies within the south-eastern boundary of the Park.

Certain rock formations have provided a building stone resource whilst others serve as important groundwater resources, or aquifers. Both require different forms of protection. Some abandoned quarries and restored sites are used for informal recreational activities such as climbing, and mountain biking, but equally they can suffer from unauthorised motor vehicle/motorcycle use and fly tipping. They can provide opportunities for geological research, education and interpretation. Codes of practice exist for these activities. However, fossil and mineral collecting can damage formations and cause the loss of scientific resources, especially when conducted for commercial gain. For example, similar activities have caused damage to limestone pavements, including their removal for garden decoration. Limestone pavements provide rare and important habitats in addition to being significant geological formations. As with other activities of this nature, they should not be conducted without the expressed permission of the landowner.

Audits of the geodiversity of the region have been undertaken and an assessment of the potential for regionally important geological and geomorphological sites (RIGS) designation is currently taking place across the Park and sub-region. This will inform the production of a Local Geodiversity Action Plan (LGAP) for the Park in the near future.

### **Strategic Objectives for Geodiversity**

1. **Conserve and enhance designated geological sites.** Whilst some of the Park's geodiversity is very robust, other parts are more vulnerable to erosion, recreation pressure, mineral working or other forms of use and development. Geodiversity is a significant contributor to the Park's biodiversity and is integral to the Park's landscape and agriculture, which themselves contribute to the quality of life of both residents and visitors.
2. **Identify and protect other significant sites of geological importance and/or nature conservation value, such as limestone pavements.** Nineteen geological/geomorphological SSSIs have been identified in the Park covering 15,808 hectares, but

identification of second tier sites is less complete, including RIGS). Some geological sites such as limestone features are valuable for both geodiversity and biodiversity and are probably the most vulnerable of the Park's geodiversity features. Limestone pavements and caves can be damaged by plunder, quarrying, pollution and recreation pressures. Shakeholes and sinkholes are often used for dumping.

3. **Improve the understanding and enjoyment of the Park's outstanding geodiversity.** The Park's geology and geomorphology create the landscape that so many people come to the Park to enjoy and for which it is nationally and internationally recognised. These geological resources and processes have also shaped, in part, agricultural resources, the Park's biodiversity, the local economy, the built environment, its history, and the regional culture. Without an improved understanding of our connection to these resources and processes, we are likely to lose sight of their importance and, in turn, damage or destroy much of that which we depend on.

#### **Cross-references**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.2 Biodiversity
- 7.1.12 Agriculture
- 7.1.13 Woodland Management
- 7.1.14 Upland Management
- 7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation
- 7.2.2 Education
- 7.2.3 Interpretation
- 7.3.3 Fforest Fawr Geopark

#### **7.1.4. Historic Environment**

The first purpose of National Park designation was expanded in the 1995 Environment Act to include for the first time the conservation and enhancement of the Park's cultural heritage. "Culture" includes everything that people make or do, and "heritage" comprises everything that was done or thought in the past and which remains today. Those aspects of cultural heritage that consist of the historic environment and built features are covered in this section and the next section (7.1.5 Built Environment). Section 7.1.6 Culture and Traditions comprises the intangible aspects of culture: language, literature, music, religion, customs, folklore, crafts, art, people and ways of life.

A vital component of the Park's landscape is its historic depth, manifested by historic landscapes, archaeological sites, parks and gardens and the built environment. The historic environment comprises the material remains of past ways of life. The present that we live in is the product of past events, and our understanding of that past is a key factor in understanding the present and managing for the future. The landscape as a whole is a product of past human activity. Patterns of field enclosure or land use, or transport systems like the Brecon-Monmouthshire Canal and its associated tramways, are historic features in their own right, and the individual features – such as megaliths or mottes – which have been the focus of attention in the past are now seen as part of a wider whole. Accepting that the landscape is dynamic and cannot be fossilised, sustainability requires that the necessities of modern life are considered in conjunction with the protection of important historic landscapes and features.

The Park's historic landscapes are many and varied. Some have been designated for their international significance such as the Blaenavon World Heritage Site, 40% of which lies within the National Park. Some, identified as being of outstanding interest in the Welsh context, with important prehistoric, medieval and industrial elements, are included in the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding or Special Historic Interest in Wales. These include: Tywi Valley, Black Mountain and Mynydd Myddfai, East Fforest Fawr and Mynydd-y-Glog, Clydach Gorge, Middle Usk Valley, Brecon and Llangorse, Blaenavon and Middle Wye Valley.

Historic parks and gardens of national importance have been included by Cadw and the International Council on Monuments and Sites(ICOMOS) on a separate register. Registered Parks and Gardens either partly or wholly within the Park are: Abergavenny Priory Deer Park, Abercynrig, Buckland House, Craig-y-Nos Castle and Country Park, Ffrwdgrech, Glangrwyney Court, Glanusk Park and Penmyarth, Gliffaes, Llanfihangel Court, Llangattock Park, Llwynywormwood, Penpont, Plas Llangattock, Treberfydd, Trefecca Fawr, Llanfihangel Court and Trewyn.

More sites may be added to both registers. Other historic sites range from the Mesolithic period up to redundant industrial remains only a few decades old. Of over 11,600 records for the Park in the Regional Historic Environment Records, 342 (March 2009) are protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs). SAMs are nationally important designated sites, but not all nationally important sites are scheduled. Cadw provides the main funding for conserving SAMs. Most of the NPA's conservation projects are on SAMs because of their importance and the availability of funding. The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales(RCAHMW) holds the National Monuments Record and

is the national surveying body. It funds upland survey work carried out by the NPA in partnership with the Welsh Archaeological Trusts. The latter also hold the detailed Historic Environmental Records, and exchange data with the NPA. They also provide specialist advice on the historic environment to the NPA in its role as planning authority. The NPA and its partners not only play an important role in preventing damage to features but they also seek to improve monument condition in a proactive manner through land management advice, development control and raising awareness through interpretation and education, as well as by practical conservation work. Educating and involving the public, both adults and school groups, is an important aspect of the NPA's work.

The importance of non-designated historic sites which range in form and significance and include many sites and buildings of national, regional and local significance also should not be overlooked. Partners should facilitate the creation of local lists of non-designated sites and buildings to emphasise the importance of these features of the historic environment. The management of the Park's historic environment should be integrated with other important factors, such as biodiversity and recreation activities. Modern development in and land management of the historic environment needs to be carefully designed so as not to detract from the sense of place. The continued preservation of the archaeology and historic landscapes of the Park depends on the recognition of these factors, and the adoption of sympathetic management by all those whose activities impinge upon it. CCW's increasing involvement in historic landscapes (as identified jointly with Cadw and ICOMOS), and the Archaeological Trusts' assessments of landscape areas will feed into this process.

The Heritage Protection Bill currently being discussed by WAG sets out heritage protection reforms which aim to provide an integrated approach towards the management of the historic environment. SAMs, LBs, registered parks and gardens and historic landscapes will be brought together into a single register of heritage assets. The Bill will also require Local Authorities to create, maintain and have access to Historic Environment Records that include all types of heritage asset.

### **Strategic Objectives for the Historic Environment**

- 1. Support and encourage, through partnership working, the development and promotion of a regional strategy for understanding, protecting, managing, monitoring, raising awareness and enjoyment of the Park's historic environment.** A holistic view of the Park's historic environment and the strategies for conserving and interpreting it is needed. This approach should be placed in the context of the Park's surroundings and wider Wales. To be most effective, the strategy must

not only focus on protecting the identified resources but also concentrate on enhancing them where possible and promoting their continued enjoyment and understanding. Continued survey, investigation and analysis are required to improve our understanding and ensure that what is significant is in the first place recognised and then appropriately managed for the benefit of residents and visitors to the Park. This strategy would encourage a coordinated approach to management of the historic environment among the variety of partners involved whilst facilitating long term monitoring and data exchange.

2. **Protect and manage historic landscapes.** Within the Park there needs to be a unified framework for the management of historic landscapes as a subset of the historic environment, supported by the work of CCW and the Archaeological Trusts. This framework should lead to the formulation and implementation of management plans targeting the Park's historic landscapes.
3. **Protect and manage historic parks and gardens.** Historic parks and gardens are now being given due recognition and should continue to receive increased attention into the future. Effective management and protection therefore require forward thinking. Thus, historic parks and gardens should have management plans which are being implemented. The historic garden at Craig-y-nos Castle is partly in the NPA's ownership.
4. **Protect and enhance scheduled and designated sites.** "Scheduling" is the process through which nationally important man-made sites and monuments are given legal protection by Cadw. The number of scheduled monuments reflects those that exist or are known. It does not indicate the state of the Park's cultural heritage. There are many other features in the Park which have not been granted the protection of scheduling. The production of management plans of those monuments owned by the Park and by other will ensure they are protected and enhanced for future generations. As with the other strategic objectives in this section, provision of information and raising awareness for both residents and visitors is essential to proper management.
5. **Seek to protect and enhance, where appropriate, regionally and locally important historic environment features (including historic buildings and archaeological sites) that do not have statutory designation.** The number of scheduled monuments reflects those known sites which have been assessed and recognized as being of national importance and for which scheduling is considered to be



an appropriate protection. In addition to designated sites there is a need to address the protection of currently undesignated sites.

6. **Seek to manage all sites appropriately, concentrating on threatened and neglected sites/types whilst involving local communities.** Given the large number of sites, the management of individual historical and traditional features must be prioritised, including those previously neglected such as the industrial heritage and redundant churches. Owners/occupiers can assist in meeting the demands of site management. Local residents are often the first to notice when sites are in need of active management, and may be aware of other sites that have not previously been included on any records or registers. Local communities, therefore, can be encouraged to participate in schemes to improve the management of SAMs and to prevent the loss or deterioration of features. Local heritage audits can be used to encourage a sense of place and ownership within the local community. Further support can then be provided for small projects that result.
7. **Increase awareness and appreciation of the Parks historic environment through a coordinated programme of public information and community outreach.** Improved understanding of the Parks historic environment is required at all levels within and outside the National Park. This could be achieved as part of an integrated programme of environmental awareness. The needs of tourism and public access, both physical access and access to information, could be met in this way. The important economic benefits of a cherished historic environment need to be highlighted as well potential adverse impact on the historic environment. Panels, leaflets, web sites and other publicly available information should be integrated with a programme that includes events and active interpretation such as guided walks, self guided trails, workshops, presentations and local research projects. Programmes should target both residents and visitors. Presentation of information through new technologies should be considered (e.g., mobile telephones and downloadable digital data).

#### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.2 Biodiversity
- 7.1.5 Built Environment
- 7.1.6 Culture and Traditions
- 7.1.12 Farming
- 7.1.14 Uplands Management

7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation

7.2.2 Education

7.2.3 Interpretation

7.3.4 Planning and Development

#### **7.1.5. Built Environment**

The Park has a wide range of vernacular architecture: Norman castles and mediaeval farmhouses, concentrations of 17th and 18th century buildings within the main settlements and a scatter of very fine rural buildings which often retain original features such as stone tiles, screens and mullioned windows. There are a number of fine country houses on the better farmland in the Usk and Wye valleys, some set within parks and gardens of historical importance. The Park's ecclesiastical architecture is very rich, with Brecon Cathedral, many important mediaeval churches and some early Nonconformist chapels. Changes in building materials (mainly red sandstone and limestone) and differing styles give local distinctiveness to the Park's many farmsteads and cottages, whose original features may be masked by later adaptations.

The pattern of settlements and their character also vary across the Park, from valley to valley. In general, nucleated villages predominate in the east whilst a more dispersed pattern of isolated farms characterises the west. Industrialisation, particularly in the south of the Park, gave rise to 19th century workers' cottages, the canal, a range of mills and other features perhaps better considered as industrial archaeology.

Buildings are protected by being listed by Cadw, by being within one of the Park's four Conservation Areas, or through ownership by bodies such as the National Trust. There are 1945 listed buildings including 29 Grade I and 86 Grade II\* (May 2009). Cadw provides grant aid to safeguard outstanding buildings or for significant works in Conservation Areas but funding is not adequate to assist many listed or unlisted buildings. The NPA offers advice and some grant aid, supporting the use of traditional styles, techniques and materials such as lime mortar, oak window frames and authentic paint colours.

The character of the Park's built environment, in common with the rest of Wales, is threatened by the neglect of listed buildings, small, incremental changes to buildings, the declining use of stone tiles and other traditional local materials, new developments in settlements and the countryside and the loss of traditional uses for buildings such as stone barns. Low farm incomes mean that cash may not be available for repairs. Policies on

sympathetic use changes, barn conversions for example, are set out in the Local Development Plan (forthcoming).

### **Adfer Ban a Chwm – Revitalise Hill and Valley**

Adfer Ban a Chwm – Revitalise Hill and Valley (ABC) is a charitable organisation whose mission is to develop a “creative solution to the dual issues of the need for affordable housing in rural Wales and the vast number of derelict vernacular buildings in the area.”

ABC was set up in June 2008 by Joanie Speers and Roger Mears, who over 30 years have rebuilt a mill and its ancillary buildings in Carmarthenshire. During this time they have seen local stone farm houses and buildings fall into disrepair and slowly disappear from the landscape. At the same time they have seen local people experience great difficulty buying homes in the area due to the high market value and competition from outside the community.

ABC’s vision links together community, regeneration, heritage, history, culture, environment, employment and the revival of local building skills. The aim is to purchase at low cost derelict redundant farm houses and associated buildings, rebuild them to high conservation and sustainable standards and sell them as affordable homes (in perpetuity) to local families. ABC is about to undertake a feasibility study with the help of Gwalia, the south Wales housing association, into a pilot building in the National Park to establish whether this really can be done. The ultimate goal is to see this happening throughout the Brecon Beacons National Park, and beyond.

Once these buildings disappear totally, they are gone forever, and take with them their embedded energy and intrinsic value to the community.

It is part of the NPA’s vision that the Park’s irreplaceable historic settlement patterns and buildings are conserved. They represent a diminishing resource visually and culturally, and by their attraction for people, they contribute to the Park’s economy. Sustainability implies that the heritage of the past is balanced with the needs of present and future generations. In principle, this should involve communities in the design and development of their settlements and surroundings. Where these efforts do not contribute to the degradation of the Park’s special qualities, they should explore of sustainable methods of re-using or recycling building materials rather than acquiring or quarrying new building materials, and where appropriate investigate the sustainable quarrying of new building materials for conservation projects. The NPA’s Sustainable Design Guide will assist these efforts, but a major injection of resources into buildings and settlement conservation and design is also needed.

### **Strategic Objectives for the Built Environment**

1. **All buildings of listable quality should be listed.** All buildings of listable quality should be listed to help protect buildings of architectural or historic interest. The completion of the Wales survey in 2005 should have seen the listing of all buildings of

architectural interest. This seemingly simple task presents a conundrum. Whilst resurveys have increased the number of listed buildings in the Park by over 400%, there is a lack of a corresponding increase in funding to conserve and enhance them.

2. **All listed buildings and their settings should be conserved and their condition improved, concentrating on buildings at risk.** The NPA as a planning authority has a duty to conserve listed buildings. To achieve this aim, available funding will be targeted at buildings most at risk. Listed Building condition surveys will be used to enable targeting where it is most needed, giving priority to buildings at risk. Partnership schemes will be sought for major projects through national grant schemes such as the Heritage Lottery Fund. The NPA will also continue to work with CADW to increase the scope of town schemes within conservation areas. As with the other strategic objectives in this section, information gathered from monitoring the condition of the Park's built heritage will be necessary to manage it for future generations to enjoy and will be used for future State of the Park reports.
3. **Protect unlisted buildings that contribute to the Park's built heritage.** Protecting the Park's heritage includes the conservation and enhancement of vernacular buildings of archaeological and historical significance. Many unlisted buildings also contribute to the character of the Park's built environment and the character of historic landscapes. The importance that these vernacular buildings play in the character of the historic landscape should also be recognised. The Local Development Plan will include policies designed to conserve this character, but additional innovative methods need to be sought to aid this conservation effort, for example, a comprehensive suite of guidance/advice literature addressing windows, mortar use, roofing, etc. Guidance will be in keeping with the local vernacular. Recording of buildings is achieved through the planning process. Where alterations are to take place to buildings, they also need to be recorded by RCAHMW or expert contractors if the Park's built heritage is not to be lost. Each building has its own story to tell – information which can easily be lost through insensitive alterations. The Draft Heritage Protection Bill makes reference to the development of lists of assets of special local interest.
4. **Conserve and enhance settlements and settlement patterns.** Settlement patterns need to be considered and reflected in new development so that greenfield development does not destroy village forms. Options are currently being investigated in the formulation of the Local Development Plan. Within existing Conservation Areas, further improvements are required, perhaps related to village design statements, in

partnership with local groups. Future designations are likely to be of small areas within settlements, so that scarce resources can be concentrated where they will have the best effect. Local communities and groups have a role in conserving and enhancing the quality of settlements, through village enhancement schemes and village design statements, and by actively engaging in the LDP process. Inherent in this approach is the requirement of a sustainable settlement strategy that satisfies the economic, environmental and social aspects of sustainability.

5. **Promote built heritage education and awareness.** As with archaeology and historic landscapes, built heritage requires development and implementation of a programme of public awareness and community outreach to support sustainable management of this resource. The NPA and its partners can, for example, promote the use of traditional building materials and methods through education, outreach, training and financial assistance.

#### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.6 Culture and Traditions
- 7.1.11 Energy
- 7.2.2 Education
- 7.2.3 Interpretation
- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.4 Planning and Development

#### **7.1.6. Culture and Traditions**

There are close links between culture and the physical landscape. Landscape character is strongly influenced by the patterns and traditions of past and present agriculture and other land uses including commoning and grazing practices and by social and industrial history. Commoning and grazing are significant traditions on a UK and international scale. Graziers in and around the National Park produce some of the finest sheep and cattle in the country. Family farming practices and traditions, such as hefting, stone walling, hedge laying, are handed down generation to generation. The Park is also the centre for breeding of Semi-feral, Section A Welsh Mountain Ponies. Similarly, the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site captures the story of life in the South Wales Valleys during the Industrial Revolution.

Local distinctiveness is also affected by the associations it carries, through place names or with literature, politics or more personal connections. Together these qualities create the Park's "bro" (sense of place) and "cynefin" (a person's habitat) which are expressed uniquely through the medium of Welsh.

Sustainability implies that the importance of the heritage of the past should be acknowledged and handed down, integrating this with the needs and well-being of present and future generations. A lively culture and living traditions contribute to a healthy community. The Park's distinctive blend of cultures and traditions also are attractive to visitors and, in turn, contribute to a healthy local economy. It is part of the NPA's vision that the Park's strong Welsh heritage and rich cultural life should thrive and grow.

### **Strategic Objectives for Culture and Traditions**

#### **1. Support the Park's cultural life and traditions through partnership working.**

Although the NPA is charged with conserving cultural heritage, this part of its statutory purposes is likely to be fulfilled mainly by other organisations and individuals. The National Park's communities have living cultures that thrive without NPA support. The Park's stakeholders need to develop effective and innovative ways in which they work together to conserve and enhance culture and traditions in the Park. Existing examples of effective partnerships include ongoing support of community events and festivals. The NPA assist local organisations to obtain funding for cultural projects, in its commitment to the Welsh language, by supporting sustainable community initiatives and by way of the Sustainable Development Fund. The NPA have also encouraged and supported training and conservation of local skills and traditions such as traditional livestock farming practices and dry stone walling, for example. In fact, most of projects and policies in the National Park relate to the conservation of culture and tradition in some way, as is evident throughout this Plan. The NPA could improve its promotion of cultural associations of its properties and organise traditional skills courses and competitions.

#### **2. Support functioning statutory Commons Councils across all commons in the National Park.**

Commons Councils are intended, under the Commons Act (Wales) 2006, to provide an improved mechanism for the common rights holders to manage their own affairs and implement cooperative management decisions. Reducing the inherent difficulty of the cooperative management decisions should assist commoners in using their resource to economic benefit and in a sustainable way.

3. **Record and monitor the Park's cultural heritage.** The NPA aims to develop partnerships and identify the various aspects of culture and traditions in the Park that help to make each part of the Park distinctive and defines its sense of place. These efforts will create a baseline for future monitoring and suggest suitable indicators. This work will identify the potential for management actions related to culture and traditions, and ensure that what might be lost is recorded in the most appropriate way.
4. **Promote the use of the Welsh language.** The NPA and its partners play a key role in promoting the Park's and Wales' cultural heritage by developing the use of Welsh in their own work and by supporting local events and activities. The NPA's Welsh Language Scheme, for example, which is approved by the Welsh Language Board, will continue to be implemented, increasing the knowledge of Welsh among Park staff and its use in publications and other written material.
5. **Promote cultural heritage as an attraction for people.** Much of the NPA's work in support of the social and economic vitality of the Park involves making the most of the area's culture and heritage, its sense of place. To this end, the NPA and its partners should take full economic advantage of the Park's culture and traditions to promote cultural heritage as an attraction and to support the lives and livelihoods of the people who live and work here, creating a richer experience for all.
6. **Develop understanding and awareness of cultural life and traditions.** Part of the challenge to promoting culture and traditions in the Park is developing an understanding of the value of the intangible aspects of cultural heritage, many of which can only be fully appreciated through the medium of Welsh. Social history and local culture are ever-changing facets of this heritage. The NPA needs to emphasise the value of cultural heritage in everyday life. The aim is to enable local communities to identify, record and share local history and culture via "toolkits," community events and activities.

### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.4 Archaeology and Historic Landscapes
- 7.1.5 Built Environment
- 7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation
- 7.2.2 Education
- 7.2.3 Interpretation

### **7.1.7. Air Resources**

“Fresh air” is one of the key qualities that bring people to the Brecon Beacons. High standards of air quality not only lead to increased life expectancy and quality of life, but they also contribute to improved habitat quality and enhance biodiversity.

Air quality in the Brecon Beacons is good, particularly compared to more heavily populated areas of South Wales. The outstanding air quality issue is acid rain, especially nitrate deposition, originating from outside the Park. This affects vegetation growth and water quality. EAW have also indicated that particulate matter and ozone may be of concern as well. Particulate matter and ozone have no exposure threshold levels below which adverse human health effects do not occur. Transport and delivery, power generation and other heavy industries are the major contributors to poor air quality in the Park. The increasing focus on biofuels production also poses a threat to local air quality through increased concentrations of pollen from oilseed rape, a potential allergen.

#### **Strategic Objectives for Air Resources**

1. **Maintain and, where possible, improve the Park’s air quality.** The UAs carry out Updating and Screening Assessments (USA’s) to determine if there are “hot spot” locations where there is potential for air quality objectives to be exceeded. The UAs’ work shows that air quality is up to standard in the Park. However, increases in development, product delivery and traffic within the Park, or industry and power generation outside the Park, could increase air pollution above current standards. Policies will aim to reduce the negative effects of key pollution sources on the Park’s air quality. For example, the NPA and its partners can encourage cleaner alternatives to conventional modes of transport, power generation and heavy industry. Policies can also be designed to reduce the need for travel to and within the National Park through appropriate siting of new developments and provision of public transport infrastructure.

#### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.8 Water Resources
- 7.3.4 Planning and Development
- 7.3.5 Transport



### 7.1.8. Water Resources

Along with the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal (Annex 1, Map 5), more than 25 rivers and streams (Annex 1, Map 3) originate in or pass through the Brecon Beacons National Park, providing the source for many significant river systems in south Wales. These include the Usk, Wye, Tawe, Twrch, Nedd, Hepste, Cynon, Taf, Rhymney and Ebbw. Additionally, more than 18 lakes and reservoirs (Annex 1, Map 4), and countless wetlands and smaller water bodies are scattered throughout the Park.

The Park's rivers and streams have been influential in shaping the landscape, carving out gorges, valleys and floodplains which present contrast for the uplands. Water courses also continue to form and alter sinkholes, lakes, caves, waterfalls and subterranean features which provide habitat for a variety of unique species.

The Park's waters are home to the likes of otters, salmon, trout, aquatic insects and native crayfish, and previously water voles. They sustain countless other species, plant communities and habitats, including agricultural ecosystems. Several of these water bodies have been recognized for their scientific and ecological value, including the Rivers Usk and Wye and Llangorse Lake (Annex 1, Map 7). Many of the Park's designated wildlife areas such as National Nature Reserves (NNR's), Bat Conservation Sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are wetland sites. They include wet woodlands, bogs and heath, fens, wet pasture, swamps and open water. Invasive species (such as Himalayan balsam, giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed) pose a threat to the integrity of the Park's diverse wildlife.

The Park's streams and rivers have served as principal travel and settlement routes for humans throughout history. Ancient human settlements relied heavily on wetlands for navigation as well as for food (fish, hunting), plant materials and grazing. Additionally, the Park's wetlands have preserved archaeological artefacts and evidence of historic settlements and human activities. Wetlands have also preserved evidence of previous landscape change, including how surrounding ecosystems and their biodiversity have changed. Unfortunately, wetlands have been progressively drained and in places effectively removed from the landscape to meet the growing demands for land use and development.

Along with numerous groundwater private water supplies, surface waters provide a vital resource to communities within and outside the Park Whilst supporting its natural environment. Reservoirs in the BBNP supply drinking water to south Wales. The majority of licensed abstractions are for public water supply, but water also serves industry, agriculture and domestic use. These water bodies also attract a growing number of avid

outdoor enthusiasts interested in angling, boating, canoeing, nature study, relaxation and other activities.

Despite plentiful rainfall in the region, predicted shifts in precipitation associated with climate change are likely to put more strain on water resources, particularly during summer months. Water abstraction rates for public water supplies and domestic use are likely to increase under these scenarios, and potential increases in visitor numbers will add to this demand. Any increase in water abstraction across the Park could have an effect on waterlogged archaeological deposits. Similarly, careful consideration will need to be given to abstraction from the River Usk to feed the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal to achieve a sustainable balance. The canal and the river are both important assets to the NP.

Water quality is general very good throughout the Park with only Grwyne Fawr and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal rated fair. The proliferation of small private sewage treatment works and poorly maintained existing cess pits and septic tanks can be a major influence of the water quality of the parks, though. Inappropriate agricultural conservation practices and the disposal of sheep dip throughout the Park are the primary concerns for water quality. A commercial product is now available, however, that has been shown to reduce the toxicity of spent sheep dip (diazinon) by as much as 99% in three hours.<sup>17</sup> Its use requires further study, but it provides a potential solution to a practical water quality issue. The condition of the Park's rivers and wetlands has been compromised further by acid deposition over the last 100 years since the Industrial Revolution,<sup>18</sup> and by nitrification which enriches surface soils, having a fertilisation effect. Other activities that have the potential to contribute significantly to the degradation of the Park's water quality include large-scale construction and development projects that are poorly monitored. Improved monitoring will reduce their potential negative effects.

The loss of wetlands has increased the flood risk to settlements and agriculture both within and downstream from the Park, eliminating natural flood storage areas, reducing the rate of water infiltration into the soil and thereby increasing the volumes of rapid surface run off that give rise to floods. It has also reduced or reversed natural means of maintaining and improving water quality. Engineered solutions are costly and labour intensive to carry out, and they deflect the problems downstream.

---

<sup>17</sup>Porter, L. and Clarke, C. 2007. Dipping -- The Turning Point. *Sheep Farmer*, July-August. Pgs. 24-25.

<sup>18</sup> Batterbee, R.W., C.J. Curtis, and H.A. Binney. 2004. The Future of Britain's Upland Waters. Proceedings of Meeting, 21 April 2004, Environmental Change Research Centre, University College, London.

A more sustainable and cost-effective solution is to implement catchment-scale surface water management by restoring functioning peatlands and wetlands in the uplands and the lowland floodplains. Both the quality and quantity of water resources are dependent on the sustainable management of upland soils and vegetation. This approach can alleviate flooding, improve water quality and quantity, improve soil condition and promote biodiversity. One method of achieving these outcomes is through re-introduction of the European beaver. There is a growing interest in the re-introduction of European beaver to Britain. Once introduced, the costs of maintaining and managing European beaver populations is much less than the ongoing maintenance costs of engineered solutions. Published evidence also identifies the benefits beaver can bring to wetland habitats, biodiversity, fisheries, water quality and the local economy. Species such as otter have been proven to benefit from the presence of European beaver, for example. Any form of wetland creation or restoration will, of course, have to be done sensitively, in order to have a positive effect on the Park's special qualities.

Protection and sustainable use of the Park's water resources will require implementation of the EC Water Framework Directive (WFD) under the Water Framework Regulations in Wales. The WFD requires the integration of water resource management issues with other social, economic and environmental concerns across entire watersheds or catchments. The principles of objectives for the WFD are:

- Preventing deterioration in and improving water status;
- Developing water and waste water capacities;
- Mitigating the effects of floods and droughts; and
- Ensuring sustainable water use.

Issues, outcomes and objectives will be linked via River Basin Management Plans for each major hydrological unit. The Brecon Beacons National Park falls within the Severn River Basin District and the West Wales River Basin District. Environment Agency Wales are in the process of formulating these plans. Utilising the WFD integrated approach and principles could:

- Help to restore the condition and function of existing wetlands;
- Identify where there are good economic and environmental reasons for reinstating former wetlands;
- Provide mutually beneficial outcomes from water management, such as water conservation for year-round evenness of supply, water quality improvements, reduced flood volumes and agricultural improvements; and

- Where it is economically competitive, achieve mutually beneficial outcomes from woodland expansion within floodplains and on valley sides.

Catchment sensitive farming, for example, employs this approach to ensure the continued supply of drinking water for local and nearby communities in a sustainable manner whilst delivering other public benefits. Planning policies will incorporate this approach as well by way of the Local Development Plan, maximising sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) for all new development, locating new developments outside areas of flood risk and ensuring sustainable waste water treatment, for example. Open storage SUDS should be promoted over underground storage, as open systems have other benefits such as increasing and enhancing habitats. Additionally, new wetlands can be integrated into the “green infrastructure” of new developments. The National Park Management Plan reflects this shift towards a holistic approach to managing Park waters and associated resources and will continue to do so in the future.

### **Strategic Objectives for Water Resources**

#### **1. Maintain or improve the quality of the Park’s groundwater, rivers and lakes.**

The biological and chemical quality of water in the Park is generally high. The quality of some of the Park’s waters and ecosystems are threatened by lack of sewerage capacity, industrial point sources and diffuse pollution, from both urban and agricultural sources. Lack of sewerage capacity, for example, leads to a proliferation of non-mains drainage such as septic tanks, private treatment plants and cesspits. These systems add appreciably to the number of potential sources of pollution that need to be monitored to ensure that, if they fail, they will not contribute to the pollution to soil and water. Application of sheep dip poses a problem for water quality in most catchments within the Park, though solutions are becoming available as noted in the text. Management strategies will need to reduce and eliminate pollution episodes where possible and encourage farmers to use catchment-sensitive agricultural practices. EAW recommends monitoring point source pollution and diffuse pollution source(s) for specified catchments within the National Park to ensure that guidelines are met. Compatibility with the Water Framework Directive will complement these efforts.

#### **2. Ensure that water resources are used sustainably across all sectors in the National Park.** Although quantities of water are sufficient to meet current demand, climate change will alter the distribution and abundance of water through time and space. This will result in excess at certain times of the year and severe limitations at other times. Immigration to the area will also strain existing resources. If continuing

immigration and development were to continue uncontrolled, they would strain existing water resources, sewerage capacity and related infrastructure. Water will need to be used more efficiently to meet the needs of society without causing damage to the environment. Efforts should be made to restore and maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge rates within the Park's carrying capacity (including future capacity). Both the BBNPA's "Sustainable Design Guide" and "Best Practice in Biodiversity and Geological Conservation in Planning and Development" provide guidance on incorporating wetland and water management features into the built environment. Sustainable development initiatives also aim to reduce flood risk through the siting of development outside the flood plain and encourage sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) through building design and urban design. All partners involved need to work towards sustainable water resource use within the context of their respective remits.

3. **Encourage a co-ordinated approach to national and regional policy so that they are consistent and complimentary.** The Environment Strategy for Wales, Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan, Spatial Development Plan, RDP Wales, Energy Route Map and agri-environment schemes have been formulated without consistency among strategic objectives and clear linkages between each document. Management of rivers and wetlands is affected by and can contribute positively to all of these strategic interests. There is an opportunity to deliver the aims of these strategies efficiently through the River Basin Management Plans in accordance with the Water Framework Directive, optimising the achievements of all plans.
4. **Achieve sustainable conservation management of all existing wetlands, rivers and streams within the National Park.** Managing natural resources is quickly increasing in importance in response to climate change. Addressing these risks will bring other benefits, including reduced flooding, minimised soil erosion and stabilised carbon sinks among many others. Given the importance of rivers and wetlands to the National Park's landscape, as well as the high number of statutory designations on them, this must be stated explicitly and can be achieved in conjunction with fulfilling the other strategic objectives.
5. **Optimise the Park's capacity for water storage, small scale hydroelectric power and irrigation of locally grown food.** The National Park's capacity to store water and produce other public benefits can be optimised through restoration of the land's natural capacity to retain rainfall and surface flows, without the need for new reservoirs. The initial premise is that all initiatives should ensure that they conserve and

enhance the Park's natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, and that they view the Park's landscape in terms of its energy potential. The Park receives lots of rain and has large, flat areas of deep, water holding soil to act as a water reservoir. Many of the local streams, although not large, possess qualities that make them ideal for generating electricity through small scale hydroelectric generators. This includes the presence of scattered or small, compact settlements at the base of the streams to provide numerous, small consumption points. These settlements can also generate income from the power generated, to be re-invested in other community and environmental benefits. Projects underway in the Park such as the Green Valleys Initiative can make significant contributions to solving the energy and environmental needs of the Park's communities (see textbox, Section 7.1.11 Energy).

- 6. Implement objectives within the River Basin Management Plans under the Water Framework Directive to achieve good ecological status for resilient aquatic ecosystems within the Park.** Using the approach highlighted in Strategic Objective 3 above, the WFD can provide a cohesive framework to improve and maintain the ecological status of the Park's aquatic ecosystems. Farmers and other land managers and owners will need advice and support to live up to the objectives in these plans. Agricultural policy and financial incentives will also need to be targeted to achieve the objectives set forth in the WFD.
- 7. Halt the continued acidification of upland soils and waters within the Park.** Acidification of upland soils and waters will increase as the atmosphere warms up, which is largely outside the control of the stakeholders within the National Park. Therefore a national effort involving national policy and industrial practice on land and sea is required to fulfil this aim.

#### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.2 Biodiversity
- 7.1.4 Historic Environment
- 7.1.5 Built Environment
- 7.1.8 Water Resources
- 7.1.9 Soil Resources
- 7.1.12 Agriculture
- 7.1.13 Woodlands Management
- 7.1.14 Uplands Management
- 7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation

7.3.1 Sustainable Communities

7.3.4 Planning and Development

### **Usk and Wye Catchment Initiatives**

Under the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) the UK must protect, enhance and maintain all surface, coastal and groundwater bodies in order to achieve good chemical and ecological status by 2015. In Wales, 39% of rivers, 61% of lakes, 58% of coastal waters and 9% of groundwaters are currently estimated to be at risk of failing WFD targets. Meeting the requirements of the WFD will require action on both point source and diffuse pollution.

The Environment Agency Wales Catchment Initiatives operate in 6 priority river catchments where diffuse pollution from land management is a key issue. Identification was based on levels of impact from diffuse pollution and nationally and internationally important designated sites including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Natura 2000 designations. The Initiatives are co-ordinated through a network of Catchment Co-ordinators who engage with stakeholders and provide and co-ordinate advice to land managers allowing them to improve environmental performance across the catchment. It encompasses best farming practice, habitat creation, flood risk management and fisheries interest. Two of the Catchment Initiatives are located in the Brecon Beacons National Park.

The focus of the Rivers Usk and Wye Catchment Initiatives are to prioritise areas where there are specific problems with water quality and to identify areas at risk from diffuse pollution.

Diffuse water pollution is defined as pollution arising from land-use activities (rural and urban) that are dispersed across a catchment and do not give rise to a process effluent, municipal sewage effluent or farm effluent discharge. The extent and significance of diffuse pollution are determined by the way, in which land is used and managed, together with a range of environmental factors such as climate (especially rainfall), geography and geology, which influence the characteristics of run-off and the sensitivity of the receiving waters.

Agriculture is the major cause of diffuse water pollution as Wales is predominantly rural, with the majority of land area used for agriculture (79%) and forestry (13%). By reducing agricultural sources of diffuse pollution within river catchments, we can ensure that emissions to water are consistent with the ecological requirement so that the objectives of the Water Framework Directive can be met.

There is a need to raise awareness of the issues and a requirement to effectively influence the wider environmental consciousness of land managers to bring about change in practices that are likely to improve water quality. Integrating diffuse pollution mitigation with habitat creation, flood risk management and fisheries issues could achieve multiple outcomes – a single solution can often satisfy more than one objective and all approaches benefit from collective catchment-based action.

Catchment Co-ordinators working under the Welsh Catchment Initiative have a proactive non-enforcement approach to tackling agricultural diffuse pollution by engaging the farming community. This engagement will be delivered by means of 1:1 farm visits, farm workshops and demonstrations of good practice.

### 7.1.9. Soil Resources

Together with air and water, soil serves as one of the Earth's fundamental life support systems. Soils and their biota maintain critical functions on a global scale, such as hydrological, carbon, phosphorus and nitrogen cycling. For example, soils act as a carbon sink and are thus an important factor in controlling climate change. Soils are essential to agriculture, forestry, energy production and the textile and fibre industries, providing nutrients and making water available for plants and animals alike. Soil type, structure and function – in conjunction with climatic factors – determine the location and quality of wildlife and their habitats. In fact, soils provide habitat for millions of organisms that dwell beneath their surface. Soils also serve as a medium in which many of our cultural artefacts have been preserved. They hold the record of our past and, quite literally, serve as the foundation for our built environment.

Because of these relationships, degradation or contamination of soils can have cascading and sometimes irreparable effects on biodiversity, economics, culture and even global processes. It can take hundreds to thousands of years to form one centimetre of soil depth, making soils a non-renewable resource on a human time scale. Yet very little is known about soils despite our utter dependence upon them.

A firm understanding of soils is critical to management, especially in a park dominated by uplands and containing significant organic soil resources. Unfortunately, there is a lack of data for soils in the BBNP. We do know that there are no nitrate vulnerable zones and no contaminated sites in the Park. Soil erosion and impoverishment, particularly the loss of organic soils, are the most significant concern for healthy soils. Peat soils which play a significant role in carbon storage have eroded, succumbing to a combination of historic industrial pollution, recreation pressures, inappropriate grazing and the elements. To a lesser degree, agricultural practices are having detrimental effects on the Park's cultural and historical record. This Plan provides for the conservation and enhancement of soils within and around the National Park.

#### Strategic Objectives for Soils Resources

1. **Protect the Park's soils from degradation and erosion.** Soil erosion is of serious concern in the Park. Loss of soil quality, quantity or function will impair the soil's ability to support plants and animals, store carbon and provide other important ecosystem services. Vegetation cover and peat are easily removed from thin mountain soils and popular paths. Erosion can be exacerbated by weather, grazing pressures and some



farm and forestry practices. Soils can also be damaged by the removal of turf, which includes the top layer of the soil, a subject of concern for local development as well as the recent gas pipeline project through the Park. Peat is being damaged by acidification and unmanaged burning; much of the Park's blanket peat is degraded. Soil and peat damage can be reduced by minimising the sources of degradation and erosion where possible and by improved vegetation cover. Careful management of particularly vulnerable areas and long-term monitoring of restored sites are important steps toward successful protection of the Park's soil resources. Much of this can be achieved through implementation of the BBNP Upland Erosion Strategy.

2. **Improve collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders managing soil and peat resources.** The NPA will work with commoners and other key stakeholders in the National Park to coordinate managed burns, improve grazing practices, restore degraded areas and adopt other management approaches that conserve and enhance soil and peat resources. Because soil and peat resources extend beyond Park boundaries, management initiatives will benefit greatly from cooperation with partners outside the Park, including partners in England. Efforts will include collation of data and other information pertaining to Park soils. A key component of this effort will be the provision of educational programmes and materials explaining the importance and details of best management practices.

### **Cross-reference**

7.1.14 Upland Management

7.3.4 Planning and Development

### **7.1.10. Minerals**

For many years, minerals have supplied fuel in the form of coal and construction materials for walls, buildings, roads and other forms of development in and around the Park. Minerals are also the parent material for soils, providing nutrients and habitats utilised by a variety of plants and other wildlife. Through the ages, agriculturalists have taken advantage of the Park's mineral resources directly for crop production, in the form of burnt lime used to neutralise soil pH, and indirectly for the purposes of animal husbandry. Mineral extraction has been and, in isolated cases, continues to be a viable economic activity in the National Park. Consequently, the Park's minerals and soils are critically linked to its biodiversity and economics as well as its history and cultural heritage.

Mineral working inevitably interferes with our ability to conserve and enhance the Park's natural and cultural resources and to provide for the enjoyment of these by the public. Mineral extraction consumes limited resources. It not only damages the Park's biodiversity and geodiversity but also mars the Park's natural beauty. Quarrying can impact on archaeological sites. In some instances, however, it may reveal features of interest which might be threatened by quarry infilling or create new and unique forms of wildlife habitat. Additionally, abandoned quarries and restored sites often succumb to unauthorised use by mechanised recreational activities which may cause damage to the environment, result in personal injury and infringe on the quiet enjoyment had by others.

Yet the surviving evidence of the historic extraction of mineral within the Park is now a significant element of the Park's historic environment. The character of its built heritage is dependent upon the character of the building stone, mostly obtained from small scale local quarries. The need for small quantities of locally sourced building stone, from appropriately located quarries, will continue into the future to enable conservation work and where appropriate new build to take place whilst ensuring that the character of the historic buildings, and the influence that they have on the broader historic landscape character is retained

The Welsh Assembly Government aims to *"prevent unacceptable aggregates extraction from areas of acknowledged landscape, cultural, nature and geological conservation and hydrological importance."*<sup>19</sup> This encompasses national parks, SSSIs, SACs and historic sites, all of which are considered in the context of this Plan. In relation to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the WAG's aim is that "minerals development should not take place in these areas save in exceptional circumstances. All mineral applications must therefore be subject to the most rigorous examination and all major mineral developments demonstrated to be in the public interest before being allowed to proceed."<sup>20</sup> The Quarry Products Association also has made a commitment to reduce the impacts of its operations in national parks, and this commitment is welcomed.

### **Strategic Objectives for Minerals**

- 1. Reduce the damage done to the Park by mineral working whilst fulfilling the NPA's obligation as a Mineral Planning Authority.** Minerals can only be worked where they are found, and the principles of sustainability require that the needs for minerals are met from as close to the demand as possible, to reduce the Park's carbon

---

<sup>19</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. 2004. Minerals Technical Advice Note (Wales) 1: Aggregates.

<sup>20</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. 2001. Minerals Planning Policy Wales, para. 21.

footprint via minimising transport of minerals. This would suggest that minerals required for development taking place in the BBNP should be quarried within it. However, WAG policy supports the NPA's view that national parks should not be required to contribute proportionally to the regional landbank of aggregates.<sup>21</sup> The Regional Technical Statement endorses this view, and further recommends exploring the possibility of a gradual transfer of production from the BBNP to other areas.<sup>22</sup> WAG has also supported the policies in the BBNP Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which state that the NPA will not identify in this UDP any safeguarded or preferred areas or areas of search for further aggregate mineral extraction within the National Park.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, *"applications for new or extended mineral workings... will be subject to the most rigorous examination and will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it is demonstrated to be in the public interest..."*<sup>24</sup>The NPA will continue to take part in the development of regional guidance through its membership of the South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party.

2. **Apply WAG's policies against mineral working in national parks to the BBNP's identified sand and gravel deposits.** Minerals TAN 1 identifies deposits of glacial sand and gravel in the Park, and requires them to be safeguarded from other development, for possible future use. Currently these resources are of unknown quality and quantity and are too small-scale and distant from major markets to make their extraction economically viable. WAG considers that there may come a time when there is a demand for them, for reasons of sustainability or because finite resources have been depleted elsewhere. The NPA has refused to safeguard them in the UDP, and this policy has been supported by the Inspector's report. This stand has resulted in WAG's refusal to allow the UDP to be formally adopted. Consequently, the UDP has merely been approved by the NPA for development control use. Current NPA policy, backed by WAG guidance, does not support new mineral extraction in the Park. The NPA will continue to resist extraction of sand and gravel from the identified sites.
3. **Explore more local and sustainable options to supplement or replace the need for mineral resources.** The Welsh national parks serve as exemplars of sustainability, experimenting with innovative development concepts whilst promoting environmental conservation through leadership. With respect to mineral extraction,

---

<sup>21</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. 2004. Minerals Technical Advice Note (Wales) 1: Aggregates para. 49.

<sup>22</sup> South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party. November 2007. Consultation Draft Regional Technical Statement.

<sup>23</sup> Brecon Beacons National Park. 2007. Unitary Development Plan: Part 1 Policy 6: Allocation for the Extraction of Aggregate Minerals.

<sup>24</sup> Brecon Beacons National Park. 2007. Unitary Development Plan: Part 1 Policy 7: Minerals Development.

there is a need for local sources of building stone for the repair of old buildings and walls and for limited use in new-builds. There are not enough sources of local building stone, and finding new ones will require exploration. For other uses, the NPA must identify alternatives that meet the demands for building materials Whilst satisfying WAG's vision for the national parks. This can be accomplished through the use of secondary, recycled or waste materials, by using alternative building materials (e.g., wood, straw, mud), by finding alternative and sustainable sources of mineral aggregates, and/or through reduction in the demand for mineral resources, for example.

### **Cross-reference**

7.1.3 Geodiversity

7.3.1 Sustainable Communities

7.3.4 Planning and Development

### **7.1.11. Energy**

More than 90% of Wales' energy supplies come from non-renewable resources, comprising oil, coal and gas.<sup>25</sup> Energy distribution is very inefficient. For example, 90% of the energy generated by large power plants is dissipated by the time it reaches consumption points in the Park. Continued reliance on fossil fuels presents at least two undesirable environmental consequences for Wales and the Park. First, the burning of fossil fuels emits substantial concentrations of greenhouse gases which are, in turn, altering climatic conditions across the globe. Transportation (35%) and domestic usage (26%) contribute significantly to unsustainable fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in Wales, whereas industries consume about 10% of the UK's energy supply.<sup>26</sup> Secondly, there is growing consensus that global oil production has or soon will peak whilst oil consumption continues to grow. Because our societal infrastructure is based on the consumption of fossil fuels, particularly petroleum, the impending peak in oil production relative to consumption (peak oil) has serious implications for every facet of daily life. Similar scenarios are envisaged for gas and coal resources, albeit further into the future.

Whilst these factors may seem insurmountable, local efforts to improve energy efficiency and promote the use of renewable energy can effectively reduce the Park's ecological footprint. Large-scale electricity generation and distribution, for example, is highly inefficient, but local generation of electricity is considerably more sustainable. Implementation of small-

---

<sup>25</sup> Department of Trade and Industry. 2007. Energy White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

scale, local generation projects, then, can make great strides toward reducing the Park's ecological footprint. The end result is an increase in regional self-sufficiency, overcoming local reliance on external energy providers and improving community responsibility through shared resource management. The NPA and its partners will encourage a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by reducing energy use, improving energy conservation and supporting renewable energy production. This will be reflected in the LDP which will strive to maximise renewable energy output and energy efficiency from all new buildings and developments.

### **The Green Valleys Initiative**

The community-led Green Valleys project is working to develop the UK's first carbon negative valley in the Brecon Beacons National Park which may have the capacity to provide five times more energy than the area needs from micro-hydroelectric schemes alone.

Dyffryn Crawnon Valley in the National Park is well on its way to being the UK's first carbon negative community. The valley's first 3.7kW hydroelectric project was installed in 2008 and a 17 kW community owned hydroelectric generator is to be built in summer 2009. It will generate 190% of the valley's energy needs and reduce the entire community's carbon emissions by 42%. With five other streams already surveyed to supply a further 33kW it will eventually lead to a 94% reduction in carbon emissions making it a forerunner to become the UK's first carbon neutral valley.

With nearly 100 hydro schemes already identified in the Park, old mills, forgotten water wheels, streams and rivers are being looked at with fresh eyes by local farmers, landowners and residents who are incredibly enthusiastic about the enormous potential of hydroelectric schemes in Wales. In Britain last year there were 13 hydro schemes installed and 6 of those schemes were within the National Park which is the Green Valleys area. These initiatives are also creating local employment by training community members within the Green Valleys area to become hydroelectricity installers.

Hydroelectricity schemes in the BBNP are now generating 1.5% of the Green Valleys area's energy needs and the Green Valleys have already identified the next 15%. They are also in the process of completing feasibility studies and developing project plans for 92 hydro installations. If everything goes according to plan, in ten years time the area could be producing £30 million pounds worth of energy.

The Green Valleys community project in the Brecon Beacons aims to reduce carbon emissions through a number of initiatives - not just hydroelectricity - and is hot in the running for the £1 million pound winning prize which is due to be announced in January 2010.

Set up by community volunteers, the Green Valleys beat off stiff competition from 350 entrants last October to become Wales' only finalist in NESTA's Big Green Challenge climate change competition, submitting grand plans to combat rising fuel costs and tackle climate change. Just some of their plans include restoring a network of micro hydroelectricity schemes in local streams and rivers, assisting local people reduce their fuel bills through community-led energy saving initiatives and to develop large scale peat bog restoration work.

In the Brecon Beacons National Park 11 communities have already signed up for the Green Valleys with another 7 communities in the process of joining. They are all volunteers and community members that are working on various projects which aim to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and also make their communities more sustainable.

## Strategic Objectives for Energy

- 1. Help achieve national targets for greater renewable production through community and domestic scale schemes.** In 2007, the Welsh Assembly Government has set renewable energy targets for Wales of four terrawatt hours per annum by 2010 and seven terrawatt hours per annum by 2020.<sup>27</sup> More recently the focus has been shifted to reduce carbon-based energy production by 80-90% whilst *“producing as much electricity from renewable sources by 2025 as we consume.”*<sup>28</sup> Although large-scale renewable energy projects such as wind farms are not appropriate in the National Park due to undesirable impacts on landscape, natural and cultural resources, WAG have charged the Parks with being exemplars of sustainability and centres of clean energy innovation. Microgeneration of renewable energy is within the context of this vision.

The Park's first community renewable energy scheme was approved in 2004. By the end of 2007, three hydropower, six photo-voltaic, 40 solar and five single turbine wind renewable energy schemes were in place in the National Park. More recently, interest and implementation of microgeneration schemes has increased dramatically through community-led initiatives associated with the Green Valleys Project. The NPA and its partners will continue to encourage private or community renewable energy installations, through the Green Valleys Project, the Renewable Energy Assistance Programme (REAP) as well as projects on the NPA's own estate. In future, new dwellings or residential plans will be required to have on-site renewable energy schemes integrated into their permissions in accordance with the Sustainable Design Guide. Small scale schemes will also need to consider mitigation for any adverse effects on biodiversity (including fish), the availability of water and hydrology.

- 2. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by minimising energy use.** The average ecological footprint for a person living in Wales is nearly three times that of the “average Earth share” of 1.8 area units.<sup>29</sup> In accordance with the Kyoto Protocol, the UK Government agreed to a 12.5% reduction and set a domestic goal of reducing

---

<sup>27</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. 2007. Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities in Wales.

<sup>28</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. November 2008. One Wales: One Planet, Consultation on a new Sustainable Development Scheme for Wales.

<sup>29</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. 2007. Sustainable Development Indicators for Wales 2007.

carbon dioxide emissions by 20% of 1990 levels by 2010.<sup>30</sup>In Wales the target has been set for a 3% per annum reduction in carbon equivalent emissions.<sup>31</sup>Despite reductions in greenhouse gas emissions since 1990, UK targets for reducing them are not being met. More recent strategies urge the UK to “Power Down.”<sup>32</sup> These strategies encourage commonsense approaches to reducing wasteful energy consumption practices, implementing modern energy management technologies and adopting thrifty lifestyles. Powering Down does not mean going without, but it does require being more efficient and limiting carbon-intensive activities. The NPA and its partners will actively promote awareness of the issues and practices that help us “Power Down”. The NPA will aim to be an exemplar of best practice through its working practices and management of NPA estate. The forthcoming BBNP Sustainable Design Guide will include policies and standards for new developments that will assist the NPA and its partners in meeting this aim. Examples of current initiatives in the Park can be found throughout this Plan.

3. **Assist the development of community energy initiatives.** By 2028, the aspiration is that most of the Park’s towns and villages will have community renewable energy systems, greatly increasing efficiency and producing a more cost effective energy solution than at present. District heating schemes and combined heat and power systems that use biofuels will be realistic proposal for many of the Park’s settlements. Similarly, community wind turbines and hydro facilities will be more practical as technology advances and public perceptions change. The NPA and its partners will assist the Park’s towns and villages in making this transition. NPA will produce guidance notes on renewable energies for the Park in 2009-2010 so that applicants they can provide the planning authority and its statutory reviewers with adequate information to determine if the proposed development is in conflict with the first purpose of the National Park.
4. **Develop the capacity for a localised energy grid.** Areas of the National Park already have the potential to produce all of their heat and electricity requirements on site, and not be a part of the national grid. As the effects of population pressures, climate change and fossil fuel depletion unfold, requirements for existing and new settlements to become energy self-sufficient are likely. Rather than viewing these scenarios as impediments to progress, they can be seen as opportunities to add environmental, social and economic value to the local community or social enterprise,

---

<sup>30</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. 2005. Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement: Planning for Renewable Energy.

<sup>31</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. November 2008. One Wales: One Planet, Consultation on a new Sustainable Development Scheme for Wales.

<sup>32</sup> Centre for Alternative Technology. 2007. Zero Carbon Britain: An Alternative Energy Strategy.

reducing environmental impacts, promoting a sense of place and retaining all generated revenues.

5. **Integrate renewable energy into building and settlement design.** The WAG and UK governments aim is for all new buildings to be carbon neutral by 2011 and 2015, respectively. To do so this will require significant shifts in architectural practice and the planning process. Indeed, the character of buildings will need to be radically altered to increase efficiency. Renewable energy will need to be integrated in initial design stages rather than add-ons or last minute amendments. In a move away from traditional planning protocol, for example, it may be most efficient for the situation of new settlements and buildings to actually “chase the energy,” whereby developments are sited next to a useable water source that generates all heat and energy requirements, rather than opting for edge-of-town development that relies on traditional and inefficient solutions to energy delivery and consumption. The BBNP Sustainable Design Guide will assist in delivering this strategic objective.

#### **Cross-reference**

- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.4 Planning and Development
- 7.3.5 Transport

#### **7.1.12. Farming**

Farming is a key process that assists in maintaining many of the special qualities of the Park, including contributions to landscape, biodiversity, the historic environment, culture and the socio-economic well-being of the local communities. Agriculture also has the potential to provide other public benefits, for example carbon capture and retention and catchment management to reduce flood risk. Agricultural holdings comprise 51% of the Park's land area; commons make up a further 38% of the Park, a proportion greater than many other national parks in the UK. Common land fulfils an important role within local farming systems and the continued use of traditional management practices has also allowed commons to retain significant conservation value Whilst providing recreational opportunities via open access provisions as laid out within the CROW Act. However, the economic viability of upland farming and grazing commons in particular is under threat because of recent changes within the agricultural sector.

Farms within the Park are typically family run, utilising enclosed grasslands with commons providing supplementary summer grazing. Upland farming would traditionally have been



based on keeping hardy beef cattle and sheep, supplemented by sales of Welsh Mountain ponies. The sale of stores and breeding stock demonstrates the interdependence with lowland farms. Climate, poor soils and topography limit the agricultural potential of the land. Therefore for over 30 years, Government policy has recognised the need to provide additional financial support to hill farmers received through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). For many years, agricultural subsidies were targeted at increasing productivity, by providing minimum guaranteed prices for farm products, for example. These policies contributed towards a loss of environmental quality, for example through the agricultural improvement of semi-natural grasslands, over-grazing with sheep and the reduction in the number of cattle. Some policy reforms occurred in the early 1990s with greater use of quotas with payments linked to numbers of livestock or area of crop produced and a small increase in the amount of agri-environment grants available to achieve conservation objectives. In 2005 all subsidies linked to production finished. Farmers are currently paid a "Single Farm Payment" that in Wales is usually based upon the quantity of historic subsidies claimed by an individual farmer, subject to the land being maintained in good agricultural and environmental condition.

#### **Brecknock Hill Cheviot Marketing**

The Brecknock Hill Cheviot Marketing Project was awarded Sustainable Development Fund funding in September 2001. The aim of the project was to develop a major marketing campaign for lamb, to develop branding and to secure a market for lamb for future years.

The project has been hugely successful with 45 businesses joining a scheme to supply Marks & Spencer (M&S) with Brecknock lamb; in excess of 10,000 lambs were sold last season. Brecknock Lamb appeared in the M&S Christmas brochure.

The sustainability gains of the project are:

**Economic:** Lamb sales to M&S have provided a much needed boost to the farming economy in the Central Beacons (especially post foot and mouth) and this helps to support the wider social economy.

**Social:** A successful marketing campaign has encouraged community cohesiveness and provided incentives for young people to continue farming traditions in the Brecon Beacons.

**Environment:** Producers have been trained in improved environmental management and stock rearing techniques.

**Cultural:** The Brecknock Hill Cheviot breed has been a key feature of the local landscape for 150 years – this initiative has helped to ensure that this cultural tradition continues in a more environmentally sustainable way.

Whilst there have been historic pressures on the profitability of upland farming, the current trends are particularly significant because of an increase in both pace and scale. Current issues include:

- Lower prices received for agricultural produce partially due to supermarket bargaining power and cheap food imports;
- Reduction in levels of agricultural support due to reforms of the CAP;
- High cost of rural housing with limited opportunities for new entrants;
- The cost of implementing increasing levels of regulation, for example livestock records and tagging;
- Impact of animal disease such as foot and mouth; and
- Centralisation and loss of local agricultural processing industries, for example markets and slaughterhouses.

The changes in upland farming are so significant that there are likely to be fundamental changes in upland character and how the landscape is managed within a relatively short period of time. Upland farming requires specialist skills and knowledge, the fundamentals usually being passed down through family generations and matched to local conditions. An example of this is the knowledge and skills of how sheep are hefted to particular parts of the hill. With the decline in the number of people employed within farming, an increase in the average age of the agricultural workforce and limited opportunities for young people to earn a reasonable living within farming, there is a risk that the skills and capacity needed to manage the upland landscape will be lost. There are significant social and environmental reasons for retaining the traditional family farming unit and ensuring that land is at least maintained in "good agricultural and environmental condition" so that it is readily available for food production. Alternative approaches to uplands management would require a fundamental change in tenure systems, resource allocation, funding and training.

### **Strategic Objectives for Farming**

1. **Maintain and enhance viable and productive farming businesses within the uplands so that they are able to deliver private and public objectives to enhance the special qualities of the Park.** The primary reason for how land is managed varies, but it is increasingly likely that a number of objectives will be delivered from an individual piece of land requiring integrated approaches to management. Deliverable objectives may cover food production, biodiversity, the historical environment, outdoor access, recreation, renewable energy generation and other benefits. Farm and other land management businesses will remain profitable, maintaining

many of the traditional practices that have helped to shape the special qualities of the Park, whilst being innovative with bureaucracy minimised. Resilience will be increased, for example through appropriate farm diversification and collective management of risks such as from animal diseases.

2. **Integrate and promote public support for sustainable farming.** The upland landscape is a critical asset both nationally and relative to the Park. The emphasis of policy is changing from encouraging agricultural and timber production to uplands being areas for recreational pursuits and the delivery of public benefits. However, the continued importance of livestock, particularly larger grazing animals, to the well-being of the uplands needs to be communicated to the public as well as national and European levels of government.
3. **Develop communications and collaboration among land managers, statutory agencies, non-governmental organisations, communities and other interests.** Farming continues to be the most significant element of what needs to be a profitable land management industry. To be successful now and in the future, this will require increased collaboration, local empowerment and innovation among the stakeholders involved.
4. **Encourage innovative marketing of farm products, for example through the development of local supply chains and landscape branded products.** Given the changing face of agricultural policy, economics and practice, farmers will need to maximise market opportunities by adding value to goods produced in rural areas, for example by niche marketing, branding and diversification. Farmers can add significant value to their products through marketing and promotion based on local and regional branding – such as the Brecknock Hill Cheviot Marketing Scheme. The aspiration must be that farmers can benefit from being within a protected landscape and thereby continue to contribute to its management.
5. **Reduce waste, energy use and pollution from all agricultural activities.** Farming activities provide many public benefits to local, national and international communities, not the least of which is food security. As with any business, however, there are energy requirements, waste products generated and potential sources of pollutants. Careful evaluation and management of farming practices can reduce waste and improve energy efficiency whilst continuing to provide public goods and services. Some farmers in the National Park, for example, are directly involved in the Green

Valleys Initiative, generating their own electricity from local, small-scale hydroelectric schemes.

6. **Advocate for the establishment of a new rural subsidy system based upon agri-environment and rural development programmes that pay people to provide public benefits in the countryside, particularly the delivery of environmental goods and services.** Enclosed land generally has a greater potential for agricultural productivity compared to commons, but this is still limited compared to more lowland parts of the country. It is likely that these areas will continue to need support if the farming systems that have helped create their special qualities are to be retained. Tir Gofal has provided some income to manage features such as hay meadows and field boundaries. However, insufficient resources have been allocated to allow the majority of farms to enter. A range of schemes is needed to suit different types of holdings, including common land. A limited number of simple prescriptions may be suitable for a relatively productive unit, for example, whereas a more bespoke scheme may be needed for holdings with higher levels of conservation interest and for landscape scale initiatives.

### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.2 Biodiversity
- 7.1.13 Woodland Management
- 7.1.14 Upland Management
- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.5 Transport

### **7.1.13. Woodland Management**

The woodlands are an integral part of the distinctive landscape and natural beauty of the Brecon Beacons National Park. Sustainable woodland and forest management positively contribute to the vision of the National Park by conserving and enhancing diverse habitats within and around the forest, supporting wildlife that depend upon woodlands, creating and maintaining accessible locations for people and contributing to a vibrant rural economy. Four woodland complexes within the Park are SACs and each is very distinct and different. Within the Waterfalls Area, for example, the ravine woodlands survive as temperate rainforests and are rich in biodiversity. Additionally, woodlands can have a significantly greater carrying capacity for people than more open landscapes, being more resilient to

natural and human impacts such as weathering and footpath erosion than geographically similar non-forested ecosystems.

Forests and woodlands offer environmental benefits which include the expansion of native woodland, conservation of land within and adjacent to the SSSI's, SAC's, and SAM's and the creation, restoration and expansion of valued habitat. They provide shade, increase the infiltration and storage of water, store carbon and provide wood fuel and other raw materials such as timber and fibre.

Woodlands offer a sense of welcoming to people travelling along the numerous scenic drives throughout the Park's valleys and to those who wish to explore the wilder aspects of the more mountainous terrain. They can frame a landscape and help to provide a local setting for settlements.

At the southern end of the National Park, the gateway to the National Park, and the Geo Park, the Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) invite visitors to the Garwnant Visitor Centre and Education Complex. Formal recreation is of increased interest as well, with the more active pursuits being sought, such as mountain biking, horse riding and outdoor activity centres. As such this visitor centre provides an appropriate outlet for enjoyment of these activities.

In addition, the successful award of the Fforest Fawr Geopark status within the National Park offers opportunities to expand on and experience the internationally recognised geological value the National Park and that which the forests can offer.

Woodlands also offer a sense of well-being to the larger landscape and to the setting and structure of settlements. Woodlands have been a source of local, sustainable building materials for centuries (making an as yet unknown contribution to carbon storage). These benefits can be incorporated into future development, including residential housing and industrial commercial activities.

Woodland cover exists in the National Park as a combination of public sector forests and private woodland. Public sector forests managed by the Forestry Commission are in excess of 10,000 hectares (or 25,000 acres) of land in the Park most of which are commercial coniferous plantations, whereas private woodland comprises a mosaic of much smaller, dispersed mainly broad-leaved farm woodland holdings and some traditional estate managed forests. These different scales present different opportunities and challenges for woodland restoration and expansion or reversion to other priority habitats.

The *Woodland Strategy* Vision for Wales over the next 50 years is: "*Wales will be known for high-quality woodlands that enhance the landscape, are appropriate to local conditions and have a diverse mixture of species and habitats that will provide real social and community benefits, support thriving woodland-based industries and contribute to a better quality environment throughout Wales.*"

*Better Woodlands for Wales* is the new FCW grant scheme designed to meet that vision. The scheme has been developed in consultation with woodland owners and their agents as well as partner organisations. The new scheme places greater emphasis on good quality woodland management and offers grants specially designed for Welsh woodlands. Grant aid is now based upon an approved long-term management plan that meets the minimum standards under the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme.

Forest design is a planning tool for creating a future vision for new and existing forests. Forest design identifies the existing woodland structure, and shows how, by pro-active management of the land, the future forests and woodlands will contribute to an improved ecosystem, whilst maintaining a sustainable resource of both economic and conservation value. It considers both the effects on the wider landscape and issues surrounding climate change and species habitats, thereby contributing greatly to the conservation of nature, culture and biodiversity in the National Park.

The management of woodlands and forestry has significant implications for managing historic landscape character as well as the survival of individual historic landscape features. Many historic native woodlands are historic landscape features in their own right and may include extensive associated archaeological features such as woodland boundaries, saw pits and charcoal burning platforms. Woodland can also preserve earlier historic features which predate tree growth. FC obtains historic environment information and advice from the Archaeological Trusts to ensure that both FC estate and BWW management plans properly integrate the management of the historic environment.

All woodlands and forests managed by the Forestry Commission have been assessed by forest design, and approved by the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS). This process is also adopted by private woodland owners wishing to attract grant aid via the Welsh Assembly Government's *Better Woodland for Wales* scheme. Forest Design invites consultation from all interested parties, and the Park's stakeholders are active in creating the vision of our forests and woodlands for the future.

The Mynydd Du forest case study (below) is an example of a forest design plan near Abergavenny and within the north-eastern area of the National Park.

### **Strategic Objectives for Woodland Management**

1. **Capture the existing values of the lower valley native farm woodlands in the National Park and expand these habitats towards the higher slopes where existing forests lie.** This strategic objective enhances the existing landscape and habitats whilst expanding native woodlands in these areas, encouraging the native woodland to migrate into the commercial coniferous forests. These efforts include management of wooded linear habitat. Tree lines grown out hedgerows, as well as tree-lined streams and rivers are an important feature of the BBNP landscape, both in defining character and providing biodiversity and connectivity. The present form of features is often the result of semi-abandonment of past practice. Connectivity for some species will rely on enough route options within the landscape, so that rotational management of these features always retains some routes in a suitable form. In addition there may be the potential to incorporate small-scale firewood/hedgerow products into cyclic management of such linear features.

This native woodland expansion will improve habitat networks and connectivity, allowing species to migrate to higher or lower elevations, depending on the pressures of changing temperature and precipitation patterns that will arise in the future. Designing habitat connectivity into forest plans is one important measure to safeguard the Park's species and habitats given the uncertainty of future climate change scenarios.

2. **Manage forests at higher elevations to maintain a sound commercial presence as coniferous forests, contributing to the rural economy whilst offering the opportunity to improve landscape design and create new upland open space via felling.** This open space will contribute to the grandeur and sense of wildness associated with the National Park by creating near-natural areas adjacent to the open commons. Careful management of such creations of open space within a forest and woodland structure, with particular reference to the higher elevations, also can contribute to combating climate change, via creating carbon sinks through restoration of upland peat bogs and heath land. In addition, the opportunity will be taken to preserve and enhance the archaeological and other features of the historic environment. Transitions to native characteristic broadleaves on the upper edge of forests will be used where feasible to soften forest edges and the visual amenity.

3. **Restore internationally recognised habitats, including upland bogs, heath land and upland oak woods, where the viability and potential exists.** Examples of all of these habitats can be found within the FC managed forests and elsewhere within the National Park. Open space management within the FC's forests not only offers opportunities to create a diverse landscape but also to create new habitat and restore disturbed habitats. In the process these efforts provide good practice models for other private woodlands and forest to emulate.
4. **Practise continuous cover forestry in forests within the National Park where tree species, aspect, previous management and soils allow.** Continuous cover forest practise is an integral management tool for foresters. It offers the maintenance of permanent tree cover within woodlands. It is the preferred mechanism to maintain landscape sensitive areas and convert plantation to native woodlands on previous ancient woodland sites.
5. **Integrate woodland management into the Local Development Plan within the National Park.** Woodland management contributes to flood defence and to other development-related issues. This is of particular importance within the context of the Park's Local Development Plan with respect to future housing demands and societal needs. Where applicable within water catchment areas, woodlands can offer flood defence mechanisms via the creation of new wet woodland habitats and contribute to reducing the impact of higher water levels downstream and nearer those communities most at risk from flooding. Woodlands can also be grown to provide fuel and other raw materials.
6. **Consider and create new community woodlands within easy access of future and existing communities that contribute to the improved sense of health and well-being.** The Forestry Commission forests and woodlands within the National Park invite quiet informal recreation for both tourists and the local residents. The forests provide a sense of public ownership and are an important contributor to the local economy through tourism activities they attract. Local communities also benefit from the forest through the improved health and well-being they provide to those who access these areas. They are recognised as valued assets for today's society.

#### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.2 Biodiversity



#### 7.1.14. Uplands Management

##### 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities

### **Mynydd Du Forest Design**

Mynydd Du Forest lies on the eastern edge of the BBNP, near to the market town of Abergavenny. The forest is situated within a discreet valley, and adjacent to the majestic open hills of the Brecon Beacons. The forest covers an area of 1200 hectares, and is managed by the Forestry Commission Wales. The FC Wales estate covers in excess of 120,000 hectares, of which circa 35000 hectares is managed by the Llanymddyfri Forest District team, including Mynydd Du Forest.

Mynydd Du Forest is the largest forest in the National Park, which is managed under a combination of clearfell and continuous cover management, including native woodland and heath land restoration. Majestic trees tower over forest entrances throughout the valley, with broadleaf woodland expanding along the streams and tributaries to the Grwyne Fawr River. As the forest rises to the higher elevations, a combination of productive forest and heath land restoration exists.

The forest design identifies the structure of the forest for the future. It captures the forest of today and influences how the evolution of the growing forest will change and adapt to the future. Forest design is a management tool and is recognised as a part of sustainable forest management. All Forestry Commission forests meet the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) which demonstrates forests and woodlands are being managed to a high standard.

**Sustainable forest management** is measured within three tiers: economics, environment and social. Forest management considers all aspects of these three tiers, to ensure a sustainable forest exists in the future.

The **forest design vision** is identified by the following key issues which will effect affect the future regeneration management.

This forest is one of the larger forests in the area and is capable of growing a mix of tree species which will enhance the future timber markets whilst also considering the effects of climate change, and the potential for migration of species, through a habitat network within the forest. The forest design will enhance these demands by broadleaf riparian restoration, with mixed conifer and broadleaf species throughout the lower elevations of the forest. On the upper elevations, the forest will consist of open space managed to complement the adjacent open hill, whilst enhancing and restoring upland heath habitat to complement the wider landscape of this area. This will further enhance the woodland and forest edge to remove the harsh shapes adjacent to the forest boundary, and further complement the wider landscape of this area.

To ensure sustainable forest management the following specific issues are considered within the forest design process for each of the three tiers:

## **Mynydd Du Forest Design (continued)**

### **Environment**

**Forest design** and subsequent forest management will enhance and protect the environment in accordance with relevant EU legislation, with a particular emphasis on recent habitat regulations (Aug 2007). This will include protecting and enhancing species and habitat, and consider future climate change by creation of habitat networks throughout the forest to allow for migration of species in the future.

**Native woodland expansion** and increased broadleaf planting will feature prominent in the future forest. The current broadleaf woodland exists as 7% in this area, with a gradual expansion to 33% by a combination of felling and replanting and natural regeneration management.

**Landscape of the forest** must be considered in two factors: 1) the lower internal valley landscape, where continuous cover and broadleaf forest will exist to promote a sense of welcoming and habitat network creation alongside existing native woodland and stream sides; and 2) the upper landscape of the Brecon Beacons, where the forest complements the wider large-scale open landscape. The lower valley offers greater opportunity for species diversity, continuous cover management of the forest, and ancient woodland expansion due to better soils and stability. The upper forest area will complement the adjacent open hill of unimproved upland grazing by breaking up the harsh edge shapes, which exist as the current forest boundary. This will be done by open space management, and some scattering of natural regeneration throughout these areas, whilst offering the opportunity for habitat restoration of the traditional heathland.

### **Economic**

Mynydd Du Forest will continue as an important commercial forest, whilst combining the diversity of species, both conifer and broadleaf, to complement existing, new and emerging markets for the future.

Current harvesting programmes are committed to the wood processing industry for the next five years through published production forecasts. This allows the industry to invest in the short and medium term with confidence, adding to a further sustainable industry. There is little or no change to planned and committed operations for the next five years.

The forest design considers access requirements, and any subsequent road building in the forest. No new road requirements are identified for this period of review in this forest. Liaison with local highways departments, and the local community has identified a preferred compact forest operations period within each five-year programme, as opposed to a continual harvesting impact on the area. The timber marketing strategy has identified this preference.

## **Mynydd Du Forest Design (continued)**

### **Social**

Mynydd Du Forest is managed by FC Wales, who invite the public to enjoy the forest as quiet informal recreation. Access is open on foot, cycle and horse, and all visitors must be aware of other users of the forest, including ongoing forest operations.

Car park facilities are present albeit as low key sites.

Permissions exist within this forest for organised events, and interest in these activities is increasing. The FC considers this increased interest in the use of the forest, by these specialised activities, whilst still offering the quiet informal recreation throughout most of the year.

The forest design focuses on the lower valley forest area to promote and enhance the visitor experience to Mynydd Du Forest by a combination of majestic conifer trees alongside the forest edge, continuous cover management, and the native woodland enhancement along the stream sides throughout the forest.

Forest design review is undertaken every 10 years for each forest area managed by the FC, with a five-year mid-term review. This allows for the existing plan to be considered in response to new policy changes, any major effects on the forest, such as catastrophic damage to the forest by climate, and stakeholder demands.

The forest design process has been evident in FC Wales' forest management structure since the early 1990s, and is an invaluable and robust tool for the forest manager to manage the forest for the future in a sustainable way. Mynydd Du Forest has undergone a forest design review during 2007 and early 2008.

### **7.1.14. Uplands Management**

The Park's uplands provide a virtually continuous expanse of nationally important habitats, common land and open access stretching from east to west across the Park. They comprise the most obvious features of the Park's designated landscape and provide a barometer for the state of the Park's ecological, agricultural and economic health, provided that we can read the signals they give us.

The uplands are the core of the National Park's character and form the most southerly area of extensive uplands within Great Britain. They support a complex mixture of important habitats over a very large area and are framed by the ffridd/coedcae zone (sheep walk/wood pasture), the transition zone between the upland and lowland habitats.

The Park includes three of the four contiguous belts of unenclosed upland common of over 4000 hectares in Wales, whose owners include the Countryside Council for Wales, Dwr

Cymru, National Trust Wales, private estates, The Honourable Artillery Company and the BBNPA.

On the whole the Park's uplands are in poor agricultural and ecological condition. This has been caused by factors such as air pollution and acid rain deposition dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, trampling and inappropriate grazing levels, repeated burning in certain locations, deforestation and the naturally slow rate of biological productivity that occurs in upland environments. In general, these can be summarised as an absence of integrated, co-operative management between the parties involved. Reversing this situation will rely upon a profitable farming and land management sector and an understanding on all sides of the needs of agriculture and biodiversity conservation, whose varied activities can contribute positively to managing an outstanding natural and cultural environment.

Commons management is made more difficult due to the need to gain a consensus from the multiple legal interests associated with what can be very large areas of poor quality land with marginal economic returns available. There is a risk that current economic pressures will lead to a structural change in farming systems and consequent loss in land management capability. Difficult issues such as the role of fencing on upland commons to enable sustainable management may need to be addressed. The Commons Act 2006 included measures to facilitate sustainable management, particularly through the establishment of Commons Councils. However, there is likely to be a need to support the establishment of Commons Councils and to provide incentives for them to be able to undertake sustainable land management.

Air, soil, water, carbon and nitrogen are essential to human life, agriculture and biodiversity; they are the "life support" for the living world. They are increasingly prominent in environmental and rural policy and legislation. Each could be affected negatively by climate change. In the Park, sustainable management of these essential resources is dependent upon proper grazing, woodland, fire, water, recreation and access management.

Huge volumes of carbon are stored in soils and peat. Wales' organic soils contain about 410 million tonnes of carbon. Within the BBNP, a high proportion of upland habitats and organic soils are in poor condition and ecological restoration will be a slow process requiring long term commitments to achieve success. Without appropriate action the uplands will contribute increasing volumes of carbon into the atmosphere, thereby adding to the greenhouse effect and global warming. A loss of just 1% per year of soil carbon throughout Wales would increase Wales' overall carbon emissions by 25%, thereby eliminating the same volume of carbon savings made elsewhere. If the average annual temperature in Wales were

to increase by just 1°C during the next 20 years, which is almost certain to occur, this sort of carbon loss is likely too.

There are some obvious measures to protect organic soil carbon such as maintaining a continuous cover of dwarf shrubs and grasses, avoidance of deep ploughing, matching grazing levels with site requirements, preventing soil erosion and compaction, reversing land drainage and preventing uncontrolled moorland burns. As an example, compliance with the new heather and grass burning codes will reduce the risk of uncontrolled burns in the future. Whilst providing examples of best management practice through the formulation of burn plans that adhere to the new regulations. These measures also deliver benefits related to water conservation in line with the WFD which, in turn, can provide a focus for upland management.

In terms of small-scale, hydroelectricity generation, the Park's upland landscape is ideal: ample rainfall, large, flat areas of deep water-holding soil (storage), storage at altitude above the points of generation and consumption, numerous points of run-off around the upland peripheries and scattered, small, compact settlements at the base of these streams to provide small consumption points.

As the Welsh Assembly Government (2007) has noted, today's farmers – the trustees of this landscape – have a very difficult task ahead of them, to manage the land and its resources in our changing world. It will require conviction and innovative thinking to overcome the uncertainty and risk set before them, particularly on the part of younger people who will have to bear the burden and the costs.

### **NPA-owned land**

The agricultural and upland common land owned or managed by the NPA comprises a very significant asset in terms of its ecological, archaeological and landscape value. Sites include some of the most popular and iconic locations across the Park: parts the Blorenge, the Hatterrall Hill, the Gwernyfed Commons, Henallt Common, Llangasty, Pen y Crug, Mynydd Illtyd, part of the Waterfalls Area and Gunpowder Works, Cefn Llechid, Manor Bach, Craig y Nos CP, Govilon disused railway line, Manor Mawr, Fforest Fawr, Mynydd Du, Mynydd Myddfai-Mynydd Bach Trecastell, Carreg Cennen Woodlands and Garn Goch.

These properties give the Authority its best chance of making a direct contribution to fulfilling Park purposes and to mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. By working in partnership with commoners and with the other upland landowners in the Park,

action can be taken over large areas, benefiting not only the users of uplands and commons but also the areas adjacent to them.

### **Strategic Objectives for Uplands Management**

1. **Identify priority areas for organic soil and wetland management.**  
Understanding the volumes and extent of soil carbon losses is a first step to reversing this trend.
2. **Reduce the extent of invasive alien species.** Invasive species such as bracken, and invasive alien species such as Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed, *Rhododendron ponticum*, Cotoneaster, New Zealand Swamp Stonecrop are all present in the Park. Some, such as bracken are economically and ecologically damaging on a large scale, affecting agricultural land, common land, forest edges and other important habitats. Bracken and many of the other invasive species are expensive to control effectively, particularly on inaccessible upland terrain. Reduction in the extent of invasive species would contribute positively to upland management.
3. **Achieve sustainable farming and ecosystem management.** By 2020 we need to have developed good practice for managing soil carbon and water conservation in the uplands (Welsh Assembly Government 2007). This requires good practice to be supported by the landowners as well as the commoners. Through a good understanding and close working relationship with upland farmers and commoners, upland management can accommodate the needs of biodiversity conservation, commons grazing, conservation of the historic environment, access, water management and soil carbon management Whilst utilising and developing local skills and knowledge. There is currently a window of opportunity available to concentrate public resources toward achieving sustainable management. This opportunity arises through the Rural Development Plan Axis II Review and the comprehensive review of Common Agricultural Policy by 2013. After this period, pressures may lead to permanent structural changes in farming and loss of hill grazing.
4. **Maximise the opportunities for diversifying the economy through integrated land management skills and services.** Economic opportunities are available from managing ecosystems and biodiversity in the uplands *and* lowlands. Integrated land management can provide additional training, employment and service opportunities beyond the confines of agriculture and tourism. Employment potential exists within surveying and monitoring, wildlife and archaeological interpretation, habitat restoration,

farm and estate management, carbon, soil and water conservation and local grazing schemes. Whether alone or in combination with other “new” enterprises – wood fuels, fishing, local food production, renewable energy infrastructure, these opportunities all add up to a much more diverse economy Whilst providing the right environment to attract suitable inward investment.

5. **Demonstrate integrated, sustainable landscape scale conservation on NPA-owned land by securing large scale, long term funded projects across the Park.** If Commons Councils are established under the Commons Act (Wales) 2006, this will affect the BBNPA directly, which owns a significant proportion of Wales' upland commons. This presents opportunities to blend farming, conservation and non-farming expertise to achieve integrated management. The BBNPA can work with partners to demonstrate best practice management. Once success is demonstrated on NPA-owned lands, projects can be expanded to encompass lands owned and managed by partners. Collaborative landscape-scale schemes should be commonplace by 2020, with farm businesses comfortable with conserving water, soil carbon and landscape, conserving the historic environment, supporting biodiversity and producing high quality, locally marketed food (Welsh Assembly Government 2007).
6. **Ensure that uplands management is conducted through an integrated approach whilst utilising and developing local skills and knowledge.** Uplands management incorporates the needs of agricultural production, biodiversity conservation, the historic environment, access, water management and soil condition. Commons grazing is the dominant land use in terms of extent across the National Park. The Park's upland commons have been traditionally managed by commoners exercising their rights, which has mainly been through the rights to graze livestock. This is not only a valued cultural tradition, it is vital to the viability of many farm enterprises. Frequently commoners retain the knowledge and skills required to manage the land effectively and pass this knowledge from generation to generation. Most uplands in the Park are also Open Access land and remain an important and valued recreational resource as defined within the CROW Act. The uplands also support the most extensive range of priority habitats in the Park, though the ecological quality is mainly poor. Although the uplands are in poor ecological condition their archaeology often survives in exceptional condition. The management of the uplands recognises the importance of these historic landscapes and the nationally important archaeological complexes which they include. Similarly, dry stone walls, which are a significant feature of the Park's landscape need to be rebuilt and maintained as part of an integrated approach to upland management.

7. **Restore and enhance the habitat connectivity across the Park's contiguous upland commons.** There is great scope for restoring biodiversity beyond designated sites, which is the best way to support biodiversity conservation within the sites and to provide interconnectivity between them. These efforts can, for example, provide the right environment for merlin, hen harrier, red grouse, ring ouzel, golden plover, curlew, lapwing and snipe which are nationally important upland breeding birds. The health and extent of their populations are good indicators of successful biodiversity conservation efforts.

#### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.2 Biodiversity
- 7.1.4 Archaeology and Historic Landscapes
- 7.1.9 Soil Resources
- 7.1.12 Farming
- 7.1.11 Energy
- 7.1.13 Woodland Management
- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.7 Military Use of the Park



## **7.2. Understanding and Enjoying the National Park**

The National Park is a unique resource for everyone to enjoy the outdoors and learn more about the UK's most important landscapes and the issues facing these environments. Those who are charged with helping the public understand and enjoy the National Park have a key role in assisting or ensuring the public gain access to the vast range of benefits this area has to offer, and are ideally placed to help everyone understand more about the key issues facing this landscape and protected areas as a whole. In order to achieve this, it is vital that we ensure access and orientation is first class, and we continually look for ways to improve. Through careful visitor management techniques, we can be very effective in not only making the Park highly accessible to visitors but also promoting understanding and safe enjoyment through the provision of high quality information, interpretation and education.

### **7.2.1. Outdoor Access and Recreation**

Outdoor access and recreation are inherent parts of the Park's second purpose – to promote opportunities for the enjoyment and understanding of its special qualities. The Brecon Beacons National Park offers opportunities for a wide range of air-, water- and land-based recreational activities and for the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Communities within and adjacent to the Park also stand to gain potential economic and social benefits from these activities. The Park is after all a Park for the Nation. The challenge for all involved is to enable all sectors of society to enjoy the Park in legitimate and sustainable ways which do not conflict with the Park's first purpose or detract from its special qualities.

All "open country" (which includes hills and mountains) and registered common land are now "access land" by virtue of and in accordance with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which provides a right of access to the public on foot. In addition, the Forestry Commission Wales has dedicated its freehold estate as access land. There are 1983 kilometres of public rights of way in the Park consisting of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic. The NPA has responsibility, delegated from the constituent unitary authorities, for the repair, maintenance, signing and protection of this network. It also has the delegated responsibility for keeping the definitive maps and statement (the legal register of public rights of way) of the unitary authority areas up to date and has the necessary powers to make changes to the map and statement itself. The NPA has a key role to play in ensuring that the access restrictions regime associated with access land operates effectively so that legitimate farming activities are not disrupted by walkers and others pursuing recreational activities in the Park. The countryside and people's property

and livelihoods must continue to be respected and properly protected. Users of the resource, therefore, have a duty to respect the Countryside Code and practice responsible behaviour to ensure its long-term sustainability.

WAG's Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities in Wales(2007) indicates that the NPA should promote the widest range of opportunities for recreation Whilst respecting the Park's special qualities and environmental capacity. The impacts of recreational activity vary greatly, however. Activities often seen as harmful can be benign if properly managed, whilst apparently harmless pursuits can be damaging if practiced on too large a scale or in the wrong setting. At the site specific scale, consideration of a site's designations, conditions and other attributes need to be considered when determining what activities are most beneficial and least detrimental to the long term management of the site. Sustainable management of the National Park requires that both statutory purposes are executed in a balanced manner. In the event of irreconcilable conflict, the needs of conservation take priority. Serious recreational conflict is very rare in the Brecon Beacons National Park and has, in the past, been largely resolved through effective planning and management, negotiation and compromise.

WAG's Policy Statement agrees that it is not appropriate for all forms of recreation to take place in all parts of the National Park and that some activities can cause unacceptable damage or disturbance. Where these activities are legal, the NPA will seek to reduce their harmful effects by negotiation and through good management. Under the NERC Act 2006, the NPA has direct powers to make traffic regulation orders restricting or excluding activities from certain areas in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 and the National Park statutory purposes. The NPA will continue to work with its partners to reconcile potential conflicts through effective planning and management. The NPA works with many local groups, including the Local Access Forum, which provide advice to the NPA and other organisations on the improvement of access. Disabled people are represented via the Disabled Access Action Group through which the NPA can ascertain the needs of people with disabilities. The Regional and National Feedback Forums pioneered by the Mosaic Partnership work with the NPA, providing feedback from multicultural and urban based users of the Park. Many routes suitable for "access for all" are available in the Park along with a publication providing details of them.

In June 2007 the NPA adopted its Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). This statutory document is the means by which the Authority plans strategically for the development, better management and promotion of existing local rights of way and changes

or additions to the rights of way network. The ROWIP provides a framework to identify, prioritise and plan for improvements to the local rights of way network and in doing so improve provision for walkers, cyclists, equestrians and people with mobility impairments. It has a life of 10 years and sets out the Authority's proposed actions within that time scale.

The ROWIP also states that positive steps should be taken to implement the BBNP Upland Erosion Strategy. The recommendations within the draft Upland Erosion Strategy are cross cutting in that they include access improvements, landscape protection and organisational changes. The Upland Erosion Strategy is discussed in the Section 7.1.9 Soil Resources of this Management Plan.

The WAG has also encouraged the NPA and its partners to develop the Park as a water-related recreation hub in line with the recent EAW water recreation strategy. Given the ample resources available in the Park (see Section 7.1.8), there is strong potential to increase participation in water-related recreation by a variety of individuals and organisations including those from Communities First areas; and to develop consensus and understanding between the variety of people and organisations that have interests in the aquatic and recreational environment. The NPA will establish a forum together with landowners, DCWW, EAW, CCW, recreational groups and others to develop new and existing opportunities, such as paddling on flat and white water, angling, riverside activities, and aim to provide excellent information to the public to encourage them to use these facilities.

### **Strategic Objectives for Outdoor Access and Recreation**

1. **Strategically manage the rights of way network.** The NPA's ROWIP covers a wide range of actions that encompass a variety of topics intended to improve the condition of the rights of way network in the long term. Actions range from increasing the extent of barrier-free routes to maintaining way marking and associated furniture in the network. A key to successful delivery of the ROWIP and management of the rights of way network is an accurate and up to date Definitive Map and Statement that covers the National Park. As with all strategies, these actions will be implemented in accordance with priorities set forth in the ROWIP and based on the availability of appropriate resources.
2. **Improve the provision of information with regard to public access.** The ROWIP identifies several key areas where the provision of information could be improved, including the provision of information:
  - In a variety of accessible formats;

- On routes for mechanically propelled vehicles on the BBNPA website;
- On position and extent of parking areas and associated facilities which support outdoor access in the countryside;
- Regarding public transport links to BBNPA promoted routes;
- On codes for responsible recreation, including the Countryside Code; and
- That is better incorporated into Authority publications.

Whilst work has commenced on a number of these areas, the ROWIP's long-term action plan will continue to improve in these areas.

3. **Make the best use of external funding and resource opportunities to improve public access.** The Authority recognises that achieving all of the action in the ROWIP, the Upland Erosion Strategy, and other strategies that affect outdoor access and recreation is a huge challenge. Finding the resources to implement these actions is equally daunting. The NPA and its partners must therefore make the best use of any opportunities to secure additional resources.
4. **Improve access to and on water.** The Welsh Assembly Government has commissioned the Environment Agency Wales to produce a water-related recreation strategy. This strategy outlines in very general terms the role of NPAs in Wales regarding water-based recreation. The strategy recommends that all water-related activities be assessed on a case by case basis with due consideration of:
  - The requirements of Habitats Regulations Assessments;
  - The Park's statutory purposes, duty and special qualities; and
  - Provision of adequate funds for implementation.

Implementation of this strategy's recommendations (relevant to BBNPA) will be subject to NPA members' approval.

5. **Continue to work constructively with partners to reduce and resolve conflicts and improve access and recreation provision.** There is already a tremendous amount of partnership working between recreational groups, land owning interests, regulatory organisations and other stakeholders. Continuing co-operative and collaborative working can act to reduce and resolve conflicts in future. The NPA retains the powers granted by the NERC Act and other legislation to restrict or exclude activities from certain areas in the event that these steps fail to protect sensitive areas.

## **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.8 Water Resources
- 7.1.9 Soil Resources
- 7.1.14 Upland Management
- 7.2.3 Information
- 7.3.2 Sustainable Tourism
- 7.3.7 Military Use of the Park

### **7.2.2. Promoting Understanding and Enjoyment**

The role of interpretation, information and education are vital tools in encouraging the public to maximise the opportunities for enjoyment, making the most of the benefits the Park has to offer, promoting safe enjoyment and engaging with them on issues which encourage positive behavioural change. There are many issues facing our protected landscape and the environment as a whole, as discussed in Chapter 5. Only when we begin to engage with the public on these issues can we help show how they can be alleviated and how we can begin to change attitudes and behaviour. Interpretation, information and education are powerful tools in helping us effect this change.

Engaging with all members of society and helping them understand and enjoy the Park helps achieve all of the strategic objectives for the National Park. Everyone has a role to play in addressing the Plan's cross cutting themes (see Chapter 6). In fact only by using these important communication methods can our work be truly effective.

These services contribute to people's understanding and enjoyment of the Park's landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage. They also assist in explaining the Park's purposes whilst contributing to the understanding of the policies and work carried out by the NPA and its partners. Such an understanding is important in encouraging people to care for and conserve the Park. Through the provision of high quality information, interpretation and education we can promote awareness and understanding. We will aim to ensure that everyone who lives within the National Park or visits the area will be aware they are within a protected landscape, appreciate what the National Park designation means and understand how everyone can contribute to achieving the Park's purposes and duty.

Interpretation, information and education should be built into all Park Management areas and projects to effectively communicate these efforts to the wider community. Particular emphasis should be placed on promoting awareness and understanding of the work conducted in conjunction with local communities and businesses. These partners are most

closely linked to the landscape and, therefore, need to be directly involved in developing, funding and promoting their roles in Park management. It is vital that we gain their understanding, commitment and support.

In addition, throughout our communication of opportunities we need to ensure that the Park is accessible to all and eliminate any elements which deliberately or inadvertently exclude people. The Park is a national and international resource and therefore has a huge audience range. Providing opportunities for everyone to enjoy the Park and learn from its rich resources will be a priority. This work should not be necessarily seen as tackling social exclusion but ensuring that all services are inclusive. This includes the information produced either electronically or through print, interpretative media as well as access to visitor centres, Park land and specific sites.

Below are the overarching strategic objectives for promoting understanding and awareness as a whole. The sections following these aims break down individual aims for the three main areas involved in promoting understanding and awareness.

### **Strategic Objectives for Promoting Understanding and Awareness**

- 1. Information, interpretation and education will be at the heart of all projects to ensure the long term support, understanding and commitment for the National Park from visitors and the local populations.**
- 2. Promote opportunities to connect people to the National Park.** Through the provision of high quality experiences and communication we can promote awareness and understanding, which can ultimately influence behaviour.
- 3. Ensure that the National Park can be enjoyed by all and that services and facilities don't deliberately or inadvertently exclude people.** This work should not be necessarily seen as tackling social exclusion but ensuring that all services are inclusive.

#### **7.2.3. Information**

The NPA's Information Services aim to provide a network of high quality information that promotes opportunities for enjoyment in the National Park, key orientation and important messages on safety. Information should reach the widest possible audience, and the NPA has developed a range of tools to help achieve this goal.

The NPA runs the National Park Visitor Centre (Mountain Centre) and Craig-y-nos Country Park. Both of these centres not only provide information such as interpretive displays, talks and events and opportunities for informal recreation, but they are also visitor attractions in themselves. Their staff, the staff of the NPA's networked information centres in Abergavenny and Llandovery and the staff at the Waterfalls Centre at Pontneddfechan provide comprehensive information about the National Park and Fforest Fawr Geopark. Advice is available to visitors on where to go, what to see and how best to enjoy their visit without harming themselves or the landscape. The two networked information centres are Wales Tourist Board approved.

The networked information centres are operated jointly by the NPA and the local UA, the latter running the tourist information side with its bed-booking service. Independent, local information centres based in settlements within the National Park are run by local partnerships to provide a service to local businesses and information to visitors about the locality as well as the wider National Park. The NPA also has five village information agencies in small shops and community centres across the Park, to provide a more comprehensive network of information points for visitors and increase the benefits of tourism locally. It also has a purpose-built mobile trailer to provide interpretation at local shows and events.

The NPA produces a range of publications to promote understanding of various aspects of the Park, or to help people enjoy their visit. These are mainly marketed through the visitor and information centres, which also sell other relevant literature. They are promoted to retail outlets in and around the Park and to tourism providers. The development of the internet and information technology has increased our ability to communicate information about the National Park to a global audience. Development of new information, interpretation and education materials on the website will continue to widen access and evolve to meet the needs of all our audiences.

The NPA has many other ways of communicating with the local and visiting public to explain its activities, put across the conservation message and support local communities. These include its guided walks, a range of organised events, attendance at local shows and giving talks to local groups on request. The NPA's Warden Service delivers many of these functions throughout the Park, whilst the NPA's Interpretation and Education Services develop materials and offer ongoing support to Park communication efforts. Press releases, editorials and advertisements in the local and national press and other media such as local radio also have an important role to play in raising the profile of the National Park and

stimulating interest, discussion and visits to the Park. The NPA undertakes this work on its own and in partnership with others. The NPA's Welsh Language Scheme includes producing as much of this material as possible bilingually.

Likewise, Information Services contribute to sustainability objectives by purchasing catering and other supplies and services locally, printing and manufacturing goods using environmentally friendly materials, providing a market place for locally produced craft items, hosting produce fairs and other events and making its two eco-centres available as venues for community groups.

### **Strategic Objectives for Information**

- 1. Provide a first class visitor experience and welcome is to anyone interacting with and enjoying the National Park and its special qualities.** The NPA will work with information providers in the Park to ensure those who interact with this landscape receive a first class welcome. The NPA will also work to ensure that our audiences receive good orientation and are made aware of all the opportunities on offer and how they can access these sustainably. The NPA will develop facilities as well as offer training opportunities to ensure this occurs.
- 2. Provide a holistic and networked dissemination of information which gives visitors the confidence to explore the National Park safely, by working with NPA centres, tourism providers and agencies operating within the Park.** Before visitors are receptive to interpretative messages, it is essential that they have their basic needs met (e.g., know the location of the nearest shop or toilet, how far the walk will take them, how difficult the terrain is), therefore, the provision of orientation and visitor information at appropriate locations is a key component of the visitor experience. If done well this can not only enhance the visit but also encourage visitors to explore a wider range of sites, thus encouraging longer stays and higher spending to benefit the local economy. By strategic networking with partners, we can all maximise the effectiveness of information dissemination to a wide audience.
- 3. Increase awareness of environmental sensitivity and sustainability issues to positively influence behaviour.** For visitors to enjoy the Park in a sustainable way, they need information such as timetables and maps to enable them to use public transport with confidence, guides to interesting places and activities and details of places selling local produce and so on to enable memorable experiences. It is possible to have some influence over what people see and do, and where they go in the interests of



visitor management and enjoyment. In order for this to be successful, tourism and conservation organisations must work together to promote the most sustainable use of the Park's resources.

4. **The NPA will provide a range of information on the National Park, its recreational opportunities and its special qualities to provide a holistic understanding to a range of audiences.** Electronic communication, printed publications and a range of interpretative media will provide targeted information to support those who use the National Park in such a way that it will also increase their understanding and enjoyment of it. All information will contain important messages about why the area is special, the fragile nature of the landscape, the Countryside Code and how everyone can play a role in its future conservation and enhancement. Information will promote sustainable and responsible behaviour.

#### 7.2.4. Education

Education is one of a suite of tools that can aid the Park in its efforts to communicate its purposes, efforts, decisions, results and challenges to interested individuals. Education can be used to make the links among wider issues of management, the environment and sustainability whilst empowering individuals to critically consider available options.

The National Park Authority's Education Service will work with partners across the Park to facilitate increased opportunities for learning and take account of developments in the Welsh and National curricula, and other policies which promote outdoor learning. The Education Service will do this through the provision of unique, Park-focused learning experiences that encourage people to work towards becoming future stewards of the National Park.

The United Nations has designated 2004 - 2014 as the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. WAG (2006) released its own document "Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship – A Strategy for Action." These efforts emphasise education for and as sustainable development, encouraging behaviour change and more importantly the development of critical thinking skills. These concepts form the foundation of environmental education efforts in the National Park.

The future of the National Park depends on continued, active involvement from diverse individuals from across society who understand and support the principles which underpin the Park's designation as a protected area. Long-term success of the Park also

requires that those who care for the Park are not only well-informed but critically use this knowledge in their decision-making.

Consequently, when decisions need to be made about the conservation, use and purpose of this protected landscape, an engaged public will be skilled enough, capable, willing and able to make appropriate decisions. In other words, the purpose of education about the environment "involves integrating knowledge with decision-making skills through learning."<sup>33</sup> The National Park Education Service along with its partners will strive to attain this integration.

### **Strategic Objectives for Education**

- 1. Raise awareness and promote understanding of National Park purposes, policies and activities.** The NPA does much work in the arena of care and management of the National Park's resources and its communities. This good practice and good work should be accessible and useable as a learning tool. The Park is an international, national, and regional asset, too, so people across Wales should have the opportunity to interact with the Park as a learning tool. Successfully raising awareness and developing a deeper understanding of the Park amongst future decision makers (both resident and non-resident) will be vital in delivering the vision for the Park.
- 2. Provide a unique, park-specific outdoor experience that is not available through any other source.** The Education Service will strive to provide a unique experience for learners and educators wanting to utilize the Park as a learning venue. Unique experiences are very important in developing a deeper understanding of, connection to, and caring ethic for the Park and the principles it represents.
- 3. Provide learners with the opportunity to have an experience relating to the National Park purposes face-to-face, in the Park, on-line or through written or audio materials.** People learn in different ways. The UK as a whole has seen an increase in, for example, the numbers of students who are home-schooled. All people interested in learning about the Park or using the Park for learning should be aided to do this. They should have assistance accessing learning

---

<sup>33</sup> Scott, WAH and Oulton, C. 1999. Environmental education: arguing the case for multiple approaches. *Educational Studies* 25(1): 89-97.

experiences in a way that suits their needs and allows the Park's key messages to be communicated.

4. **Ensure the health and safety of all learners/participants, retaining the Adventurous Activities Licensing Scheme (AALS) status as a minimum standard.** The efforts of carers/educators to get learners out of formal environments and into the outdoors are often hampered by the perceived risks associated with outdoor learning and the anticipated paperwork needed by educators/administrators to do so. The NPA holds an Adventurous Activities Licence and demonstrates best practice in the running of all its activities.
5. **Provide learners with an enjoyable experience of the National Park.** Engendering long term support for the National Park means making it a place where learners and educators have enjoyable experiences and then return to their daily lives to share these positive experiences with others.
6. **Create learning opportunities for all, including those who have not traditionally had such opportunities in the BBNP.** Traditionally the prime users of national parks have been mainly primary schools from more affluent areas and, with respect to residential study within the Park, certain groups from more affluent parts of England. In the development and focusing of learning opportunities, more socially excluded groups will be targeted (i.e., Communities First areas) and aided in learning in the Park. For residential study the Education Service will encourage more groups from across Wales to participate.
7. **Demonstrate the principles of sustainability through learning materials and in practice and by supporting Eco-Schools and attaining and maintaining Eco-Centre status for NPA centres.** The Welsh Assembly Government has set targets for schools across Wales to gain Eco-School status as part of the Environment Strategy. The BBNPA and its partners will continue to support schools as they seek this status and also achieve the comparable Eco-Centre award for the Park's three learning centres: the National Park Visitor Centre, Craig-y-nos Country Park and YHA Danywenallt National Park Study Centre.
8. **Work with internal and external partners to promote and implement the effective and safe use of the Brecon Beacons National Park for learning.** The National Park Authority's Education Service can only interact with a limited number of learners. Therefore it is important that the BBNPA partner with

organizations such as the Association for the Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC) to promote learning within the National Park, and to support their endeavours. Other partners include the Youth Hostel Association (YHA) with whom we currently partner to provide residential opportunities.

9. **Meet the needs of learning providers through the development and provision of learning services, including those in Welsh.** NPA education staff and their partners provide services to schools, colleges, outdoor education centres, public organisations, home educators, universities, youth groups, adult learners and others. There is currently a reasonable number of National Park staff involved in education provision who are able to deliver services through the medium of Welsh. Further improvements need to be made to the availability of written (print/web-based) media and for supporting staff to develop the skills to achieve this aim.
10. **Enable educators to learn how to utilize the National Park as a place for learning (i.e. through training days).** Educators experience many barriers to bringing learners out of the classroom setting and into the outdoors. These barriers can be overcome through the provision of INSET days for teachers and training (familiarization) days for non-school based educators to highlight specific opportunities, content or safety aspects. The Education Service will continue to develop and deliver these services as part of an “educate the educator model.”
11. **Incorporate national and international education efforts (e.g., UNESCO decade for ESD, Curriculum Cymreig 2007/8) into the Education Strategy as they arise.** The current Education Strategy runs from 2007-2014 in line with the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development. This strategy is an iterative document that aims to be flexible and forward thinking in order to adapt to and include the knowledge and expertise and ideas generated for the benefit of creating great learning experiences in the National Park.

### **Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship**

In 2007 the National Park Authority's Education Service was awarded a grant by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) to develop Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship materials. The 3 year project (2007-2010) entitled "Learning through experience in the Brecon Beacons National Park" will focus on encouraging learning in the Park.

This project consists of a programme to develop and deliver Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) activities within and around the Brecon Beacons National Park targeted at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 (11-15 year olds).

The programme will develop ESDGC courses that are led by National Park Educators and also that can be led by teachers, develop mobile learning materials for Wales Biodiversity Week, and deliver ESDGC teacher training days. Courses developed cover the following subject/topic areas:

1. Development and conservation.
2. National Park Case Studies-
  - a. Biodiversity.
  - b. Managing a protected landscape.
  - c. Sustainable communities.
3. Ecotourism in the National Park.

As a result of this project the following outcomes are anticipated:

- Increased understanding of National Parks and countryside in relation to ESDGC.
- Increased understanding and opportunities for global citizenship.
- Increased understanding of biodiversity and CCW Biodiversity week.
- Increased use of National Parks by teachers to provide learning experience for their students.

The granting organization, CCW, is the Government's statutory advisor on sustaining natural beauty, wildlife and the opportunity for outdoor enjoyment in Wales and its inshore waters. CCW champions the environment and landscapes of Wales and its coastal waters as sources of natural and cultural riches, as a foundation for economic and social activity, and as a place for leisure and learning opportunities. They aim to make the environment a valued part of everyone's life in Wales.

### **Cross-reference**

7.2.3 Information

7.2.5 Interpretation

7.3.1 Sustainable Communities

### 7.2.5. Interpretation

Interpretation is the process of connecting people to a place or object, so that they may enjoy it more, understand their heritage and environment better and develop a positive attitude to conservation.<sup>34</sup> Interpretation is an incredibly powerful tool to help deliver the National Park's statutory purposes as it can facilitate understanding and appreciation of the National Park which can ultimately influence behaviour resulting in increased support and conservation.

There is often confusion between information (e.g., opening hours, location of facilities, orientation within a site) and interpretation. Although interpretation does include information, to be truly effective interpretation must have the following qualities:

- **Organised** – Ensuring we meet Maslow's hierarchy of needs so visitors are receptive to our message.
- **Enjoyable** – The majority of visitors who visit sites we manage are there for a recreational day out; they are not here for a formal learning experience and therefore we have to embed our messages in fun and enjoyable activities.
- **Relevant** – Using universal qualities to connect people to places (e.g., survival, food) using non-technical language.
- **Thematic** – An interesting and thought provoking theme that visitors will take home with them.<sup>35</sup>

Interpretation can take a variety of formats including guided walks, graphic panels, art, recreations, events, audio, publications, websites and exhibits.

The BBNPA's Interpretation Strategy (2007) identifies the following issues:

- Limited coordination between organisations delivering interpretation within the National Park resulting in duplication, wasted resources, and uncoordinated visitor information.
- Little understanding of the value of the interpretative planning process amongst those delivering interpretation.
- A traditional approach to interpretation with a heavy reliance on panels and leaflets which are the least effective media.
- A focus on end product rather than process, where process can be a great way to engage with communities and traditionally excluded audiences.

---

<sup>34</sup> Association of Heritage Interpretation.

<sup>35</sup> Ham, Sam H. 1992. *Environmental Interpretation: A practical guide for people with big ideas and small budgets.*

- Limited use of thematic story lines which result in non-memorable interpretative messages which, in turn, are less likely to result in our sought after behavioural outcomes.
- Limited research and evaluation of the visitor experience and the effectiveness of the interpretative media.
- Limited maintenance budgets resulting in out of date and/or broken interpretation.
- Limited use of sustainable materials, local artists and crafts people to develop green, innovative and locally distinctive interpretation.

The NPA's Interpretation Strategy (2007) was developed to help address these issues, and the following strategic objectives will support these efforts across the Park.

### **Strategic Objectives for Interpretation**

1. **Encourage partnership working between those involved in interpreting the National Park to ensure greater co-ordination and better use of limited resources.** Interpretation is delivered by a wide variety of statutory bodies, charities, organisations, communities, clubs and societies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. By working together we can ensure that we create a high quality seamless visitor experience that raises awareness of the area's special qualities.
2. **Raise the profile of interpretation and the promotion of good practice to improve its quality and effectiveness within the National Park.** The Interpretation Strategy identifies a tendency for interpretation within the National Park to take a traditional approach with an emphasis on panels and leaflets. The proactive promotion of good practice, especially the role of interpretative planning, to National Park Authority staff, partner organisations and communities together, will be an important step in achieving more creative, innovative and effective interpretation.
3. **Encourage thematic interpretation based on the key themes outlined in the Authority's Interpretative Strategy.** Themes are the one thing we want visitors to remember; they are the take home message, the moral of the story. Themes can turn the communication of unconnected facts into a memorable story, they ensure that the interpreter has thought about what they want the audience to understand and they can help organize ideas and edit content. Themes are beliefs and beliefs are the building

blocks of attitude and behaviour and if we want to influence these in the National Park our themes need to be strong and compelling.<sup>36</sup>

4. **Provide enjoyable interpretative services that will greatly enhance the quality of a visit to the National Park.** When the majority of people visit the National Park they are not there for an interpretative experience but because they perceive it to be an enjoyable day out or a chance to take part in recreational activities.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore when we consider that people remember only about 10% of what they hear, 30% of what they read, 50% of what they see and 90% of what they do.<sup>38</sup> To be successful in communicating to visitors we need to embed our messages in fun, enjoyable activities, in which the learning element is subtle.
5. **Enable and support local communities in defining and presenting their cultural heritage stories.** In recent years there has been an increase in community-led interpretation projects within the National Park. The process of developing an interpretation project (i.e. the historical research, the collection of stories, photos, partnership working, etc.) is often as important a process for helping communities develop a wider feeling of stewardship for their environment – a sense of place, as the final product.
6. **Promote locally distinctive, sympathetic and sustainable interpretation.** The use of local crafts and skills and/or locally sourced materials can sometimes communicate more about the special qualities of an area than other, more traditional forms of interpretation, Whilst supporting local businesses and promoting a sense of place.
7. **Develop socially inclusive interpretation that is accessible to the intended audiences.** Not all visitors to the National Park are the same. Understanding their varied needs, interests and aspirations is fundamental to effective interpretation. Projects that aim to involve “excluded” groups, such as youth groups in the creation of a sculpture can foster a feeling of stewardship and hence reduce vandalism. Maximising accessibility is about much more than just ensuring that minimum text sizes are used; accessibility needs to be considered at the project inception stage rather than as an afterthought.

## Cross-reference

---

<sup>36</sup> Ham, S. 2004. Making meaning: some thoughts on goals, objectives and themes in *Dehongli Cymru/Interpret Wales*, Spring 2004, Issue 1.

<sup>37</sup> Veverka, J. A. 1998. *Interpretative Master Planning*. Acorn Naturalists, Tustin, California.

<sup>38</sup> Lewis, William J. 1998. *Interpreting for Park Visitors*. Eastern national Park & Monument Association. PA.



### 7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation

#### 7.2.2 Education

#### 7.2.3 Information

#### 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities

### **Bringing the Life and Works of Henry Vaughan to Life**

An exciting historic literary project in the Talybont valley

The Henry Vaughan walk was a successful partnership project involving the Community, the NPA as well as local experts, craftsmen and artists. The idea for the walk was put forward by residents of Talybont-on-Usk under the auspices of the Community Council. It brought together the desire to commemorate the Vaughan brothers who lived in the Usk valley in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and a need to improve access on a popular local route.

The National Park Interpretation Officer worked closely with the community to bring the fascinating story of the Vaughan Brothers to life so that it was relevant and interesting to modern visitors. This was done with a combination of media including interpretation panels, interactive poetry posts, herb garden and a leaflet. The Wardens also played a pivotal role by liaising with contractors and landowners to arrange for the installation of new benches, stiles and way markings to improve access. In addition the Community team assisting with the grant received funding from the Sustainable Village Enhancement Scheme, Sustainable Development Fund, and Article 33 (Powys Council and WAG DEIN).

As a result of this project the following outcomes have been realised:

- Successful partnership with the National Park Authority supporting a local community to define and present their cultural heritage which will increase people's appreciation of the area leading to a wider feeling of stewardship.
- A pro-active approach to interpretation planning enabled a creative and innovative approach to be taken which also promotes good practice.
- An enjoyable walking route in which the learning element is subtle but a clear understandable message is communicated helping to create a sense of place.
- The majority of the work was carried out by local experts, craftsmen and artists, thus supporting the local economy and reducing transportation costs and emissions.
- A well promoted and waymarked route to help give people confidence to explore the National Park safely. As well as physical access to the route, intellectual access to the local heritage was also maximised.

The experience gained from this project has led to the development of a Walking and Interpretation Toolkit which can be downloaded from the National Park Authority website.

## **7.3. Economic and Social Well-being of Local Communities**

The Environment Act 1995 emphasised the importance of the economic and social well-being of local communities to the long-term sustainability of the Park and its special qualities. People are an integral part of the landscape; they have been instrumental in shaping its current form and will continue to contribute significantly to its formulation now and in the future. All of the sections described in Chapter 7 are dependent on the involvement of local communities to realise their strategic objectives. This section, however, focuses more on the provision of processes and infrastructure needed to ensure the socio-economic well-being of the Park's communities and build resilience to future changes – such as climate change (see Chapter 5) – Whilst conserving and enhancing the Park's special qualities. This remit extends far beyond the scope of the NPA, reaching from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) to individuals within each community. Most importantly, though, this effort entails empowering people to become actively involved in decision-making and management endeavours that impact the future of their communities, towns and villages within the context of the Park's purposes.

### **7.3.1. Sustainable Communities**

The Brecon Beacons National Park has a population of about 33,000, concentrated in the Usk valley between Brecon and Gilwern, and in the Clydach Gorge between Gilwern and Brynmawr. The main settlements are Brecon (pop. 7,900), Gilwern, Hay-on-Wye, Crickhowell, Talgarth and Sennybridge. There are many smaller villages, hamlets and scattered farms.

Although agriculture has long been the basis of the Park's economy, only a tenth of the working population is now directly employed in it. Public, financial and other services are the main employers of Park residents, followed by distribution and catering. As with all rural areas, the centralisation of shopping and other services and reduction in public transport have radically affected the way of life. These factors have exacerbated the volume of commuting from the Park to urban centres and into the Park from areas of lower cost housing. One consequence has been a dramatic increase in private car use.

The vision for the National Park includes healthy and socially inclusive communities and a sustainable, thriving economic, social and cultural life. The NPA and its partners in pursuing its two statutory purposes must "seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities." Both affordable housing and employment issues have been raised as central issues related to local community needs. The NPA does not have a primary responsibility

for economic development and does not function as a housing authority, but it is an important catalyst in its role as Local Planning Authority, allocating land for development and community needs. Major components of the local economy, especially agriculture and tourism, are directly related to the Park's statutory purposes, whilst the position of the National Park close to industrial South Wales is important in attracting industry. Thus the NPA's work makes a direct contribution to economic life.

The NPA's approach to this duty is rooted in its commitment to sustainability. Sustainability as it applies to community development implies that people devise their own strategies for promoting long term investment in social capital to make their community, environment and economy healthy and vibrant for the long term. The concept of sustainable communities is supported by the Wales Spatial Plan and the Assembly Government's "One Wales - Connecting the Nation," Wales Transport Strategy. Strategic objectives herein also support the Assembly's proposed development of sector targets for carbon emission reductions as well as improving access to services and facilities for those who do not have private transport. The Government's priorities for sustainable communities include climate change, economy, health, education and social inclusion.

The long-term sustainability of NPA policies is dependent on good working relationships with other agencies and with local people. With this end in mind, the three Welsh NPA's will:

- Involve local people in the development of appropriate policies and recognise the strength and value of local aspirations and skills as well as the importance of national designations and approaches;
- Seek to ensure that all sectors of the local population have an opportunity to participate in this process;
- Assist local communities to meet the obligations of and realise the opportunities provided by sustainable development despite any handicaps resulting from remoteness or a narrow economic base.

With respect to the BBNP, the NPA and its partners deliver these aims through a variety of means, including their Disability Equality work and policies, the NPA's Sustainable Development Fund, the Green Valleys Initiative and many other programmes promoting social and economic sustainability. Much work is also being conducted by the Local Service Boards by way of the Rural Development Plan and Community Strategies.

Community councils represent local democracy at the grassroots, and the NPA has a statutory responsibility to consult with them over development control issues. In addition, a close working relationship with the 50 councils in the Park is of mutual benefit in achieving the NPMP's objectives and improving the quality of life locally.

### **Strategic Objectives for Sustainable Communities**

- 1. Prepare the National Park communities for climate change and fossil fuel depletion by building resilience to ensure minimised economic and social impact.** Climate change is likely to alter the future way of life for the Park's communities, including: extreme weather events, hot and dry summers, wetter winters, agricultural changes, water shortages and demographic changes as UK and world populations migrate. Predictions of the effects of peak oil vary, though the potential impacts may be just as significant and may affect people more dramatically in the short term than climate change. A decline in oil production given continued growth in consumption will most likely reduce the affordability and availability of fuel for personal and commercial transport, for instance, which may in turn significantly increase living costs (e.g., for food production, heating and energy costs and transport).
- 2. Reduce direct and indirect production of greenhouse gases by the National Park's communities.** Everyone needs to reduce the production of greenhouse gases if we are to limit the potential impacts associated with human-induced climate change. The communities within the Park are expected to play their part in achieving national targets designed to mitigate climate change. Where possible, the Park's communities should also demonstrate innovative means for achieving these targets. Strategic objectives related to transport options, the major sector contributing to the national carbon footprint, are addressed in the Transport section (7.3.5). Renewable energy objectives are discussed in the Energy section (7.1.11). These efforts will require integrated actions across all sectors of the Park to reduce its communities' contributions to greenhouse gas emissions.
- 3. Support and enhance local production and local economic supply chains.** There are widely recognised benefits in strengthening local supply chains. Economically, the multiplier effect of local purchasing means more money is retained in the community. Socially, local links are strengthened and social enterprises help deliver multiple benefits. Environmentally, greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide production, associated with transporting goods, services and customers are reduced. To achieve this

strategic objective, the NPA and its partners will need to: strengthen local production of goods (e.g., food and added valued food products), strengthen local production of services (e.g., recycling, energy production), strengthen social enterprise, and support and enable local purchasing. The NPA, with other bodies, is able to use its contacts and expertise to help communities retain, provide and improve facilities and amenities. This in turn can help communities to remain viable, in line with the vision for the Park.

4. **Address and breakdown actual and perceptual barriers experienced by socially excluded groups.** An Audit of Social Inclusion in the three Welsh National Parks highlighted a range of actual and perceptual barriers to accessing the Park amongst excluded groups from within and beyond the Park boundary. It is implicit in the Park's second purpose that enjoyment and understanding of the National Park is for all. It is the responsibility of the NPA and its partners then to ensure that, where practicable, barriers are addressed.
  
5. **Ensure that all sectors of the Park's communities are able to contribute to development of, appreciate the benefits of, and play a part in the delivery of NPMP objectives.** Development and delivery of the National Park Management Plan involves careful consideration of community aspirations. Integration of the NPMP with Community Strategies facilitates this process, reflecting community aspirations for economic, social and environmental well-being. Successful integration requires the NPA to actively pursue partnership opportunities. By the same token, integration requires commitment on behalf of communities as well as voluntary, private and public sectors to delivering the NPMP objectives. Consequently, the NPA have and will continue to involve key stakeholders from all sectors across all the unitary authority areas in the Park.

### **Cross-reference**

- 7.1.5. Built Environment
- 7.1.11 Energy
- 7.3.4 Planning and Development

## **Sustainable Development Fund (SDF)**

### **Aim**

Through partnership, to develop and test ways of achieving a more sustainable way of living in a countryside of great natural beauty and diversity in which the local characteristics of culture, wildlife, landscape, land use and community are conserved and enhanced.

### **Objectives**

- To explore ways of meeting concurrently the 4 principles of sustainability\* and of breaking down barriers that can act as obstacles to sustainability.
- To develop models for the sustainable management of the countryside that could be applied more widely in Wales.
- To generate greater awareness and understanding of sustainability.

#### **Four principles:**

- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment;
- Prudent use of natural resources; and
- Maintenance of high & stable economic growth & employment.

### **Eligibility**

Projects will have to:

- Be sustainable – link social, environmental, cultural and economic issues through public participation;
- Demonstrate genuine support or involvement of communities within the Park;
- Support one or more of the objectives of the scheme;
- Be complementary to key local and national strategies;
- Bring organisations together in partnership to tackle problems;
- Be compliant with the principle of treating the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality in dealings with the public (e.g., publicity literature and signage) as set out in the Welsh Assembly Government's Welsh Language Scheme.

### **Sustainable Development Fund (continued)**

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Overcome institutional arrangements, relationships and cultures that may be creating barriers to sustainability;
- Demonstrate innovation or best practice;
- Involve young people;
- Support community based sustainable transport initiatives designed to reduce their carbon footprint;
- Support sustainable visitor transport initiatives, including access to visitor "hot spots";
- Support sustainable food marketing and the promotion and consumption of local produce;
- Promote the sustainable use of water resources, through the support of projects designed to promote access to water;
- For which no other resources exist;
- Which lever in contributions from other sources (in cash or kind);
- Promote wider understanding of sustainability;
- Add value or new dimensions to existing sustainability projects;
- Support local disadvantage and disabled groups;
- Derive support from and provide support to local businesses;
- Encourage social inclusion.

### **Projects Outside Park/AONB Boundaries**

Whilst projects are designed to support communities within Park and AONB boundaries, there is flexibility to support projects in communities immediately adjacent to Park and AONB boundaries to encourage closer links between those communities and Park and AONBs.

### **Transferability**

Where appropriate, SDF Officers should discuss with applicants the possibility of supporting projects which can be replicated elsewhere.

### **Grants**

The scheme will provide project grants, management grants (to support staff costs) and development grants (to provide a catalyst for new action or partnerships). Grant rates will normally be set at 50%, plus an appropriate element for overheads (10%), but up to 100% will be available in exceptional circumstances.

### 7.3.2. Sustainable Tourism

Tourism is the industry that encourages people to enjoy the National Park and which provides facilities and services for them. It is an essential component of the economy of this National Park which hosts over 3.6 million visitors each year. Tourists, in turn, have a significant effect on sustainability in the Park. They may create pressures that effect the environment and the lives of Park residents, through their use of private cars for transport to and within the Park for instance. Simultaneously, the industry is itself dependent on the Park's healthy environment, special qualities, and attractions. A sustainable approach to tourism is, therefore, beneficial to visitors, local communities, and the Park as a whole.

Tourism supports a wide diversity of businesses including the accommodation sector, local food producers, attractions such as the Show Caves, historic buildings and activity centres. It can make a very positive contribution to sustainable development. Tourism builds strong links with agriculture which can be developed to mutual benefit, it supports the many rural shops, pubs and businesses of great importance to local people and it can contribute to the regeneration of communities with a strong industrial heritage story to tell such as is being implemented at the Blaenavon WHS.

In 2006 the Brecon Beacons Sustainable Tourism Partnership approved a Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the BBNP as a destination. The Partnership involves a wide variety of stakeholders, from private businesses to local authorities and tourism bodies.

The strategy was developed over 18 months of intensive consultation and discussions. It is for all partners to implement and is based on the sustainable management of the destination as a whole – not just the development of tourism as such but the management of that tourism and the impacts it has so as to protect the environment on which it is based (see Figure 7.3.1).

The vision for the Tourism Strategy is:

*"By 2020 the area will be an exemplar of sustainable tourism development in protected areas, building on: a strong sense of place, the indigenous natural and cultural heritage of the Brecon Beacons, and a reputation for quality built upon communities, public sector and business interests working closely together to exceed the expectations of visitors."*



The Strategy was submitted to the Europarc Federation in February 2007 as part of an application for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas which was subsequently awarded to the BBNP in Cesky Krumlov (Czech Republic) in September 2007.

### **European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas**

The Brecon Beacons National Park was awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas in 2007, providing innumerable benefits to the Park and its communities. By subscribing to the Charter, the Park “chooses to adopt tourism development that is compatible with the principles of sustainable development. It agrees to favour a coherent approach to projects within its own area and to take a long term view of the management of the area” (Europarc Federation 2007). In so doing, the Park will prioritise co-operation and the sharing of responsibilities in order to improve the effectiveness of its mission to protect the environment.

The Charter requires that a strategy be prepared for the Park that will:

- Protect and enhance the natural and cultural heritage;
- Improve the quality of the tourism experience;
- Raise public awareness of the Park’s special qualities;
- Develop tourism specific to the area;
- Support training programmes for staff and other target groups;
- Protect and support the quality of life for local residents;
- Increase benefits from tourism to the local economy and;
- Monitor and control visitor numbers.

These same principles are at the core of the guiding principles underpinning this Management Plan (Chapter 6) and reinforce the statutory purposes and duty that are the foundation of the Park’s designation. Pursuit of the Charter’s principles in tandem with those of the Management Plan can only serve to benefit the National Park, its visitors and the people who reside here.

Visit Wales, Regional Tourism Partnerships, the Heads of the Valleys Partnership and UAs also have strategies for tourism. Visit Wales is responsible for developing tourism in Wales, and its strategy document, *Achieving Our Potential*, endorses the partnership approach adopted by the NPA. The NPA sees its role as maintaining co-ordination and dialogue between the players within the Park. The partnership based tourism strategy aims to increase sustainability by ensuring social, economic and environmental benefits.

### **Strategic Objectives for Sustainable Tourism**

1. **Invest in well researched, planned and coordinated product development based on the natural strengths and culture of the area.** Tourism is considered

to be a key priority for sustainable development in rural areas such as the Brecon Beacons National Park. It is an industry particularly sensitive to sustainable objectives both because it is the environment that is its key resource and because the key markets for its products are themselves sensitive to these messages. Under the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism model, local communities are involved in guiding the development of tourism in their area and an aim of the Strategy is to encourage them to undertake tourism in their own right. The model ensures that tourism must be implemented through a partnership approach based upon piloting new ideas, defining clear roles and responsibilities, and committing to sustainable tourism principles.

2. **Continue to improve the understanding of tourism trends, market behaviour and the business of tourism in and around the National Park.** Knowledge of the state and trends associated with a resource is the cornerstone to successful management. Tourism is no exception to this principle. Increasing amounts of data are available that are Park-specific and this will be built on using a coordinated approach to research. Profitable investigations include: visitor satisfaction surveys, economic baseline data, visitor carrying capacity and the development and monitoring of agreed sustainable tourism indicators.
3. **Refine the tourism organisational structure to help create a stronger partnership approach involving all key stakeholders.** The Brecon Beacons as a National Park and as a tourism destination sits on the intersection of a wide variety of administrative boundaries. Not only are there nine local authorities with land inside the Park boundary, but authorities outside the boundary are impacted upon by the Park's tourism activity. In addition, three WAG regions cross the Park. Even at a national level, the needs of England, particularly in the shape of Herefordshire which borders the Park, have to be taken into account. Consequently, there is a need to form a functional organisational structure through which tourism bodies can continue to improve communications and consultations, and the delivery of strategies/ programmes/ actions. In 2002 such a body was set up that has now evolved into the Sustainable Tourism Partnership. A core part of the BBNP Tourism Strategy involves developing and evolving this body to better serve the needs of the destination.
4. **Encourage collaborative marketing activities based upon the Brecon Beacons brand.** This has evolved as part of the Britain's Breathing Spaces project and its Welsh derivative with substantial investment on behalf of partners. The BBNP Tourism Strategy aims to harmonise the promotional activities of partners and enhance the economic

benefits of tourism. Tourism supports agriculture and the economy by providing both additional income and a market for local produce and services, for example. A national park has a strong – brand image which can be used in the promotion of sustainable tourism. Use of this brand image can also capitalise on opportunities created by being a member of the family of national parks, as well as those created by being part of tourism in Wales.

5. **Enhance the National Park experience for all people, residents and visitors alike.** A sustainable approach to a better National Park experience requires integration with other activities, strategies, policies and activities throughout the Park. Developing an integrated approach to the delivery of a high quality experience within the National Park is based upon a collaborative and coordinated approach to encourage people to stay longer, spend more money and to have a greater appreciation of the special qualities of the National Park. People who come to appreciate the National Park are more likely to care for and protect it and its resources.
6. **Manage the impacts of tourism.** Sustainable tourism helps visitors appreciate the need for conservation; with good management, more visitors can be welcomed to the Park with fewer adverse effects. However, inappropriate development, lack of management, or excessive visitor numbers can degrade the environment and long-term economic and community benefits. In the context of managing a protected area, Section 62 of the Environment Act states that public agencies such as Visit Wales are constrained to ensure that their actions do not adversely affect the integrity of the National Park's special qualities. The Sustainable Tourism Strategy was therefore developed in an effort to integrate various strategic objectives related to tourism and visitor management. The Strategy's course of action commands wide support across the broad strategic arena. It is this exercise in integration that formed the basis for the award of the European Charter. The Charter requires that impacts associated with tourism activities are monitored and subsequent management actions are taken to reduce adverse impacts on Park resources.
7. **Promote the National Park as an exemplar of sustainable living.** In the next twenty years, the National Park will be home to self-sufficient communities that, amongst other achievements, produce food locally, generate a high proportion of their energy needs from renewable sources, exhibit highly efficient building designs, have developed sustainable and effective means of meeting transport needs and have

enhanced biodiversity. The tourism industry will capitalise on these models for sustainable living.

8. **Realise fully the tourism potential of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal whilst its attractive setting is conserved and enhanced.** The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal is a key component of the Park's landscape, regional history, local culture and ecology. Because of these and other factors, it is a key tourist attraction within the National Park. The Canal allows people to enjoy the special qualities of the Park through a variety of transport options. It is the aspiration of this Plan that the Canal will continue to be well-managed for its landscape, ecological, social and historic values and as a linear routeway for sustainable transport on foot, by bike and by boat.

### **Cross-references**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.4 Historic Environment
- 7.1.6 Culture and Traditions
- 7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation
- 7.2.3 Information
- 7.2.4 Education
- 7.2.5 Interpretation
- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.3 Fforest Fawr Geopark
- 7.3.5 Transport

#### **7.3.3. Fforest Fawr Geopark**

Fforest Fawr Geopark was established in 2005 in the western part of the National Park. The Geopark's overarching purpose is to work at a landscape scale to safeguard and enhance geodiversity, biodiversity and related cultural heritage through local partnerships, enabling communities and businesses to understand its importance and take economic advantage of its special qualities in pursuit of sustainable development. The key to the Geopark's success is the engagement of local communities and local businesses. It is a member of the European Geoparks Network (EGN) and the UNESCO Global Network of National Geoparks (GGN). The Brecon Beacons National Park is unique in having within its borders, in Fforest Fawr and in Blaenavon's industrial landscape, the two UNESCO designations of Global Geopark and World Heritage Site.

Fforest Fawr Geopark is run by a Partnership Board involving key partners at a senior level working with a Management Group that coordinates and develops partner activity on the ground. The promotion and interpretation of the Geopark takes place within the context of it being 'a park within a park', recognising the importance of each designation on a topic by topic basis in the west of the National Park. The success of the Geopark is ensured through efficient and effective partnership working and by interfacing with other parts of this Management Plan.

Currently (2008) a new Geopark Action Plan is under development. The vision and objectives have been finalised and have been informed by the NPMP consultation process. NPMP consultation will continue to inform the decision making on the Geopark Action Plan.

### **Strategic Objectives for Fforest Fawr Geopark**

- 1. Develop landscape-scale conservation of geodiversity, bio-diversity and related cultural heritage.** Conservation is a key priority for sustainable development. With the Geopark designation, there is the opportunity of applying landscape scale programmes in concert with work being undertaken as part of other sections of this plan. Whilst geodiversity conservation is clearly important, it is not the exclusive priority; bio-diversity and cultural conservation are equally parts of this programme.
- 2. Improve the visitor experience, particularly by developing information and interpretation of its special qualities.** A key to enabling sustainable development is providing opportunities for people to enjoy and benefit from the designation. In this way their experience of the area is deepened by understanding it in more detail. They are also more likely to return if they have had an enjoyable time. Public, private and voluntary sector organisations all have significant roles to play in improving the visitor experience. The private sector contributes, for instance, by offering opportunities to experience the landscape through outdoor activities, commercially run attractions or other activities. An emphasis on developing and utilising the area's Sense of Place is vital to this process.
- 3. Support sustainable tourism and other forms of sustainable economic development.** Tourism is the most obvious way in which a designation like Geopark can benefit the area. The work of the partnership should be focused on improving the public and private tourism infrastructure in concert with tourism development elsewhere in the National Park. Enhancing the sustainability of the tourism industry and

the visitor experience is of critical importance again in all sectors. In addition the Geopark will explore other ways in which sustainable economic development can be supported through its work.

4. **Act as a focus for environmental/earth education and research.** Developing understanding, particularly amongst local people, of the Geopark and its special qualities by working with youth groups, schools, colleges and universities is important. Equally engaging young visitors is an important aspect of the Geopark's work. Lastly supporting and enabling scientific, particularly geological, research increases understanding of the processes that underpin the special qualities and enables both scientific and educational objectives to be met.
5. **Engage local communities in new ways of working towards sustainable development.** Ultimately the Geopark designation and its sustainable development aims are focused on improving the long term viability of local communities. It is therefore important to involve local communities, their residents and businesses in the development of Geopark initiatives in their locality and to encourage them to undertake their own projects as part of the Geopark's development. Tourism is the most obvious way in which a designation like Geopark can benefit the area. The work of the partnership should be focused on improving the public and private tourism infrastructure in concert with tourism development elsewhere in the National Park. New ways of working will be explored and developed with communications being seen as the key priority. Geopark development will be monitored to assess its impact on sustainable economic, environmental and social development.
6. **Seek to include all sectors of society in developing the work of the Geopark.** The Geopark must not be seen as being the exclusive preserve of any sector of society whether in host local communities or visitors. Active steps will be taken to encourage minority groups to visit by ensuring their special needs are met.
7. **Use the area's geological heritage to encourage partners, visitors, businesses and communities to address the challenges of climate change.** The story of geological development can inform our understanding of current climate change issues. By incorporating this theme into Geopark development it is hoped that both understanding and awareness of local issues will be raised through a better understanding of global issues, leading to real world actions on behalf of all stakeholders.

## **Cross-references**

- 7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation
- 7.2.3 Information
- 7.2.4 Education
- 7.2.5 Interpretation
- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.2 Sustainable Tourism

### **7.3.4. Planning and Development**

Planning is the principal process for achieving sustainable development in the National Park. The BBNPA is the local planning authority (LPA) for the Park. It has the statutory functions of controlling development and producing a development plan for the Park. The NPA works with neighbouring LPAs to draw up strategic planning guidance. Owing to its location, it is represented on three of Wales' four sub-regional planning groups. The NPA is currently consulting on and will publish a new Local Development Plan (LDP) within the lifespan of this Management Plan.

In fulfilling their planning roles, the NPA and other LPAs are subject to planning legislation, Government guidance and regulations. In most cases, these apply in the same way both inside and outside National Parks, for example in planning for residential development whilst protecting countryside for its own sake. In addition, Government planning guidance for Wales requires NPAs to give great weight to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty within the Park. It states that developments which are of more (UK) national rather than local significance will not be permitted in the National Park save in those exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that overriding public need, and severe detriment to the local economy, outweigh the National Park designation.

The NPA uses its planning function to help achieve its wider aims and objectives. Planning is a means of integrating appropriate development with the landscape and existing settlements, integrating development with transport, allowing for recreational facilities and providing housing and employment for local people. It is a way to encourage sustainable living whilst providing public benefits now and with an eye to the future. The NPA sets standards and policies via the LDP to promote innovative solutions to complex societal issues, such as affordable housing, potential impacts associated with climate change or fossil fuel depletion. The LDP also addresses the interaction of many of these issues through, for example, the appropriate siting of new development to reduce the risk of flooding and to mitigate the

compound impacts that climate change will bring to these considerations (see also 7.1.8 Water Resources). Thus many of the objectives in this Management Plan involve an action to include relevant policies in the LDP. Land use and transport planning will be linked through the Regional Transport Plans.

Development in the Park must be sustainable. Its role as LPA gives the NPA many opportunities to apply the principles of sustainability to land use, local food production and small-scale energy initiatives, particularly in light of climatic uncertainty. Sustainability involves ensuring a better future for the planet's environment and people by conserving resources and involving local people in decision-making. The NPA is developing its land allocations, policies and design guidance so as to save energy, and reduce waste, pollution and the need to travel. As it is formulated, the NPA will involve Park residents in both strategic and local aspects of the Local Development Plan.

### **Strategic Objectives for Planning and Development**

- 1. Prepare an LDP which is responsive to drivers of change and enables development to meet identified needs.** The Authority is required to prepare an LDP which will guide all future development in the National Park over the next 15 years. The LDP will address the unique economic, environmental, and social characteristics, opportunities and issues of the Area. It is based on the vision, objectives and priorities contained in this National Park Management Plan. The LDP will address the land use aspects of the NPMP. The NPA will prepare an LDP which is resilient and responsive to drivers of change (see Chapter 5) and which helps the Park's communities mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change where possible.
- 2. Provide a first class planning service.** The NPA has statutory functions of controlling development and producing a development plan for the Park. The NPA's role as LPA gives it a high profile in the local community. It therefore seeks to involve the public in the development of planning policy. The Planning Services Charter sets out how the NPA aims to make development control and all its planning services user-friendly. The planning system is complex, and the NPA has a role in explaining it to community councils and others. In order to make its services first class, the NPA aims to improve consistency of decision making, increase public engagement in, understanding of and satisfaction with the NPA's planning service and improve relationships with partner organisations.



3. **Ensure that there is sufficient land for market and affordable housing to meet the identified need.** The NPA has a statutory duty to provide for a level of housing in the Park appropriate to its designation whilst maintaining community vitality. The NPA is not a housing authority; this is the role of the unitary authorities. Nonetheless the NPA works closely with the relevant Housing Authorities in the preparation of the Local Housing Market Assessments and Local Housing Strategies. By way of the LDP, the NPA sets out policies for the provision of land for housing, including affordable housing. This provision not only requires the identification of appropriate sites for housing but also requires prioritising these in strategic planning as well as in funding programmes. There is expressed need for access to affordable housing across the Park's communities. Trends for the National Park indicate that this need is likely to be long term. The NPA has been working with relevant stakeholders – including the unitary authorities and developers – to identify opportunities to deliver more affordable housing and will continue to do so as it formulates the Local Development Plan. The NPA and its partners will work to ensure that all new housing, including affordable housing, in the Park and on its boundaries is of high design and quality and responds to its local context.
4. **Allocate sufficient land for the provision of a variety and mix of employment opportunities to encourage a better link between the provision of employment and housing.** In terms of securing the social and economic well-being of the Park's communities, appropriate and affordable housing provision are clearly vital ingredients. Just as important to the sustainability and viability of local communities is the provision of employment opportunities that provide for the livelihood of the Park's residents. Although the NPA is not the lead economic development or community development agency, WAG encourage the NPA to foster partnerships that retain and promote local employment opportunities that are in keeping with rural development objectives. Consideration must therefore be given to the availability of appropriate land and investment in infrastructure and services that promote sustainable communities. The NPA and its partners will ensure the availability of land and investment in the Park is consistent with the special qualities of the area and avoids damage to important nature conservation sites and species.
5. **Maintain and encourage the vitality and viability of the Park's communities and town centres.** The overriding principle behind the NPA's planning policies is that of sustainable development; development must be appropriate to the Park's statutory purposes and its rural situation. Inherent in this principle are the concepts of sense of place, social inclusion, community health and well-being, and local empowerment. From

the standpoint of local communities, this means that the NPA and its partners should encourage development which contributes to the creation of sustainable places, promotes integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all and enables development that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being.

6. **Improve the physical quality, energy efficiency, accessibility and sustainable design and construction of all development throughout the Park.** Building styles from different centuries are represented across the Park. These need to be conserved and appropriate elements reflected in the designs for new developments. Guidance for applicants is also needed on maximising the energy efficiency of their proposals, and reducing the materials used and waste produced. In keeping with the National Park's commitments to sustainability and the climate change agenda, the NPA has produced up-to-date guidance on sustainable building design and materials in the National Park. This Sustainable Design Guide is an exemplar in sustainable design locally and nationally.
7. **Minimise light and noise pollution.** Despite its proximity to urban centres such as Cardiff, Bristol and Swansea, the Park boasts a dark night sky year round where, on clear nights, a abundance of stars can be seen. Similarly, its low population density and lack of major motorways limit light and noise pollution. These factors contribute significantly to the sense of tranquillity and remoteness so often cited as a key special quality of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The NPA and its partners will seek to maintain and enhance these attributes.

### **Cross-references**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.4 Historic Environment
- 7.1.5 Built Environment
- 7.1.8 Water Resources
- 7.1.10 Minerals
- 7.1.11 Energy
- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.4 Transport
- 7.3.5 Waste

### 7.3.5. Transport

Transport is necessary for most journeys to and within the National Park, for both residents and visitors. The Park is particularly dependent on road transport for both people and goods. There are no railway stations within the Park's boundaries (although several serve its periphery), and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal is at present restricted to pleasure use. Cycling and horse riding are primarily recreational activities, and outside Brecon public transport is inadequate to serve most needs. Private vehicles are therefore essential to residents, visitors, businesses and agriculture in the Park.

Additionally, there are those both in and outside the Park whose mobility is limited by a lack of transport, and there is an unmet demand for access via public transport to destinations either side of the Park boundary. Promoting access for all to the Park and ensuring that residents have access to services and facilities are important objectives for the NPA.

Detailed information on traffic movements around the Park is difficult to obtain as there are many roads of various grades under the control of WAG and seven Unitary Authorities. The most accessible traffic data sets come from STEAM and relates to tourist traffic. Between 2003 and 2004, the number of tourist cars on the road rose 4%. However, the amount of tourist traffic decreased between 2000 and 2004, with numbers not having reached those recorded prior to the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in 2001. This goes against the trend of an overall increase in vehicles on the roads in Wales for the same period, as reported in the Welsh Transport Statistics 2004. A special data collection exercise would be required to determine the trends in all traffic across the Park.

The impact of transporting people into and around the National Park contributes to the Park's ecological footprint. Alleviating this contribution was identified in the Sustainable Tourism Strategy as a high priority task. Equally it is probably one of the most difficult tasks to address in view of the dispersed nature of the centres of population/tourism attractions and the natural propensity of visitors to use car-based transport.

The NPA is very concerned with transport issues because of their effect on sustainability, the environment and communities, and their importance for residents and visitors. However, its influence is limited; the NPA is not the Highway Authority (HA) for the Park. The relevant powers and resources rest with the National Assembly and HAs, which must have regard to National Park purposes and "ensure mutual co-operation across Park boundaries, particularly in planning and highway matters." In accordance with the BBNPA

Planning Obligations Strategy, the NPA will work in partnership with the constituent HAs to negotiate Section 106 monies where appropriate for necessary highways improvements.

Regional Transport Consortia are required to set out their transport strategy in five-year Regional Transport Plans (RTPs), with the aim of providing an integrated transport system. There must be local targets for tackling pollution and congestion, more traffic management, road safety, public transport and alternative modes of transport. There will be more certainty of funding for initiatives, wider public consultation and powers to charge for road use and parking. RTPs must also be consistent and integrated with the land use strategy contained in UDPs, the forthcoming LDPs and the Wales Transport Strategy. The Park is covered by three such RTCs and their RTPs. It is important that the prescriptions of this Plan are incorporated into those of all three RTPs.

#### **Beacons Bus Project**

The primary involvement historically of the NPA with visitor transport has been the development of the Beacons Bus project. The summer Sunday and Bank Holiday network operates by bringing day visitors from across South Wales into and around the National Park. It has grown significantly since its inception in 1999 and now provides nearly 10,000 passenger journeys per year. It is run by a partnership of the NPA together with 14 other public and voluntary bodies and is seen as being highly successful. It has achieved significant modal shift, delivers high quality social inclusion objectives, and enables interpretive work to be undertaken with guides on the buses.

In addition, some work has been done to make it easier for those keen to do so, to use public transport. Actions have been to publish a guide to using public transport, an annual timetable of all services in the National Park and to incorporate public transport messages and information within appropriate publications and websites.

The Wales Spatial Plan encourages transport-related improvements be made in the Park to fully realise local socio-economic and commercial potential, particularly with respect to key settlements (Brecon, Talgarth and Hay-on-Wye). These interventions should be pursued as part of the Regional Transport Plan to ensure that their strategic status is not restricted by accessibility constraints, and ensure that strategic transport linkages both east-west north-south are maintained and enhanced. As with any development in the NP, any proposed developments or infrastructure must be in keeping with the Park's purposes and duty as well as the UDP and forthcoming LDP.

Furthering this, the County Surveyors' Society, National Park Officers' Group, Countryside Commission and CCW published a *Joint Statement on Traffic and Transport Policy and Practice*

*in National Parks* (1996). It comprises a commitment to work together to deliver good design and sustainable traffic and transport systems which support National Park purposes, meet the needs of local communities and are fully integrated with land use and management strategies. The consultations on this Management Plan are part of this process, and a start has been made with the Beacons Bus Partnership and Visitor Transport Partnership. The NPA can only coordinate work in this regard - the primary burden for the delivery of sustainable transport will remain with the LAs and RTCs. It is essential (especially since so many administrative boundaries are crossed) that public bodies work together toward common aims and that a joined up partnership approach is taken.

### **Strategic Objectives for Transport**

- 1. Reduce the need for travel by controlling the location and design of development.** The NPA itself is not a Highway Authority but is responsible for strategic land use planning and for determining applications for highway works which require planning permission. Powys, the Highway Authority for the majority of the National Park area, works closely with the NPA and other highway authorities in the production of integrated transport and land-use strategies, particularly with the aim of assisting in the production of the National Park's Local Development Plan. The NPA also has an improved planning obligation strategy. This strategy enables the UAs to identify benefits that could be brought to local communities through a development (e.g., cycle route or transport plan). The NPA could, for example, allocate sufficient land to encourage community food production Whilst Highway Authorities strategically linked this land to places of residence via local transport routes. Given the role of quality data in monitoring progress, the NPA and Highway Authorities will work together to explore collection of appropriate data and trends across the Park. The NPA will be considering these and other factors as part of the development of the Park's forthcoming Local Development Plan.
- 2. Provide an integrated transport system that encourages healthy and active lifestyles and supports local communities.** The need to travel should be reduced, and the attractiveness and range of public transport options increased, without adversely affecting the overall quality of people's lives. Better links between modes of public transport, recreational travel and access to the countryside would benefit tourists and residents alike. This work can only be achieved by partnership working between the NPA, LAs, RTCs and WAG.

- 3. Encourage the development of new and existing services aimed at the visitor market.** Partnership working, particularly between the NPA and LAs, will be necessary to develop and market services with the needs of visitors in mind to provide transport to those attractions and outdoor activity locations that would especially benefit. The Beacons Bus project will continue to grow in time and space with the aim of covering as much of the summer season as possible and increasing routes to meet demand. Similarly, best use should be made of existing weekday service networks by ensuring that journeys are made easier for visitors with high quality marketing, information and service provision, including excellent customer care from transport operators. Work would include a network of strategically placed transport gateways and interchanges where information for visitors is attractively presented and interchanges facilitated.
- 4. Facilitate sustainable long distance transport to the National Park.** The National Park has a role in retaining holiday visits within the UK and avoiding the impact of air-based transport to destinations like the Mediterranean. This also improves the retention of finance in the country. However this in no way diminishes the need for action to be taken to encourage visitors to use non-car based transport for travelling to and within the area. The key to this process is integration with a need for rail/coach/bus interchanges to work efficiently for visitors. The Traws-Cambria bus service developed by the Assembly Government is a key component in the delivery of this integrated system. Partnership working is needed between WAG, LAs and the NPA to enable maximum benefit to be drawn from this service. Work has also been done to link the National Park with the towns on the periphery, and integrate mechanised transport modes and walking and cycling routes extending from the Swansea valley, through Ystradgynlais and across the National Park to Brecon. Further work is planned to create modal interchanges and support activities for walking, cycling and horse riding at towns on the periphery of the Brecon Beacons, and at a limited number of internal settlements where this would not detract from the character and beauty of the National Park. This will also provide economic benefits to local people.
- 5. Work with Transport Generators on Green Travel Plans.** Travel plans are intended to be a decisive mechanism in encouraging a shift to public transport and/or car sharing, walking and cycling for commuting and business journeys. Public and private sector attractions, festivals, tourism businesses and other organisations can minimise their impacts through the adoption of these Plans.

6. **Support working practices and behaviour change initiatives that reduce the Park's greenhouse gas emissions and reduce people's dependency on fossil fuels for transport.** In addition to Green Travel Plans, the NPA and Local Authority partners recognise that change needs to be made in the extent, quality and modes of operation of public transport services and in the availability and quality of public transport information. Powys County Council is working with the NPA and partner authorities in TraCC to achieve these aims and to minimise the consumption of fossil fuels. This strategic objective will also require an investment in raising people's awareness about climate change concerns and about the declining production of fossil fuels, particularly petroleum.
7. **Develop Sustainable Travel Marketing.** Whatever mechanisms are adopted, it is essential that they are attractively and consistently marketed to the visiting public with a view to educating and persuading use of non-polluting modes of transport.

#### **Cross-references**

- 7.1.7 Air Resources
- 7.1.11 Energy
- 7.2.3 Information
- 7.2.4 Education
- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.2 Sustainable Tourism
- 7.3.4 Planning and Development

#### **7.3.6. Waste Management**

Wales has an estimated five years of landfill space available based on current estimates.<sup>39</sup> The amount of waste generated in Wales continues to increase, straining an already limited resource. The good news is that the rate of waste generation across Wales has begun to slow whilst the percentage of waste recycled or composted has increased significantly. Powys, which has the largest proportion of land inside the National Park, recycles 37% of its waste – more than any other UA in Wales.<sup>40</sup> Several of the Park's other UA's are also recycling more than the national average. These efforts have slipped recently because of lack of financial support. Nonetheless it should be a priority to make recycling more the norm than it currently is by a public awareness campaign and increased facilities.

---

<sup>39</sup> Environment Agency Wales. 2004. Waste Data Update.

<sup>40</sup> Welsh Assembly Government. 2007. Key Environmental Statistics for Wales.

Although the WAG does not condone the allocation of landfills, incinerators, or other waste disposal sites in the Welsh National Parks, the Park's residents and visitors still produce waste which must be dealt with outside Park boundaries. As this approach is unsustainable, the residents and visitors have a responsibility to reduce the regional waste load, reusing and recycling materials where possible. The NPA and its partners in their efforts to achieve sustainability, therefore, share the responsibility of waste management.

The NPA's role in waste issues takes two forms: in its role as LPA, and in the promotion of sustainable waste management ideology throughout the Park (i.e., the reduction of waste generation across the Park and the promotion of reuse and recycling). Both of these roles require close liaison with the UA's, which are responsible for waste collection, and the EA, which regulates waste disposal. As such the NPA will be required to address waste management in developing the LDP.

### **Strategic Objectives for Waste Management**

- 1. Promote the waste hierarchy of reduce, reuse, and recycle across all sectors of the National Park.** The NPA and its partners should seek to minimize the production of waste and seek to contribute to sustainable waste solutions. Plans and strategies should contribute to the South West and South East Wales Regional Waste Plans. The NPA in particular can play a key role in public outreach, through education, interpretation, information, and by serving as an exemplar for sustainable waste management through its own practices.
- 2. Minimise the amount of waste generated in the National Park.** The Regional Waste Plans are underpinned by the principles of sustainability, the waste hierarchy, proximity and regional self-sufficiency. Coupled with the limitations on waste disposal methods within the Park, these principles indicate that the communities within and the visitors to the National Park have an obligation to minimise their contributions to the regional waste stream. Exploration of innovative or alternative options supportive of the Park's purposes and duty and in agreement with the Regional Strategies can be encouraged by the LAs and the NPA.

### **Cross-reference**

- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.4 Planning and Development



### 7.3.7. Military Use of the Park

The Brecon Beacons National Park has a long and rich history of military connections. The military uses the National Park's open spaces for training and adventurous pursuits. Some of these activities have an impact on the Park and the lives of those who live in it and we continue to work very closely with the MOD to fulfil our joint aims for the National Park.

The MOD currently owns about 114 hectares of land in the National Park. This includes the Roman Island Gunsite – an area of land above Trecastle; the camp at Sennybridge, base for the training area in the north of the Park; Dering Lines training camp, the Barracks, the sports fields and Headquarters 160 (Wales) Brigade – all based in Brecon. There are also two small outdoor pursuits' centres in the Park that are owned by the Royal Navy.

Military training takes place on the MOD's own bases, and there is considerable movement of vehicles to and from Brecon and Sennybridge. Jets and Hercules aircraft use the Park's airspace for low flying training and helicopters are used both for moving personnel and training purposes. Services personnel use the National Park's mountainous terrain and rights of way for military and tactical training which is conducted in uniform with packs and weapons. The National Park is also used for adventurous pursuits such as hill walking, rock climbing, canoeing, caving and hang-gliding.

#### **Army Man-power Helps Rebuild National Park**

The Soldier Development Wing, which is based at Sennybridge Training Camp, provides developmental training for over 6,000 recruits throughout the year that are in week 10 of their basic training. During the week they are exposed to local caves, climbing and kayaking/canoeing venues along with physical training in the Brecon Beacons mountain ranges. The National Park area provides the Wing with an excellent array of opportunities to conduct vital training imperative to the recruits' development.

In addition to their training requirements, the soldiers are committed to assisting with conservation improvements and improving their community relations and service. At a time when many organisations face increased resource demands, this support is essential to the ongoing management of the National Park. In turn, these efforts assist soldiers by providing them with a tremendous variety of work and skill development which may be very useful when they are posted abroad.

As part of their continued commitment, the Soldier Development Wing approached Brecon Beacons National Park Authority in 2008 with the offer of extra man-power resources to help contribute to conservation projects including bridge building, footpath repair, stone removal, vegetation clearance and common land beautification. In December, more than 500 soldiers, along with National Park wardens, rolled their sleeves up and braved freezing conditions in the Brecon Beacons enabling vital ground work to be completed on important conservation projects. *Cont'd*

The Army's efforts have provided tremendous support to the Brecon Beacons, with over 6,500 man hours dedicated to improvements at some key sites in the National Park - including the Ystradfellte waterfalls area, the Llanthony Valley, Trefil Quarry and common land. Volunteers are needed year-round in the BBBNP, and the invaluable contribution of the Army has set the scene for further partnership projects in the future.

The military presence in the National Park is part of the area's cultural heritage and economy. The Brecon Barracks was the home of the South Wales Borderers Regiment and a popular museum that is open to the public is sited near the town centre.

The MOD's various establishments offer employment to local civilians and use local services, an important contribution to the Welsh economy. The permanent staff and their families – including a Gurkha company – add cultural diversity to Brecon. They are considered an integral part of the community.

The National Park benefits from the assistance and support of military units training in the Park. Throughout the year these training units provide essential support through skills, manpower and vital ground work to help complete important conservation projects like bridge building, footpath repair, stone removal, vegetation clearance and common land beautification. The National Park Authority maintains regular liaison with Defence Estates, the land managing arm of the MOD, and with HQ 160 for the control of units using common land for training. As a public body, the MOD must under the 1995 Environment Act take account of National Park purposes in carrying out its activities.

### **Strategic Objectives for Military Use of the Park**

- 1. Reduce adverse effects on the Park's landscape, biodiversity and historic interest and on others' enjoyment caused by military exercises and adventurous training.** One of the Park's special qualities is peace and tranquillity, which can be affected by the noise from occasional low flying training aircraft and helicopters. The concern generated by this issue varies with training schedules, but it is not open to influence by the NPA, the Unitary Authorities or concerned local organisations.
- 2. Educate service users on responsible, sustainable and appropriate use of the Park.** The military use of the Park for exercises and adventurous training has effects similar to those caused by organised outdoor pursuits groups. If poorly managed or overdone, these can include traffic on narrow lanes, disturbance to stock, erosion of paths, litter and inconvenience to farmers through occasional damage to walls and

fences. An additional factor is the effect on enjoyment for some of the sight of armed troops in uniform. Where relevant, adventurous events will be covered by the NPA's developing policy on sporting and challenge events.

3. **Maximise the benefits of military activity in and around the Park.** The NPA and MOD continue to maintain a mutually beneficial and accommodating relationship. Exercise Dipper and the Soldier Development Wing training gives visiting units and personnel an opportunity to contribute to the Park's environmental conservation and provides ongoing support to its communities and resource constraints. The NPA seeks to maintain this excellent working relationship.
4. **Manage MOD's rural land in and affecting the Park to support Park purposes.** The MOD strategy takes appropriate account of stakeholders' concerns, consulting with them on detailed codes of practice relating to its management objectives and implementation activities. The MOD owns little rural land in the Park, but any changes to the use of the Sennybridge Ranges might be significant. The MOD now needs planning permission to carry out development on Crown land. The NPA will apply the same design criteria as elsewhere in making comments, and the National Assembly for Wales will arbitrate in any dispute.

#### **Cross-references**

- 7.1.1 Landscape
- 7.1.14 Uplands Management
- 7.2.1 Outdoor Access and Recreation
- 7.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 7.3.4 Planning and Development

## 8. Priorities for Action

Strategic objectives discussed in Chapter 7 have set aspirations for Park management for the next 20 years and beyond. These ambitions have been presented in a format that facilitates consideration of individual management disciplines, such as soils or transport. Effective management of the Park's resources, however, requires integration across disciplines to deliver outcomes that will help achieve long-term ambitions. Landscape management, for instance, is most effectively conducted through the concerted efforts of farmers and graziers, archaeologists, local authorities, water authorities and many others.

This chapter identifies actions that will aid in the delivery of desired outcomes and strategic objectives in the next five years, between review periods for the Management Plan. Actions and outcomes have been identified through consultation and combined with actions from existing policies and other strategic documents. The actions have been grouped together on a pragmatic or functional basis with respect to management under seven themes, or Priorities for Action, rather than by discipline. Actions may be subdivided by topic within a Priority for Action theme to make the link back to strategic objectives, but they are not listed in any particular order otherwise. Similarly, this chapter does not present an exhaustive list of all the actions required to achieve every strategic objective.

The risk of setting priorities is that it may send the message that other issues and management concerns are not a priority. Nothing could be further from the truth. Setting priorities commits to a focus for management, for research, for leveraging funding to deliver outcomes. Other business, by necessity, must still be conducted. Priorities, however, create a unified set of targets on which to focus efforts in the Park rather than taking a scatter-gun approach which ultimately risks accomplishing very little for a broad spectrum of issues.

The Priorities for Action for the BBNP in the next 5 five years (2010-2015) are:

1. Managing Park Landscapes to Maximise Conservation and Public Benefits.
2. Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity.
3. Providing Everyone with Opportunities for Outdoor Access and Recreation.
4. Raising Awareness and Understanding of the Park.
5. Building and Maintaining Sustainable Communities, Towns and Villages.
6. Building Community Pride and Sense of Place.
7. Sustainable Economic Development.

Each Priority for Action theme includes: a brief description of why the theme is important to Park management, desired outcomes related to strategic objectives, actions that are needed to make adequate progress toward the outcomes, and who is needed to deliver the actions. The list of partners involved in delivery of the actions is not comprehensive; it includes the principal responsible parties and should involve everyone positioned to ensure effective delivery of the actions.

## **8.1. Managing Park Landscapes to Maximise Conservation and Public Benefits**

### **8.1.1. Why is this important?**

The Park's landscapes comprise both natural and cultural components. Agricultural and other ecosystems, diverse landforms, geological features, the historic environment and towns and villages – among other elements – contribute to the natural beauty and cultural heritage referenced in the Park's first purpose and to its special qualities. Indeed, the National Park designation confers the UK's highest status of protection as far as landscape and scenic beauty are concerned. Along with biodiversity (see Section 8.2), these elements have value in their own right and provide valuable benefits to local communities and visitors alike. These landscapes contain the natural capital that, if cared for properly, ensures the prosperity and well-being of future generations.

The Park's landscapes are not static, though. The same natural and anthropogenic forces (see Chapter 5) that have contributed to the existing landscapes also influence their future form, in both desirable and undesirable ways. Given the scale of impact associated with some of these drivers of change, such as climate change, there is no guarantee that the Park's special qualities will not be adversely affected. Consequently, active management is necessary to mitigate undesirable processes and optimise the success of conservation efforts and delivery of public benefits. This responsibility is shared across the wide range of stakeholders concerned with the future of the Park and its diverse landscapes, further emphasising the need for an integrated and cohesive approach to landscape management to increase the likelihood of continued success.

### 8.1.2. What are the desired outcomes?

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.1</b>
More wetlands, rivers and streams within the National Park will achieve sustainable conservation management.
Conservation and enhancement of designated geological sites will increase.
The grandeur and sense of wildness associated with the National Park will increase by creating near-natural areas adjacent to the open commons.
Sustainable woodland management will continue to create new habitat and restore disturbed habitats.
Long term funding will be secured to implement large-scale projects across the Park to demonstrate integrated, sustainable landscape-scale conservation on NPA-owned land.
A coordinated approach to national and regional policy will be encouraged so that they are consistent and complimentary.
Native woodlands will be expanded in the Park where appropriate to encourage the native woodland to migrate into the commercial coniferous forests thereby enhancing the existing landscape and habitats.
Air, water and soil resources will be used in a more sustainable manner in all new development, and standards for water, soil and air quality will be maintained at a high level.
Uplands management will be conducted through an integrated approach Whilst utilising and developing local skills and knowledge.
Other significant sites of geological importance and/or nature conservation value, such as limestone pavements will be identified and protected.
Flood defence mechanisms will be improved via the creation of new wet woodland habitats which contribute to reducing the impact of higher water levels downstream and nearer those communities most at risk from flooding.
Quiet informal recreation, health and well-being will be encouraged for both tourists and local residents, contributing to the local economy through tourism activities they attract.
More viable and productive farming businesses will be encouraged within the uplands so that they are able to deliver private and public objectives to enhance the special qualities of the Park.
Forestry practices will continue to maintain landscape sensitive areas and convert plantation to native woodlands on previous ancient woodland sites.
The geological resources of the Park, including the European Geopark, will be protected and enhanced.
The extent of invasive species will be reduced.
A regional strategy for understanding, protecting, managing, monitoring, and raising awareness and enjoyment of the Park's historic environment will be developed and supported through partnership working.

### **8.1.3. To what national policies does this contribute?**

- Agri-environment schemes (Tir Gofal)
- Commons Act
- Conservation Regulations 1994 (as amended)
- Countryside Act 1968
- Countryside Rights of Way(CRoW) Act 2000
- Cultural Strategy for Wales
- Cultural Tourism Strategy for Wales
- Energy Route Map for Wales 2008
- Energy White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge 2007
- Environment Act 1995
- Environment Strategy for Wales
- Farming for the Future
- National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities for Wales 2007
- River Basin Planning Guidance DEFRA and WAG 2006
- Rural Development Plan Wales
- Sustainable Farming and Environment: Action Towards 2020
- Town & Country Planning Act (+ Technical Advice Notes)
- UK Air Quality Strategy
- UK Biomass Strategy 2007
- WAG Renewable Energy Route Map
- Wales Biodiversity Strategy
- Wales Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan
- Wales Spatial Plan 2004
- Water Framework Directive (WFD) Regulations in England & Wales
- Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (1985)
- Woodlands for Wales Strategy 2001

**8.1.4. Actions for Priority 8.1**

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
<b>Farming</b>			
LAN1	Liaise with partners on the reform of rural support measures within the Common Agricultural Policy to enhance the delivery of public benefits within the countryside, particularly with regards to the needs for specific schemes designed for commons.	BBNPA	Farming organisations, WAG, CCW
<b>Geodiversity</b>			
LAN2	Conduct Southeast Wales Regionally Important Geological/ Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) audit.	BGS	BBNPA
LAN3	Plan and undertake site based conservation project work on sites of geological importance.	CCW and BBNPA	
LAN4	Monitor SSSI/SAC/SPAs with geological importance and take action to ensure their favourable conservation status.	CCW	BBNPA
LAN5	Include policies within the LDP which ensure that future development proposals do not harm the rich geodiversity of the National Park in any way.	BBNPA	CCW, LAs



Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
<b>Integrated management</b>			
LAN6	Engage with the public to provide opportunities for raising awareness and understanding of issues related to the sustainable management of the Park's natural landscapes and historic environment.	BBNPA	Farming organisations, graziers, CADW, Archaeological Trusts, CCW, Wildlife Trusts, communities, Welsh Water, EAW, Tourism and other businesses
LAN7	Develop and implement methods to assess and monitor landscape change across the National Park.	BBNPA	CCW, EAW, Cadw
LAN8	Establish the environmental pollution baselines in the NP in accordance with the Wales Environment Strategy. Publish updates in each successive State of the Park Report.	EAW, Local Authorities	BBNPA, CCW
LAN9	Promote a partnership to deliver monitoring of the historic environment and data exchange.	BBNPA	Archaeological Trusts, Cadw
LAN10	Develop an electronic index that identifies natural and historical data sets relevant to NP management and who holds the information. The index will include an evaluation of the data sets (metadata) as well and be publically accessible.	BBNPA	All
LAN11	Co-ordinate the collation, sharing, storage and retrieval of the information required on behalf of partners to deliver the National Park Management Plan, including historical records, aerial photographs and GIS data.	BBNPA	All

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
LAN12	Explore with partners the potential for two integrated landscape projects to pilot this as an approach to the prioritisation of work within the National Park. Projects will be designed to provide public benefits whilst optimising the conservation and enhancement of each particular area's special qualities.	BBNPA	Farming organisations, graziers, CADW, Archaeological Trusts, CCW, communities, Welsh Water, EAW, Tourism and other businesses
LAN13	Develop a work plan and prioritise activities for each integrated landscape management area, including consideration of sustainable grazing and farming systems, historic environment, landscape components, carbon and energy and water-catchment planning.	BBNPA	Farming organisations, graziers, CADW, Archaeological Trusts, CCW, communities, Welsh Water, EAW, Tourism and other businesses
LAN14	Develop an invasive species management plan, focusing on linear habitats and bracken control.	BBNPA	EAW, CCW, Local Authorities, Wildlife Trusts
LAN15	Prioritise understanding of water resources management in the NP.	EAW, water utilities	BBNPA
<b>Local Development Plan</b>			
LAN16	Include policies within the LDP which seek to maintain air, water and soil quality through the control of inappropriate development.	BBNPA	EAW, CCW, LAs
<b>Upland management</b>			
LAN17	Continue to make positive steps to implement recommendations contained in the BBNP upland erosion strategy.	BBNPA	Farming organisations, graziers, CADW, Archaeological Trusts, CCW, communities, Welsh Water, EAW, Relevant businesses, National Trust, Land owners

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
LAN18	Restore and enhance habitat connectivity across the Park's contiguous uplands.	BBNPA	Farming organisations, graziers, CADW, Archaeological Trusts, CCW, communities, Welsh Water, EAW
<b>Water resources</b>			
LAN19	Develop public consensus for the re-introduction of European beaver ( <i>Castor fiber</i> ) to the Park and therefore the subsequent benefits this would bring to wetland ecosystems and water management.	BBNPA	CCW, EAW, Local Authorities, Wildlife Trusts
<b>Woodlands</b>			
LAN20	Expand native farm woodland habitats towards the higher slopes where existing forests lie to increase native woodland cover in the National Park.	FCW	Local landowners, BBNPA
LAN21	Maintain economically viable coniferous forests in appropriate areas Whilst integrating these into the existing landscape through the use of sustainable forest design principles.	FCW	Local landowners, BBNPA
LAN22	Create new upland open space via felling with subsequent integration with the local landscape.	FCW	Local landowners, BBNPA
LAN23	Restore internationally recognised habitats, including upland bogs, heath land and upland oak woods, where the viability and potential exists.	FCW	Local landowners, BBNPA, CCW
LAN24	Practise continuous cover forestry in forests within the National Park where tree species, aspect, previous management and soils allow.	FCW	Local landowners, BBNPA
LAN25	Integrate woodland management into the Local Development Plan within the National Park.	FCW	BBNPA, EAW
LAN26	Create new community woodlands within easy access of future and existing communities that contribute to the improved sense of health and well-being.	FCW	Local landowners, BBNPA, tourism businesses

## 8.2. Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity

### 8.2.1. Why is this important?

Biodiversity encompasses all aspects of our living world, from the genetic variation among individual organisms to the differences between species and habitats. Along with having its own intrinsic value, people depend on biodiversity for food, building materials, synthetic products, fuel, the oxygen we breathe, even for enjoyment and spiritual renewal. Our increasing global population and mechanisation has intensified our demands on biodiversity whilst simplifying and fragmenting otherwise complex relationships (see Chapter 5). Loss of one species can lead to the demise of other species and potentially the loss of entire habitats. These issues apply to the National Park as much as the wider community.

The task facing Park managers is to conserve the Park's biological resources and enhance them where possible. International and national policies require that biodiversity is a prime consideration of all sectors of Park management. This task will not be easy given the uncertainties of climate change, for example, which will exacerbate the impacts of other pressures on biodiversity. The best way forward is to implement a landscape-scale approach to biodiversity management which considers the needs of individual species and habitats whilst taking a broader view of their position in the landscape relative to each other and their interconnectedness. This will be done in cooperation with all of the Park's biodiversity partners.

### 8.2.2. What are the desired outcomes?

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.2</b>
Biodiversity actions and strategic objectives will be delivered through partnerships of appropriate bodies including the NPA, farmers and farming groups, local authorities, WAG, Government bodies, community groups, charities, voluntary bodies and recreational users.
More designated sites will be sustainably managed to maintain habitats and species populations at a favourable conservation status.
More of the wider countryside will contain sufficient habitat in favourable condition to provide a high quality, interconnected landscape to conserve and enhance priority species.
Biodiversity conservation will be more effectively integrated into economically viable agricultural and arboricultural systems.
The extent and quality of priority habitats and the range and/or population of priority species will be maintained.

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.2</b>
The local biodiversity targets for the restoration and expansion of habitats and the expansion of species' distribution patterns and population sizes will be met and, if possible, exceeded.
Innovative solutions to environmental challenges which integrate biodiversity conservation with education, interpretation, other resource management priorities, and social, economic and cultural sustainability will be explored.
A landscape-scale approach to biodiversity conservation will be undertaken, built on good management of soil, air and water quality.

### **8.2.3. To what national policies does this contribute?**

- Agri-environment schemes (Tir Gofal)
- Commons Act
- Conservation Regulations 1994 (as amended)
- Countryside Act 1968
- Countryside Rights of Way(CRoW) Act 2000
- Environment Act 1995
- Environment Strategy for Wales
- Farming for the Future
- National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities for Wales 2007
- River Basin Planning Guidance DEFRA and WAG 2006
- Sustainable Farming and Environment: Action Towards 2020
- Town & Country Planning Act (+ Technical Advice Notes)
- Wales Biodiversity Strategy
- Wales Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan
- Water Framework Directive (WFD) Regulations in England & Wales
- Wildlife & Countryside Act 1985
- Woodlands for Wales Strategy 2001

## 8.2.4. Actions for Priority 8.2

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
<b>Biodiversity</b>			
BIO1	Protect and enhance the conservation value of limestone pavements.	BBNPA	CCW, Wildlife Trusts
BIO2	Develop monitoring of key habitats, soils and water	BBNPA, CCW, EAW	Landowners, Wildlife Trust
BIO3	Encourage research into carbon and water management on the Park's uplands.	BBNPA	Universities, landowners
BIO4	Develop strong links with communities to progress local biodiversity action.	BBNPA	Communities
BIO5	Produce a revised LBAP document to make local involvement with biodiversity action easier.	BBNPA	LBAP Partnership
BIO6	Support development and work of PONT (sustainable grazing animals consortium) in Wales.	PONT	BBNPA
BIO7	Develop sustainable management of small woodlands to provide woodfuel Whilst benefiting biodiversity.	BBNPA	Communities, landowners, FCW
BIO8	Develop habitat improvements and water management benefits through small-scale hydroelectric power generation.	BBNPA	Green Valleys
BIO9	Develop markets for local farm and forest produce.	BBNPA	
BIO10	Develop Local Development Plan polices and Supplemental Planning Guidance that ensure compliance with wildlife legislation.	BBNPA	CCW
BIO11	Conduct community biodiversity audits to inform development of settlements.	BBNPA	Wildlife Trusts
BIO12	Continue to support biological recording.	BBNPA, BIS	Wildlife Trusts, National Trust

8. Reference	9. Action	10. Lead Organisation	11. Partners
BIO13	Continue to support species specialist groups.	BBNPA, Wildlife Trusts	
BIO14	Develop a best practice approach to ensuring compliance with protected species legislation within projects to provide wider environmental benefits (e.g. green energy).	BBNPA	CCW, EAW
BIO15	Develop a management plan for BBNPA land at Llangasty.	BBNPA	Tenants, User groups
BIO16	Develop a management plan for the Waterfalls Area.	BBNPA,	CCW, FCW, User groups
BIO17	Develop SSSI monitoring plans with CCW.	BBNPA, CCW	Landowners
BIO18	Work with landowners to survey and designate wildlife sites and provide management advice and training for them.	Wildlife Trusts, BBNPA	Landowners
BIO19	Engage with and provide management advice to other landowners.	BBNPA	Landowners, Wildlife Trusts
BIO20	Support projects to retain skills and knowledge of local land management practices.	BBNPA	PONT, NT
BIO21	Work with landowners to restore flower-rich meadows by harvesting and distributing local seed.	BBNPA	Landowners
BIO22	Develop a strategy and plan for the restoration of ponds within the wider countryside.	BWT, BBNPA	Landowners
BIO23	Create new habitats through green energy projects such as woodland expansion for wood fuel and wetland creation with hydroelectric schemes.	BBNPA	Green Valleys, landowners
BIO24	Engage with communities and individuals to raise awareness of biodiversity alongside other environmental issues.	BBNPA	Communities
BIO25	Develop understanding of biodiversity issues within other workstreams (e.g. access, tourism).	BBNPA	
BIO26	Prioritise resources towards managing designated sites.	BBNPA	

12. Reference	13. Action	14. Lead Organisation	15. Partners
BIO27	Use scenarios from UK Climate Impacts Program 2009 projections to monitor the effects of climate change on biodiversity.	BBNPA	
BIO28	Promote and publicise the biodiversity conservation work undertaken in the National Park.	BBNPA	LBAP Partnership
BIO29	Develop monitoring plans for key species/habitats in response to climate change and land use change within the National Park.	BBNPA	CCW, FCW, EAW, Universities
BIO30	Ensure recreational activities minimise impact on biodiversity and landscape.	BBNPA	Tourism / activity providers
BIO31	Link biodiversity to water conservation, food production and small-scale hydroelectric power generation by way of the Green Valleys project.	BBNPA	Landowners, Green Valleys
BIO32	Report on key outcomes related to the Wales Environment Strategy in the State of the Park Report.	BBNPA	
<b>16. Local Development Plan</b>			
BIO3	Include policies within the LDP which ensures that all new development assesses potential impact upon biodiversity and proposes mitigation and enhancement strategies through the design process.	BBNPA	
BIO34	Ensure that there are policies within the LDP which continue to give provision for the seeking of planning obligations to provide for biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures from larger developments.	BBNPA	



## 8.3. Providing Everyone with Opportunities for Outdoor Access and Recreation

### 8.3.1. Why is this important?

Providing everyone with opportunities for outdoor access and recreation is at the heart of the second purpose for UK National Parks. This legislation and other supporting policies are in place to ensure that all people regardless of age, ethnicity, ability or other factors can access and enjoy the qualities that make this Park special. In so doing, people can benefit from improved health, well-being, experience and learning. The Park gains through increased support, understanding and awareness regarding management of this protected landscape.

The Brecon Beacons National Park offers a wide range of activities, and steps continue to be taken to improve access and recreation where feasible. The challenge for management is to continue to provide these opportunities whilst preventing the erosion of the resources that people are here to enjoy or otherwise benefit from. Not all activities are sustainable in all areas of the Park or can be practiced with the same level of intensity everywhere. Sustainable use of the resource is dictated by legal restrictions, land ownership, management practices, terrain, local biodiversity and many other considerations. Managers have the responsibility to work together to maintain and enhance opportunities for enjoyment of the Park's special qualities to the benefit of local communities, visitors and Park resources. Users have the duty to practice legal and responsible behaviour when enjoying the Park's resources as captured in the Countryside Code and national policies.

### 8.3.2. What are the desired outcomes?

<b>17. Outcomes for Priority 8.3</b>
The rights of way network will continue to be managed strategically.
The provision of information with regard to public access will improve.
Progress will continue to be made to bring the Definitive Map and Statement up to date.
Best use of external funding and resource opportunities to improve public access will continue to be made
Access to and on inland water will improve.
Awareness among and provision for people with disabilities and easier access requirements will increase.
Use of the NP by excluded groups will increase.
Health and well-being benefits will be promoted to excluded groups from within and beyond park boundary.

### 8.3.3. To what national policies does this contribute?

- Agri-environment schemes (Tir Gofal)
- Climbing Higher
- Commons Act
- Countryside Act 1968
- Countryside Rights of Way(CRoW) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Environment Act 1995
- Environment Strategy for Wales
- National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Planning Policy Wales
- Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities for Wales
- PROW delegation agreements
- WAG Tourism Strategy—Achieving Our Potential
- Wildlife & Countryside Act 1985

### 8.3.4. Actions for Priority 8.3

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
<b>Strategically manage the rights of way network</b>			
OA1	Develop a clear and consistent policy statement among the local authorities and other relevant organizations on the use of mechanically propelled vehicles on rights of way in the NP that is in keeping with the CROW and NERC Acts.	BBNPA	Local authorities, police, user groups
OA2	Continue to make progress towards raising the % of the public rights of way network that is easy to use to 65% by 2013.	BBNPA	Local authorities, landowners/managers, user groups, LAF
OA3	Continue to identify and implement circular and connecting routes with the network.	BBNPA	Local authorities, landowners/managers, user groups, LAF

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
OA4	Continue to identify and implement routes and sites where barriers for disabled people can be removed where reasonably practical.	BBNPA	DASG, landowners/managers, user groups
OA5	Continue to replace furniture as necessary using the principle of least restrictive option where reasonably practical.	BBNPA	Landowners/managers, user groups
OA6	Continue to renew or replace waymarkers and fingerposts as necessary, improving information depicted on fingerposts wherever possible and appropriate.	BBNPA	Landowners/managers
<b>Improve the provision of information with regard to public access</b>			
OA7	Provide more information in a variety of accessible formats.	BBNPA	User groups, LAF
OA8	Provide information on routes for mechanically propelled vehicles on BBNPA website.	BBNPA	Local authorities
OA9	Provide information on position and extent of parking areas and associated facilities.	BBNPA	Landowners, local authorities
OA10	Identify information regarding public transport links to BBNPA promoted routes and incorporate into Authority publications.	BBNPA	Local authorities, public transport providers
<b>Bring the Definitive Map and Statement up to date</b>			
OA11	In cooperation with the Unitary Authorities make progress towards bringing the Definitive Map and Statement up to date.	BBNPA	Local authorities
OA12	Identify all anomalies on the Definitive Map and Statement and make progress towards resolving them.	BBNPA	Local authorities
OA13	Work towards clearing the backlog of Definitive Map Modification Orders.	BBNPA	Local authorities
OA14	Clear the backlog of Public Path Orders.	BBNPA	
<b>Make the best use of external funding and resource opportunities to improve public access</b>			
OA15	Continue to negotiate additions to the access network through the Tir Gofal scheme and encourage partners to adequately publicize these additions.	BBNPA, WAG	Landowners/managers, user groups

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
<b>Access to and on inland water</b>			
OA16	Make progress in implementing actions contained in the BBNPA Splash Challenge fund grant application.	BBNPA	EAW, Local communities, FCW, LAs, CCW, Wye and Usk Foundation, British Waterways, DC/WW.
<b>Providing everyone with opportunities for outdoor access and recreation</b>			
OA17	Assist in the coordination of the Disabled Access Steering Group to increase awareness and provision for people with disabilities and easier access requirements.	Disabled Access Steering group	Local Access groups
OA18	Continue to deliver and monitor the Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan.	BBNPA	
OA19	Increase the use of the NP by excluded groups through the delivery of social inclusion and outreach programmes (e.g. Crossing Park Boundaries).	BBNPA	CCW and other delivery partners and funders
OA20	Continue to provide opportunities for improved health and well-being to excluded groups from within and beyond the Park boundary.	BBNPA	CCW and other delivery partners and funders

## 8.4. Raising Awareness and Understanding of the Park

### 8.4.1. Why is this important?

Successful management of the National Park is not complete without efforts to promote understanding and raise awareness about the Park, its resources and its key management issues and practices. The importance of this role is enshrined in the Park's second purpose.

Communication is necessary to garner funding to support efforts to maintain and enhance the Park's biodiversity, natural beauty and cultural heritage. Understanding and awareness are vital to promoting local pride and sense of place and to contributing to the social and economic well-being of local communities. These services are also effective means of encouraging responsible use of the Park by visitors. They can be used to illustrate to the wider community the advantages of microgeneration of hydroelectricity, for example. In all

cases good communication and dissemination of information are best practices used to convey the importance of the National Park and the opportunities it has to offer everyone.

#### 8.4.2. What are the desired outcomes?

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.4</b>
Everyone will know they are within the National Park.
More people will understand what the NP designation means and the reasons this area has this designation.
More people who visit or live in the Park will have enjoyable experiences which will enthuse them to care for National Park and will share this enthusiasm with others.
Opportunities will be provided for all and all interpretation, education and information will be socially inclusive.
More residents and visitors will be fully aware of the range of opportunities that are on offer to help them understand and enjoy the area.
Visitors will receive a first class welcome and orientation to the National Park.
Promoting understanding and awareness will be at the heart of all the Park's work to maximize opportunities and gain support.
All involved in providing understanding and awareness within the National Park will work together to maximize opportunities and impact.
The visitor experience will be improved, particularly by developing information and interpretation of its special qualities.
The Geopark will become a focus for environmental/earth education and research.
The Park's geological heritage will be used to encourage partners, visitors, businesses and communities to address the challenges of climate change.
More people will be aware of climate change and fossil fuel depletion and options to mitigate and adapt to these.
More representatives of minority and urban groups will be aware of and able to contribute to NP decision making and delivery.

#### 8.4.3. To what national policies does this contribute?

- Countryside Act 1968
- Countryside Rights of Way(CRoW) Act 2000
- Curriculum Cymreig 2007/8 Draft
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Environment Strategy for Wales
- National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

- Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities for Wales
- Starting to Live Differently 2004
- Sustainable Development Action Plan for Wales
- Sustainable Development Convention
- The UK National Curriculum
- WAG Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship – A Strategy for Action
- Wales: A Better Country 2003

#### 8.4.4. Actions for Priority 8.4

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
<b>Raising awareness and understanding of the Park</b>			
RA1	Undertake an audit and evaluation of all existing information, interpretation and education, identifying gaps and developing a plan to increase recognition of the NP designation and special qualities.	BBNPA	
RA2	Develop, with partners, a prioritized plan for publications and information provision.	BBNPA	
RA3	Work with partners to review all signage within the National Park and develop a plan to increase number of people aware they are within the National Park.	BBNPA	
RA4	Ensure information and interpretation are provided at all key gateways and honeypot sites.	BBNPA	
RA5	Redevelop the National Park Visitor Centre into first class visitor attraction ensuring it is a sustainable attraction in the long term.	BBNPA	
RA6	Work with all public facing centres within the National Park to ensure the NP message is embedded across information points and the work of agencies in caring for the environment is promoted.	BBNPA	
RA7	Improve the bilingual delivery of interpretation, information and education.	BBNPA	

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
RA8	Work with businesses and information providers across the Park to ensure high level of quality information is delivered throughout the National Park.	BBNPA	
RA9	Support and facilitate training and development of NPA staff, non NPA information Centre staff and tourism businesses to ensure first class welcome and interaction with residents and visitors.	BBNPA	
RA10	Engage with partners in the coordinated resourcing and delivery of interpretation, information and education themes and priorities to maximize impact and benefits and ensure specialist advice is taken advantage of (i.e., farming and land management).	BBNPA	
RA11	Working with partners, develop web based electronic and web based information to provide clear, coordinated and important pre-visit information and promotion of opportunities.	BBNPA	
RA12	Work with communities and local residents to ensure local people have access to information, interpretation and education on their environment and are aware of the benefits that are on offer.	BBNPA	
RA13	Support communities in telling their stories and engage them as stakeholders in promoting understanding and awareness.	BBNPA	
RA14	Invest in sustainability of all interpretation, education and information, including use of sustainable materials and demonstration of sustainability to the public.	BBNPA	
RA15	Work with groups in promoting understanding and awareness for those not yet fully engaged, including identifying and breaking down barriers and working with advocates.	BBNPA	
RA16	Support the WAG and ESDGC agenda in the delivery of education services.	BBNPA	

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
RA17	Work with partners to educate the educators and increase opportunities for volunteering to deliver awareness and understanding.	BBNPA	
RA18	Encourage and promote sustainable use of the NP, including promotion of the countryside code, providing information on illegal versus legal access, responsible use of the countryside, information for dog owners, information and the importance of taking litter home.	BBNPA	
<b>Utilising the Fforest Fawr Geopark designation</b>			
RA19	Develop orientation at key Geopark gateway sites.	BBNPA	
RA20	Develop new Geopark interpretative partnerships including museums, communities, businesses, partner organisations, etc.	BBNPA	
RA21	Develop interpretative content of Geopark themed publications and events.	Geopark Management Group	
RA22	Develop the Geopark's interpretative partnerships with external bodies, particularly in South Wales and other UK Geoparks.	Geopark Management Group and BBNPA	
RA23	Develop training in basic understanding of the Geopark and its geology with NPA staff, guided walks leaders and other volunteers and tourism businesses.	Geopark Management Group	
RA24	Maintain existing Geopark education effort.	Geopark Management Group	
RA25	Develop Geopark subgroup to promote links to tertiary educational bodies with earth sciences interest.	Geopark Management Group	
RA26	Establish Geopark subgroup/network to undertake a review of earth science research and identify further priorities for engagement with research institutions.	Geopark Management Group	
RA27	Use the Geopark's geological record to interpret climate change and encourage behavioural change.	Geopark Management Group	



Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
RA28	Encourage local communities to engage with the issues of climate change.	Geopark Management Group	
<b>Reaching out to everyone</b>			
RA29	Work with minority group representatives to raise awareness of and contributions to NP decision making and delivery of actions.	NPA, CCW, Grass Routes Cymru	
RA30	Continue to develop and deliver the Social Inclusion Action Plan and related programmes to make people aware of the range of opportunities that are on offer in the NP and to help them understand and enjoy the area.	BBNPA	Delivery partners
<b>Utilising the Green Valleys Initiative</b>			
RA31	Utilise the Green Valleys Initiative and other relevant partnerships to raise awareness of how to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and fossil fuel depletion.	BBNPA, Green Valleys	Delivery partners

## 8.5. Building and Maintaining Sustainable Communities, Towns and Villages

### 8.5.1. Why is this important?

National Parks in the UK have a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of their local communities. The BBNPA also acts as the Planning Authority for communities within the Park boundary, delivering its services in cooperation with the relevant Local Planning Authorities. The delivery of these services is, as is the case with other Park management priorities, being affected by overriding issues such as climate change, fossil fuel depletion, affordable housing and economic decline – to name a few. The negative implications associated with these issues dictate that now more than ever communities, local authorities and other key delivery partners work together toward a sustainable future.

Indeed, the WAG's Vision for the Welsh National Parks encourages the NPA's to work closely with their communities to explore new and innovative ways to live sustainably within the context of the Park's purposes and duty. This includes examining affordable housing options, community infrastructure, transport, building design, settlement patterns and renewable energy generation. These options should encourage the vitality and viability of

the Park's communities, towns and villages with sustainable development as the end result. The actions that follow are steps toward this sustainable future.

**8.5.2. What are the desired outcomes?**

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.5</b>
Development will be encouraged that protects and enhances the beautiful and varied character of the landscape.
More listed buildings and their settings will be conserved and their condition improved, concentrating on buildings at risk.
An increasing number of developments affecting the historic environment will enhance the historic landscape and traditions of the vernacular architectural traditions Whilst also taking appropriate account the requirements for sustainable design.
The majority of development will be located in sustainable near facilities and services therefore minimising the need to travel, whilst also respecting the National Park purposes and special qualities.
More developments will make use of renewable energy resources and there will be more small- to medium-scale community led renewable energy projects.
More local communities will be engaged in new ways of working towards sustainable development.
Adequate provision of utilities for local communities and future developments will increase.
More people and organisations will reduce, reuse and recycle waste Whilst more local waste and recycling facilities are encouraged. There will also be resistance to regional waste facilities in accordance with the Regional Waste Plan.
Good quality, affordable housing of all types will be more accessible to the Park's communities where there is an identified need.
More of the Park's communities will be resilient and responsive to drivers of change and proactive in limiting and mitigating the effects of climate change.
Water resources will increasingly be used more sustainably across all sectors in the National Park.

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.5 (continued)</b>
Fewer developments will result in unacceptable flood risk.
More local and sustainable options to supplement or replace the need for mineral resources will be explored.
The physical quality, energy efficiency, accessibility and sustainable design and construction of all development throughout the Park will be improved.
A sustainable settlement pattern which enhances the special qualities of the National Park will be encouraged.
The provision of information with regard to local public access will improve.
Prime retail cores will be identified which maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centres in the National Park.
The National Park communities will be better prepared for climate change and fossil fuel depletion by building resilience to ensure minimised economic and social impact.
The benefits of better health and well-being will be promoted to the Park's communities.
More communities will be better integrated with sustainable access to a wide range of facilities and services.
The sustainable use of water resources will be promoted through the support of projects designed to improve access to water.
The National Park will be better protected against new mineral workings and extensions to existing mineral workings, Whilst also safeguarding appropriate mineral resources from sterilisation.
An integrated transport system will be encouraged that provides for more healthy and active lifestyles and supports local communities.
Stronger links will be made between local employment opportunities and housing supply to provide for a sustainable economy.
More sectors of society will be actively involved in developing the Park's work.
Local production and local economic supply chains will be better supported and improved.
More community based sustainable transport initiatives designed to reduce their carbon footprint will be supported.
More renewable energy, energy efficiency and other innovative measures designed to reduced communities' ecological impact across the National Park will be supported.
Sustainable food marketing and the promotion and consumption of local produce will increase.

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.5 (continued)</b>
Support for sustainable tourism and other forms of sustainable economic development will increase.
Support for sustainable visitor transport initiatives including access to visitor "hot spots" will increase.
More ways of achieving a sustainable way of living will be developed and tested through partnership working.

### **8.5.3. To what national policies does this contribute?**

- A Winning Wales- the National Economic Development Strategy
- Aggregates Regional Technical Statements (various)
- Conservation Regulations 1994 (as amended)
- Countryside Act 1968
- Countryside Rights of Way(CRoW) Act 2000
- Cultural Strategy for Wales
- Cultural Tourism Strategy for Wales
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Energy Route Map for Wales 2008
- Energy White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge 2007
- Environment Strategy for Wales
- Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales
- Mid-Wales Transport Plan
- Minerals Planning Policy Wales (2002)
- MIPPS Planning for Renewable Energy
- National Housing Strategy for Wales
- National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- One Wales – Connecting the Nation, Wales Transport Strategy
- Planning Policy Wales
- Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities for Wales
- River Basin Planning Guidance DEFRA and WAG 2006
- Rural Development Plan Wales
- Sustainable Development Action Plan for Wales
- Sustainable Farming and Environment: Action Towards 2020
- Town & Country Planning Act (+ Technical Advice Notes)
- Traffic Management in Historic Areas
- UK Biomass Strategy 2007

- UK Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future
- UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy
- WAG Renewable Energy Route Map
- Wales Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan
- Wales Spatial Plan (2004)
- Wales Transport Strategy
- Wales: A Better Country 2003
- Water Framework Directive (WFD) Regulations in England & Wales
- Water Resources Acts
- Welsh Commitment to Address Climate Change
- Wise About Waste: The National Waste Strategy for Wales

## 8.5.4. Actions for Priority 8.5

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
<b>Built environment</b>			
SC1	Develop monitoring of built heritage.	BBNPA	Cadw, Archaeological Trusts, LAs
<b>Climate change, fossil fuel depletion and carbon emissions</b>			
SC2	Provide outreach programmes to local groups to increase awareness and use of local opportunities for recreation, reducing travel and associated carbon emissions.	BBNPA	CCW, LA's, Tourism providers
SC3	Encourage and support community led initiatives that build awareness of and resilience to climate change, fossil fuel depletion and carbon emissions.	BBNPA, Green Valleys	Community groups
SC4	Provide information and advice to help raise awareness regarding climate change, carbon emissions and fossil fuel depletion.	BBNPA	Community groups
<b>Local food production</b>			
SC5	Encourage market gardens and local markets.	BBNPA	Farming unions, Local businesses
<b>Geopark</b>			
SC6	Develop action plan for community engagement work, encouraging the development of their own Geopark projects.	BBNPA	
SC7	Develop linkages and co-working between Geopark clusters and community groups.	BBNPA	
SC8	Facilitate exchange visits with similar destinations - especially other Geoparks - and encourage "Geo-twinning" if appropriate.	BBNPA	
SC9	Use ICT processes to enable exchange of information and ideas between Geopark communities and businesses.	BBNPA	
SC10	Work with social inclusion projects in the Geopark to promote access by socially excluded groups.	BBNPA	
SC11	Ensure information about Geopark sites with easier access is readily available.	BBNPA	

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SC12	Monitor impacts of the Geopark on economy, environment and community well-being.	Geopark Management Group and BBNPA	
SC13	Promote use and re-use of local building stone where compatible with the statutory conservation objectives of the National Park and its relevant planning policies.	BBNPA	BBPS, Walls of Llangynidr
<b>Local Development Plan</b>			
SC14	Develop a hierarchical sustainable settlement strategy, whereby the majority of future development is located in settlements well served by easily accessible services, facilities and access to public transport.	BBNPA	LA's, Housing Authorities, Transport Authorities and Regional Consortia, Local Communities
SC15	Undertake landscape character assessment as a component of the LDP settlement survey to ensure that the protection of high quality landscapes forms a significant consideration in the location of future development.	BBNPA	
SC16	Include policies within the LDP which require all new proposals for development to be responsive and related to their context, sympathetically designed and in keeping with the character of the landscape.	BBNPA	
SC17	Undertake audit of building types within LDP settlement survey to provide baseline evidence as to the character of the built environment and vernacular architectural traditions.	BBNPA	
SC18	Work with communities to produce village design statements for those settlements whose development pattern and architectural heritage are of historic value and form a significant part of the areas cultural heritage.	BBNPA	Local communities
SC19	Include policies within the LDP which work to maintain the integrity of the vernacular traditions of the built environment.	BBNPA	Cadw, Archaeological Trusts, LA's

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SC20	Through the LDP process work with key stakeholders to develop an integrated strategy for the provision of utility services in accordance with strategic location and scale of future development within the Park areas.	BBNPA, Dwr Cymru, other utilities	
SC21	Include policies within the LDP which require new development proposals to integrate intelligent waste management systems within the design process. All new development should offer adequate provision for the storage of multiple recycling bins including composting.	BBNPA	LA's, Regional Waste Consortia
SC22	Develop a strategy for providing sustainable community waste facilities such as small scale anaerobic digestion to be implemented and controlled through the LDP.	BBNPA	LA's, Regional Waste Consortia
SC23	Include policies within the LDP which prohibit new mineral workings and existing mineral workings.	BBNPA	LA's
SC24	Ensure that all mineral reserves within the Park are identified and safeguarded from sterilisation through LDP policy.	BBNPA	LA's
SC25	Include policies within the LDP which enable small scale quarrying (borrow-pits etc) to provide local building materials for use within new developments within the Park area	BBNPA	LA's
SC26	Include policy within the LDP to ensure that all new development achieves at least a 30% carbon saving below the level required by part L of the (2006) building regulations.	BBNPA	LA's, Housing Authorities
SC27	Working in collaboration with community groups to allocate suitable areas of land within the Local Development Plan for community renewable energy schemes.	BBNPA	Local communities
SC28	Include policy within the LDP which enables the incorporation of small to medium scale renewable energy schemes into new and existing development.	BBNPA	LA's, Local communities



Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SC29	Include policy within the LDP which requires new development to provide for at least 20% of its regulated energy requirements from Low or Zero Carbon energy sources.	BBNPA	LA's, Local communities
SC30	Update the Sustainable Design Guide to reflect changes in legislation and design practice for introduction as SPG to the LDP.	BBNPA	LA's
SC31	Include policy within the LDP which requires all new development to achieve a minimum CSH level 4 / BREEAM very good.	BBNPA	LA's
SC32	Undertake strategic flood risk assessment for the National Park Area as part of LDP settlement survey work. All land at high risk of flooding (C2) will not be considered as suitable location for new development and these findings will be incorporated within the LDP.	BBNPA	EAW, LA's
SC33	Include policies within the LDP which require all new development to minimise impact on flood risk by employing intelligent water management systems, such as SUDs, to ensure that there is no net increase in water runoff as a result of the development.	BBNPA	EAW, LA's
SC34	Provide for the overall housing requirements through a mix of dwelling types, catering for identified needs and which promotes integrated and thriving communities	BBNPA	EAW, LA's
SC35	Working with constituent Housing Authorities and Rural Housing Enabler determine the affordable housing need within the area and set appropriate targets for affordable housing to meet the needs of our community	BBNPA	Housing Authorities and Rural Housing Enabler, Local communities

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SC36	Include robust policies through the LDP to ensure the provision of appropriate need based affordable housing to support the vibrancy and vitality of our communities.	BBNPA	Housing Authorities and Rural Housing Enabler, Local communities
SC37	Produce a strategy through the LDP to ensure the delivery of affordable housing, (including 100% affordable housing developments where a need can be demonstrated) to support vibrant communities within the Park area. Produce SPG to ensure the delivery of this policy is made clear to future developers and Park communities.	BBNPA	Housing Authorities and Rural Housing Enabler, Local communities
SC38	Through the LDP process identify the requirement for development to serve employment needs within the National Park and make provision through the appropriate allocation of land. (Working in partnership with our constituent Unitary Authority economic development teams.)	BBNPA	Economic development partnerships
SC39	Working with economic development partners to address implementation of Brecon Regeneration Study and work arising from Ystradgynlais Regeneration Study where it affects areas within the Park.	BBNPA	Economic development partnerships
SC40	Undertake retail study as part of LDP process to gain a further understanding of pressures facing our town centres and develop resultant policies which seek to create vital and viable retail centres. (Working in partnership with our constituent economic development teams, communities and relevant interest groups.)	BBNPA	Economic development partnerships, Local communities, relevant interest groups

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SC41	Working in collaboration with local communities develop issues papers for each community council area setting out local vision, aims and objectives for the areas future development. Use these issues papers as evidence base to draft appropriate local LDP policies that respond to localised needs for creating sustainable communities. Where appropriate to the community these should form the basis for determining the location and scale of community projects such as community renewable energy schemes, community food production areas and waste facilities for inclusion within the LDP.	BBNPA	Local communities
SC42	Enable development opportunities in locations that encourage a healthy lifestyle and promote well-being.	BBNPA	Local communities
<b>Sustainable Development Fund</b>			
SC43	Support projects which follow the principles of sustainability, i.e., a)social progress which recognises the needs of everyone, b)effective protection of the environment, c)prudent use of natural resources and d)maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.	Communities, Businesses	BBNPA and other agencies
SC44	Develop and support by way of the Sustainable Development Fund community based sustainable transport initiatives designed to reduce the carbon footprint.	Communities, Businesses	BBNPA and other agencies
SC45	Develop and support by way of the Sustainable Development Fund community based visitor transport initiatives including access to visitor "hot spots."	Communities, Businesses	BBNPA and other agencies
SC46	Develop and support by way of the Sustainable Development Fund sustainable food marketing and the promotion and consumption of local produce.	Communities, Businesses	BBNPA and other agencies

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SC47	Develop and support by way of the Sustainable Development Fund the sustainable use of water resources through the support of projects designed to promote access to water.	Communities, Businesses	BBNPA and other agencies
SC48	Generate greater awareness and understanding of sustainability issues related to renewable energy, energy efficiency and other innovative measures designed to reduced communities' ecological impact across the National Park.	Communities, Businesses	BBNPA and other agencies
<b>Transport</b>			
SC49	Identify suitable areas for establishment of more dedicated car parking spaces for disabled people and implement.	LA's, HA's, BBNPA	
SC50	Provide an affordable, accessible and effective sustainable transport network that meets the needs of residents and visitors.	HA's, Transport Consortia	BBNPA
SC51	Explore sustainable travel plans for all schools in the BBNP.	LA's, HA's, BBNPA	
SC52	Promote cycling as a means of everyday travel and develop safe cycle routes.	LA's, HA's, BBNPA	
<b>Water resources</b>			
SC53	Encourage sustainable development and building design that incorporates sustainable use of water resources.	BBNPA	WAG, EAW

## 8.6. Building Community Pride and Sense of Place

### 8.6.1. Why is this important?

The landscapes of the Brecon Beacons National Park have been moulded over the course of time by the interactions between people and the environment. This relationship is ever-evolving. The clues to these interactions are still alive in local archaeology, architecture, history, language, cultural events, local stories and traditions, skills sets and farming practices. Whilst these elements have changed with time to suit the needs of current generations and will be altered to the benefit the needs of future generations, many are in common use today.

Collectively these characteristics provide communities with cultural identity or sense of place. They also form the foundation of what is special about this National Park and why so many people cherish it. Sense of place can be used for economic reasons, to attract visitors to experience the local culture or locally-branded products, for instance (see Section 8.7). But, one's sense of place can also be used to cultivate a sense of pride, of belonging and community, of what it means to be from the heart of Wales. Actions in this Plan are designed to promote this sense of pride and place.

### 8.6.2. What are the desired outcomes?

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.6</b>
Listed buildings and their settings will continue to be conserved and their condition improved, concentrating on buildings at risk.
Settlements and settlement patterns will be conserved and enhanced.
More local communities will be engaged in new ways of working towards sustainable development.
People will have an increased sense of pride in their place and ownership of their communities.
A regional strategy for understanding, protecting, managing, monitoring, raising awareness and enjoyment of the Park's historic environment will be developed and supported through partnership working.
Partnership working will targeted to increase support of the Park's cultural life and traditions.
The number of historic sites that are managed appropriately will increase, concentrating on threatened and neglected sites/types Whilst involving local communities.
Efforts will be made to record and monitor the Park's cultural heritage.
The vitality and viability of the Park's communities and town centres will continue to be maintained or enhanced.
The value of and benefit from the NP designation will increase.

### 8.6.3. To what national policies does this contribute?

- A Winning Wales- the National Economic Development Strategy
- Cultural Strategy for Wales
- Cultural Tourism Strategy for Wales
- Farming for the Future
- Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales
- National Housing Strategy for Wales
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Planning Policy Wales
- Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities for Wales
- Rural Development Plan Wales

- Sustainable Development Action Plan for Wales
- Sustainable Farming and Environment: Action Towards 2020
- UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy
- Wales Spatial Plan 2004
- Wales: A Better Country 2003

#### 8.6.4. Actions for Priority 8.6

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
<b>Built environment</b>			
SOP1	Develop a plan for the conservation and continued use of stone roofing tiles using the Herefordshire/English Heritage model	BBNPA and Cadw	
SOP2	Implement the buildings at risk strategy	BBNPA	Cadw, Archaeological Trusts, Las
SOP3	Seek partners to further the funding package and increase the scope of the Town Schemes Programs for Brecon and Talgarth	BBNPA	Las, Archaeological Trusts
SOP4	Enable the BBNPA to carry out a systematic monitoring program including enforcement with respect to the historic environment.	BBNPA	Cadw, Archaeological Trusts, Las
SOP5	Produce a comprehensive suite of guidance/advice literature addressing the local building vernacular and covering windows, mortar use, roofing, etc.	BBNPA	Cadw, Archaeological Trusts, Las
SOP6	Continue work and monitoring of the Castle of Brecon Heritage Lottery Fund project.	BBNPA, castle owners	Cadw, Archaeological Trusts, LA's
<b>Community pride</b>			
SOP7	Improve and facilitate the prevention and removal of litter through community action, particularly from rivers.	Local communities, Keep Wales Tidy	LA's, BBNPA
SOP8	Investigate options to remove all unnecessary street furniture to limit visual clutter.	Local communities, LA's	BBNPA

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SOP9	Continue to deliver community based outreach programmes such as Crossing Park Boundaries that increase the value of and benefit from the NP designation.	BBNPA	CCW and other delivery partners
SOP10	Continue to work closely with partners to provide volunteer, workshadow and other skills programmes in the NP.	BBNPA	WCVA, CCW
<b>Cultural heritage</b>			
SOP11	Promote better understanding of the Park's cultural heritage and integrate this knowledge with other aspects of Park management.	BBNPA, Local communities	Cadw, Archaeological Trusts, LA's
SOP12	Promote an increase in vocational training opportunities to indigenous local knowledge and skills, such as traditional farming and land management skills.	Local communities, LA's	BBNPA
SOP13	Enable local communities to identify and record local history and culture through the use of "toolkits," heritage audits and "best practice sharing."	BBNPA	Local communities, LA's
SOP14	Work with rural communities to establish a mechanism to promote their own areas.	BBNPA	Local communities, Las, Geopark
SOP15	Encourage projects that promote local distinctiveness, a sense of community and a sense of place.	BBNPA	Local communities, LA's
<b>Geopark</b>			
SOP16	Develop use of Sense of Place by partners and businesses.	BBNPA	
<b>Historic environment</b>			
SOP17	Establish a research agenda and strategy for the historic environment.	BBNPA	Cadw, Archaeological Trusts, LA's
SOP18	Establish a programme of positive project works in regard to conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.	Archaeological Trusts, BBNPA	Cadw, Local communities, LA's

## 8.7. Sustainable Economic Development

### 8.7.1. Why is this important?

The state of the National Park is inextricably linked to the well-being of its communities; its long-term viability is dependent upon the sustained vitality of local communities and the continued support of people who live and work in, and visit the Park. As such, the National Park designation should benefit the local economy and local communities in ways that are sustainable and which work to conserve and enhance the Park's special qualities. The benefit is mutual.

A variety of businesses operate in the National Park. Many of these are considering the potential impacts of climate change, fossil fuel depletion and other drivers of change in an effort to become more sustainable and resilient to future changes. Whilst these forces may seem to hinder future development, they can also be seen as opportunities for innovation that help deliver the Park's purposes and duty: developing microgeneration of renewable energy, creating niche markets for sustainable agricultural products, capitalizing on National Park branded products or designing sustainable buildings, as examples.

Tourism provides an essential component of the local economy in the Brecon Beacons National Park which hosts 3.6 million visitors each year. Along with economic benefits, though, tourists can create additional pressures on Park resources and local communities beyond those exerted by other drivers of change, such as increased footpath erosion and carbon emissions (see Chapter 5). Managers, then, need to work with tourism businesses and activity providers to minimise the impacts of tourism whilst maximising benefits locally. Local tourism businesses in cooperation with the BBNPA and the Geopark have been making great strides forward in developing sustainable transport networks, creating local supply chains, investing in local communities and promoting sustainable economic development. Actions in this Plan will continue to improve upon these efforts.

### 8.7.2. What are the desired outcomes?

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.7</b>
The Geopark will become a focus for environmental/earth education and research.
The understanding of tourism trends, market behaviour and the business of tourism in and around the National Park will continue to improve.
More collaborative marketing activities based upon the Brecon Beacons brand will be encouraged.



Innovative marketing of farm products will increase, for example through the development of local supply chains and landscape branded products
More local communities will be engaged in new ways of working towards sustainable development.
The visitor experience will be improved, particularly by developing information and interpretation of its special qualities.
The value of and benefit from the NP designation will increase for businesses.
Efforts to integrate and promote public support for sustainable farming will increase.

<b>Outcomes for Priority 8.7 (continued)</b>
Investment in well researched, planned and coordinated product development based on the natural strengths and culture of the area will increase.
Efforts to maintain and encourage the vitality and viability of the Park's communities and town centres will increase.
Management of the impacts of tourism will continue to improve.
The tourism organisational structure will be refined to help create a stronger partnership approach involving all key stakeholders.
More sectors of society will be actively involved in developing the Park's work.
Support for a sustainable tourism industry that contributes to the public's enjoyment of the National Park will increase.
Support for other forms of sustainable economic development will increase.

### **8.7.3. To what national policies does this contribute?**

- Agri-environment schemes (Tir Gofal)
- A Winning Wales- the National Economic Development Strategy
- Cultural Strategy for Wales
- Cultural Tourism Strategy for Wales
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Energy Route Map for Wales 2008
- Energy White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge 2007
- Environment Strategy for Wales
- Farming for the Future
- Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- One Wales - Connecting the Nation, Wales Transport Strategy
- Planning Policy Wales
- Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities for Wales
- Rural Development Plan Wales

- Sustainable Development Action Plan for Wales
- Sustainable Farming and Environment: Action Towards 2020
- UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy
- WAG Tourism Strategy – Achieving Our Potential
- Wales Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan
- Wales Spatial Plan 2004
- Wales Transport Strategy
- Wales: A Better Country 2003

#### 8.7.4. Actions for Priority 8.7

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
<b>Farming</b>			
SED1	Complete an audit of the capacity for organic food production and demand within the BBNP.	BBNPA	Farming unions, Local businesses
SED2	Promote increased procurement of locally produced food by schools, hospitals and other public services.	BBNPA	Farming unions, Local businesses
SED3	Seek views on the need for more support for farm shops or producers' exchanges.	BBNPA	Farming unions, Local businesses
SED4	Support farmers in changes to farm practices, especially where it involves development of specialist local products (e.g., traditional organic breeds farm processing).	Farmers, Local communities	BBNPA, LAs, Farming unions
<b>Geopark</b>			
SED5	Regularly attend and contribute towards EGN/UNESCO conferences and co-ordination meetings.	Geopark Management Group	
SED6	Offer to host EGN Coordination Committee Meeting in 2011.	Geopark Management Group	
SED7	Apply for revalidation in 2012.	Geopark Management Group	
SED8	Develop close working relationship with other Geoparks especially new Geoparks in Wales.	Geopark Management Group	

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SED9	Participate as appropriate in indicators developed via other Strategies and Plans and monitoring processes.	Geopark Management Group and BBNPA	
SED10	Convene management and partnership meetings regularly.	BBNPA	
SED11	Review terms of reference and membership at agreed intervals.	Geopark Management Group	
SED12	Develop relationship between the Geopark and the Brecon Beacons Sustainable Tourism Partnership.	Geopark Management Group	
SED13	Implement European Geoparks Festival annually.	Geopark Management Group	
SED14	Work with businesses to enable them to give information on Fforest Fawr Geopark.	Geopark Management Group and BBNPA	
SED15	Develop Geopark Ambassador Scheme for tourism businesses.	Geopark Management Group and BBNPA	
SED16	Ensure all Geopark work undertaken is integrated with the Sustainable Tourism Strategy and the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.	BBNPA	
SED17	Encourage the development of clusters of businesses within Fforest Fawr Geopark wishing to use the designation to promote sustainable economic development.	BBNPA	
<b>Local Development Plan</b>			
SED18	Undertake audit of tourist facilities, potential and pressure within LDP settlement survey to provide baseline evidence as to the importance of tourism within each settlement. Use the findings to provide sustainable opportunities to capitalise on tourism potential in a manner which is in-keeping with settlement character and capacity.	BBNPA	Local communities

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SED19	Review pressure and vulnerable areas for inclusion within the LDP.	BBNPA	
SED20	Include policies within the LDP which make provision for the creation of new facilities to support a sustainable tourism industry.	BBNPA	LAs, Local communities, RDP and regeneration partnerships
<b>Sustainable local economy</b>			
SED21	Examine business opportunities and regeneration strategies to increase the number of good quality jobs for local people.	LA's, Local communities	WAG, BBNPA
SED22	Develop new funding streams and signposting to external funding for use by businesses pursuing sustainability projects.	BBNPA, RDP and regeneration partnerships	
<b>Tourism</b>			
SED23	Promote the concept of an "accessible destination" with appropriate training offered to the private sector and access related information and infrastructure development by the public sector.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED24	Develop mechanisms for encouraging day visitors to stay longer and spend more.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED25	Encourage more shoulder and winter season tourism where compatible with conservation.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED26	Develop tourism-based Integrated Quality Management (IQM) techniques to engage with local communities.	BBNPA	Local communities
SED27	Develop activity tourism product development priorities within an analysis of route/site sensitivity and developing codes of conduct together with businesses involved.	BBNPA	
SED28	Plan marketing activity around authentic images and sustainable activities.	BBNPA	

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SED29	Maintain and develop social inclusion projects, particularly through Mosaic, to avoid the Park destination becoming exclusive.	BBNPA	
SED30	Implement "sense of place" awareness training.	BBNPA	
SED31	Continue the programme of community appraisals as a means of community engagement.	BBNPA	Local communities
SED32	Continue to improve public sector within-destination information.	BBNPA	
SED33	Maintain and develop current business training and familiarisation programme.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED34	Encourage greater use of local produce especially food, drink and crafts amongst all tourism operators.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED35	Continue investment in visitor surveys and Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM).	BBNPA	
SED36	Establish a system to share business-to-business intelligence.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED37	Continue to maintain an up-to-date database of all enterprises, businesses and stakeholders, establishing an extranet facility for all businesses and communities and encouraging businesses to build web nets.	BBNPA	Local businesses and communities
SED38	Establish an agreed set of sustainable tourism indicators and regularly monitor their progress.	BBNPA	Local businesses and communities
SED39	Agree the brand values and hence the brand for the Park and the creative expression of these.	BBNPA	Local businesses

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SED40	Develop a programme of marketing activity, external and in-destination information (including: public relations, Internet and print items) to promote key themes and products.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED41	Review the current range of Internet sites and establish a portal based upon visitbreconbeacons.com with links to other relevant sites.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED42	Continue to market the Brecon Beacons as a sustainable tourism destination.	BBNPA	
SED43	Continue to use the Brecon Beacons Visitor Guide as an aid to marketing.	BBNPA	
SED44	Realise fully the tourism potential of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal Whilst its attractive setting is conserved and enhanced	British Waterways	BBNPA, LAs
SED45	Hold an annual tourism conference involving all stakeholders.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED46	Encourage the development of local destination groups who will be primarily concerned with product development and the visitor experience in their areas.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED47	Encourage and facilitate further development of thematic clusters of businesses.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED48	Develop organisational structures to meet the changing needs of the destination.	BBNPA	
SED49	Encourage businesses to source their supplies locally by developing a web-based directory.	BBNPA	Local businesses

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SED50	Establish an extranet for improved communications and continuous exchange of information with all stakeholders.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED51	In partnership with local businesses, implement existing and new work on: walking, cycling, mountain biking, horseriding, Geopark, fishing, local food/drink, and heritage and culture.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED52	Promote the use of local and organic food (i) by tourism businesses with a campaign of information and events and (ii) by including food promotion and retail information in visitor publications.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED53	Promote arts and crafts to visitors through marketing/visitor information material.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED54	Encourage tourism operators and visitor facing public bodies to achieve accredited status in terms of quality schemes, environmental accreditation and other recognised codes of conduct/accreditation schemes.	BBNPA	Local businesses, VIC's, Geopark
SED55	Produce practical guidance for communities and enterprises on how to develop products that are sustainable, fit for purpose, take advantage of new markets and that are innovative.	BBNPA	
Visitor transport			
SED56	Maintain and develop Beacons Bus as a key delivery mechanism for visitor transport.	BBNPA	

Reference	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners
SED57	Encourage visitor use of weekday public transport (including taxis) by good marketing and information provision, special services, high quality training and sound partnership working.	BBNPA	Transport providers
SED58	Establish and develop the Visitor Transport Partnership including all key stakeholders.	BBNPA	Transport providers
SED59	Produce a visitor-friendly, National Park-wide transport timetable publication annually.	BBNPA	Transport providers
SED60	Develop print and distribute information on "What to do using public transport".	BBNPA	
SED61	Develop self-contained Sustainable Transport Website.	BBNPA	Transport providers
SED62	Develop walks booklets linked to buses and/or trains.	BBNPA	
SED63	Market use of public transport through walking press.	BBNPA	
SED64	Work closely with long distance footpath managers.	BBNPA	
SED65	Develop links with taxi industry and bus companies.	BBNPA	Local transport providers
SED66	Offer support to tourism businesses, festivals and attractions in reducing their transport impacts.	BBNPA	Local businesses
SED67	Work with gateway/interchange managers to develop visitor information at these points.	BBNPA	Gateway/interchange managers
SED68	Establish quantitative and qualitative monitoring for visitor transport.	BBNPA	Local businesses



## 9. Implementation

### 9.1. Implementation Framework

Achieving the aspirations and actions detailed in the Management Plan requires that implementation is carried out by way of a coordinated process. Many of the actions identified in Chapter 8 are already a part of existing plans and strategies formulated by the National Park Authority (e.g., Sustainable Tourism Strategy) and/or other partners (e.g., EAW's River Basin Management Plans). Other actions are new or part of developing policy documents (e.g., the Local Development Plan). In all cases, the actions cannot be considered in isolation but must be developed in relation to the other actions. They are all in various stages of development and delivery, varying by location, timing, partners, funding sources, commitments, etc. Implementation, therefore, requires careful planning and formulation of a solid framework. This framework, or plan, will be used to briefly describe the methods for implementation, coordinating bodies, key funding sources, identification of suitable milestones, research needs and collaborative strategies that will be required to implement the proposed actions and achieve the desired outcomes. The implementation plan should be a useful document that facilitates the effective delivery of the actions and not a plan for planning's sake. The implementation framework is an additional step beyond the scope of CCW's National Park Management Plan Guidance (2006).

### 9.2. Collaboration and Coordination

There are many actions identified in Chapter 8, with a variety of lead organizations and partners associated with the delivery of each. As stated throughout the Plan this requires the collaborative and concerted efforts of all involved in the Park's management. The future of the Park depends on sustained partnerships, particularly in times of limited resources.

The NPA, along with being a key stakeholder responsible for delivery of many of these actions, has the additional role to coordinate the implementation of the actions derived from the Management Plan. The NPA is also responsible for coordinating overall evaluation and monitoring of progress toward successful delivery of the actions in the Management Plan even though other organizations may have independent monitoring programs (see Chapter 10). Coordinating the monitoring and implementation of the Plan requires frequent and effective communication with delivery partners to ensure that both independent and collaborative activities are logged and reported.

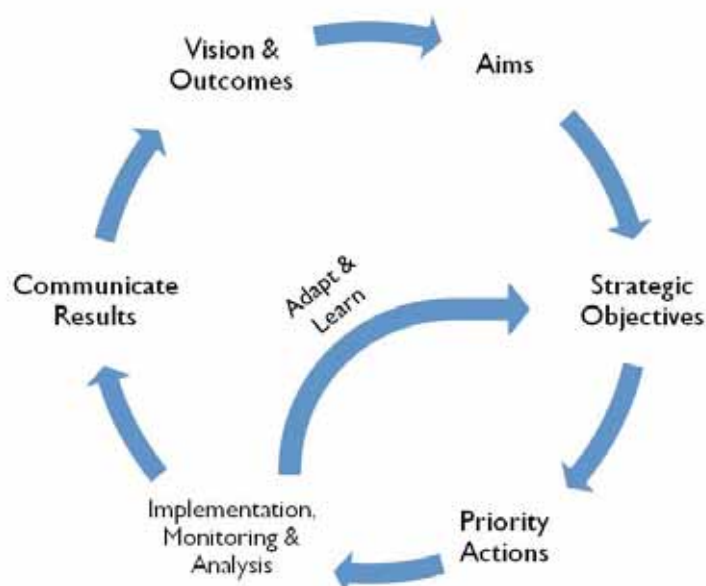
### 9.3. Funding

Some of the actions identified in Chapter 8 are included in existing funding streams. The delivery of many of the Plan's actions, however, is reliant upon the identification and procurement of new or additional funding. Part of the purpose behind an implementation framework is to identify where funding will be needed and to suggest potential funding sources to fulfil the need. Where actions and outcomes can be delivered collectively, efforts will be made to pool funding and/or obtain resources that satisfy the requirements of multiple objectives.

### 9.4. Adaptive Management

Implementation of management strategies is often thought of as a linear process. In reality, it is more of a circular or iterative process (see Figure 9.1) in which management actions may be adjusted from time to time – after careful monitoring and evaluation – in order to achieve desired outcomes. Actions are implemented. Results or outcomes are monitored. If progress is being made and identified milestones reached, then the management activity continues as planned. If, however, satisfactory progress is not being made or outcomes are undesirable, then management activity should be adjusted to realign the actions with the desired outcomes. In some extreme cases, this process may require a re-analysis of the management activity and an assessment of the outcomes in light of the newly obtained information, including an evaluation of costs and benefits.

Figure 9.1. General depiction of the adaptive management process.



## 10. Research, Evaluation and Monitoring

Figure 1.3 depicts in a simplistic fashion the basic steps involved in the management process. This chapter summarizes the steps necessary to complete the process, following on from developing actions and implementing them. This encompasses ongoing monitoring and evaluation not only of the priority actions needed to achieve the desired outcomes (and ultimately the vision for the National Park) but also of the Park's state. Whilst there is value in viewing parts of the management process from a linear perspective, it is best thought of as a circular process because of its iterative nature (see Section 9.4). Park management is on-going and never-ending. We are always learning from past activities and decisions. Today's management agenda may not be relevant to Tomorrow's circumstances and drivers of change. Our visions and aims for the Park's future will change, too. The results from the actions of this Plan will influence the future state of the Park, potentially shifting our vision and therefore our priorities. For these reasons, the Plan is a static representation of a dynamic process, requiring research, monitoring and periodic evaluation and review to ensure that management keeps pace with our ever-changing world.

### 10.1. Research

To manage any system properly, one has to have an understanding of what the state or condition of the resource is (a baseline) and knowledge of how it has fluctuated over time (trends). It is also important to know what key factors (drivers of change) are likely to influence the resource of concern and how the resource might respond to these factors or to management actions (often represented in conceptual models). Unfortunately, managers very often have limited data and information to help inform decision-making.

Scientifically-sound research provides the baseline and trend data necessary for managers to understand the state of the Park's resources, and allows managers to evaluate how these resources are responding or may respond to change, including management activity. Research is, therefore, a vital component to the management process.

The breadth of topics discussed in the Management Plan and the number of organizations involved in Park management dictates that existing data sets are compiled and analysed so that they are available to decision makers in a useful format. Relevant research also need to be coordinated and focused on the priorities identified in the Management Plan to make the most effective and efficient use of resources. This includes data mining and data sharing activities. There are a number of universities, agencies and organizations who conduct research in and

around the Park, for example, but do not share their information and findings with the Local Authorities or the NPA. Greater co-ordination will maximize the value of research to a range of partners and make the results easily accessible to all with an interest.

Here, too, the NPA has a coordinating role to play, identifying and prioritizing research needs associated with the Management Plan and sharing the information that results from this research. Several research needs have been identified in the Plan and more are likely to result during the implementation (Chapter 9) and monitoring (Section 10.2 below) phases of this process. Research efforts can also help identify and develop indicators to be used in monitoring the state of the Park. Where possible, research should also assist managers in gaining a better understanding of how drivers of change (see Chapter 5) are likely to impact the Park. In so doing, researchers and managers can work cooperatively to develop innovative approaches to mitigating for and adapting to these changes. Much of this work can be conducted in conjunction with and to the mutual benefit of the forthcoming Local Development Plan.

## **10.2. Evaluation and Monitoring**

How do we know if the Park's Vision is still in sight? Are the outcomes attainable? Without monitoring and evaluation of our activities, we have no way of knowing whether our desired outcomes have been achieved or if we have exacerbated the issues we set out to solve. All partners associated with the delivery of the priority actions in this Management Plan have a role to play in monitoring progress and the state of the Park's resources. Evaluation and monitoring conducted by the NPA and its partners will comprise three forms:

- Annual reports summarizing progress being made toward the actions identified in Chapter 8;
- The statutory, five-year review of the National Park Management Plan and SEA objectives; and
- Periodic monitoring of the state of the Park's resources, published in the State of the Park Report.

### **10.2.1. Annual Reports**

Again, given its coordinating role, the NPA is responsible for collating monitoring information with respect to the Park and its resources. To be of use to managers and decision makers, this information must be presented in a coherent form. Annual reports will be prepared by the NPA to help monitor progress toward completing the actions and achieving the outcomes. These reports will include the collective monitoring efforts of all partners, to the degree

feasible. Under the Section 62(2) duty, there should be a clear understanding amongst partners that data relevant to National Park should be collected, analysed and updated by Park area. By the very nature of this task, annual monitoring will require collaboration and frequent communication among all of the Park's management partners. Annual monitoring reports will be separate from the NPA's organizational annual report, though there should be direct links to annual reporting for the Local Development Plan.

Because of the varying scales at which change occurs and management interventions are implemented, progress toward some outcomes will be imperceptible over the course of a year's time. Other actions and outcomes may be monitored over a very short period. Restoration of peat bogs may be slow, but the installation of micro-scale hydroelectric structures may occur in months, for example. For these reasons, only relevant action items from Chapter 8 will be included in the annual reports. The distinction between long- and short-term reporting should be made clear in the reports. Long-term and broad-scale monitoring is more likely to be reported in the five-year review of the Management Plan and in the State of the Park Report.

### **10.2.2. Five-year Review and SEA Monitoring**

The National Park Management Plan must be reviewed every five years. Because the Park's vision, aims and many of the strategic objectives operate on a 20-25 year timescale, these are likely to require only minor adjustment, if any, during the review process. However, many of the actions and some of the strategic objectives may have been completed or need to be refocused in light of changing issues, policies and drivers of change that have become more pertinent during the Plan period. It is also time to take stock of the success of the Plan's implementation.

To this end, the annual reports will inform the review of the National Park Plan at this stage. They will – through the monitoring and evaluation process – help to determine whether sufficient progress towards the long term vision has been made and whether the actions still require a particular focus within the next five year period. The priorities for action will change if the issue is no longer considered pressing, the outcomes have been successfully achieved or national policies dictate that resources be shifted elsewhere.

As part of the SEA process, monitoring of environmental and sustainability objectives will be necessary, particularly of issues or actions raised in the Sustainability Appraisal Report. As per CCW Guidance, SEA monitoring should be incorporated within the overall Management Plan monitoring programme. If done properly, this integration of monitoring elements should

conserve financial resources Whilst improving the environmental soundness and sustainability of the Plan.

### 10.2.3. State of the Park Report

The State of the Park Report (SOPR) gives an indication of trends across the Brecon Beacons National Park in relation to: the Park's special qualities, environment and cultural assets; how well these are understood and enjoyed by the public; and the well-being of local communities.

Like the Management Plan, the SOPR relates to the Park area and its people, not just to the work of the NPA. The most recent *State of the Park Report 2006* contains 23 indicators carefully chosen from the available data to evaluate changes in the condition of the Park over time. Long-term monitoring of trends from these or similar indicators will:

- Show whether policies in the Management Plan are being effective;
- Help identify key issues;
- Highlight areas where more information and research are required;
- Help target resources where they are most needed; and
- Support bids for funding.

Indicators within this SOPR will need to be reviewed and updated as appropriate to allow measurement of both the Plan objectives and the SEA objectives.

Hence, the SOPR is a critical component of the Management Plan process and will be updated periodically as part of its monitoring programme. By updating the SOPR approximately every five years, it will aid in the review of the Management Plan, inform the SEA monitoring and assist in evaluating the implementation of the NPMP. According to CCW's *National Park Management Plan Guidance* (2006, para. 3.19), the SOPR should "develop a seamless link, through identified indicators, between the State of the Park Report, the Management Plan objectives, the SEA objectives and potentially aspects of the annual monitoring report for the Local Development Plan of the National Park."





# Annexes



## **Annex 1:**

### **Document Maps**

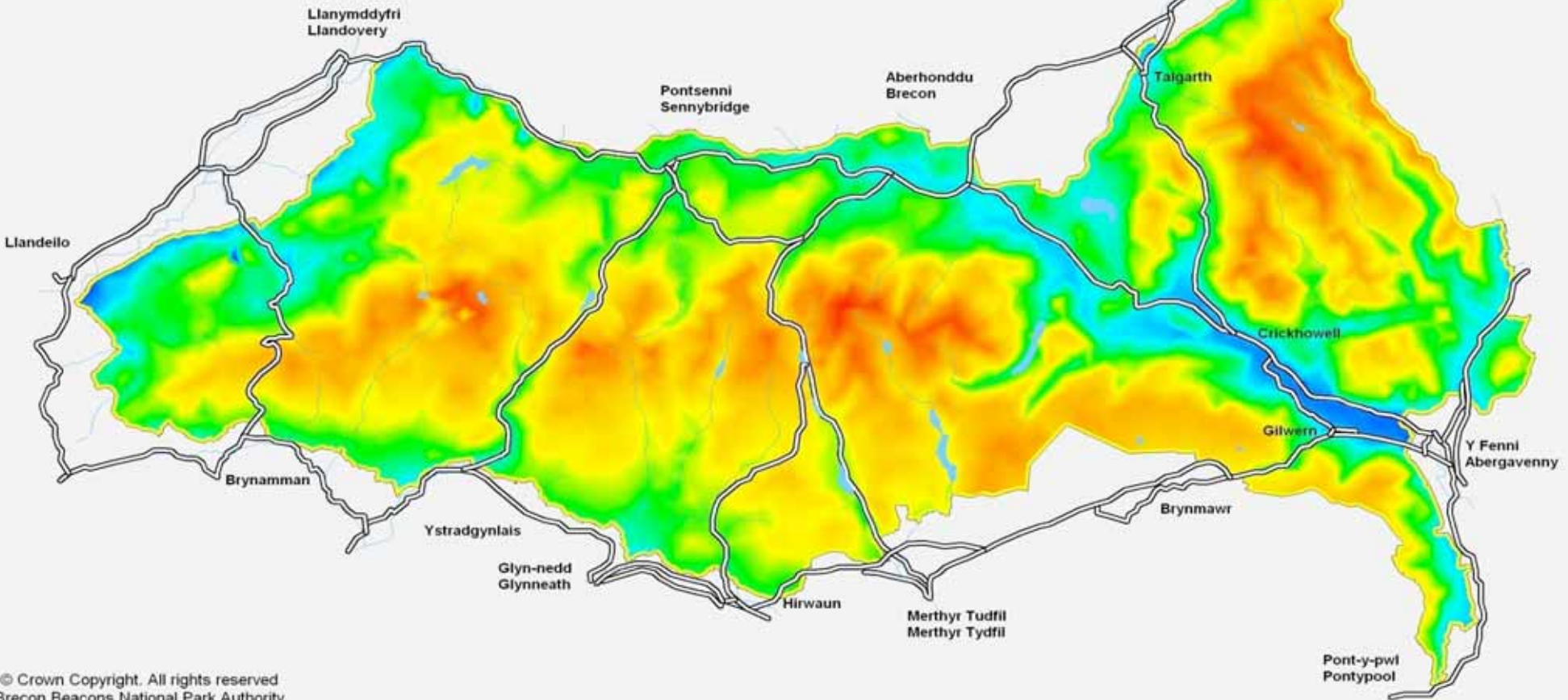
The following maps are to be inserted throughout the Final National Park Management Plan in relevant locations to aid in the illustration of the Park's key features and issues.

Awdurdod unegol		Unitary authority
Parc cenedlaethol		National Park



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved  
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
100019322 2009

© Hawlfraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl  
Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog  
100019322 2009










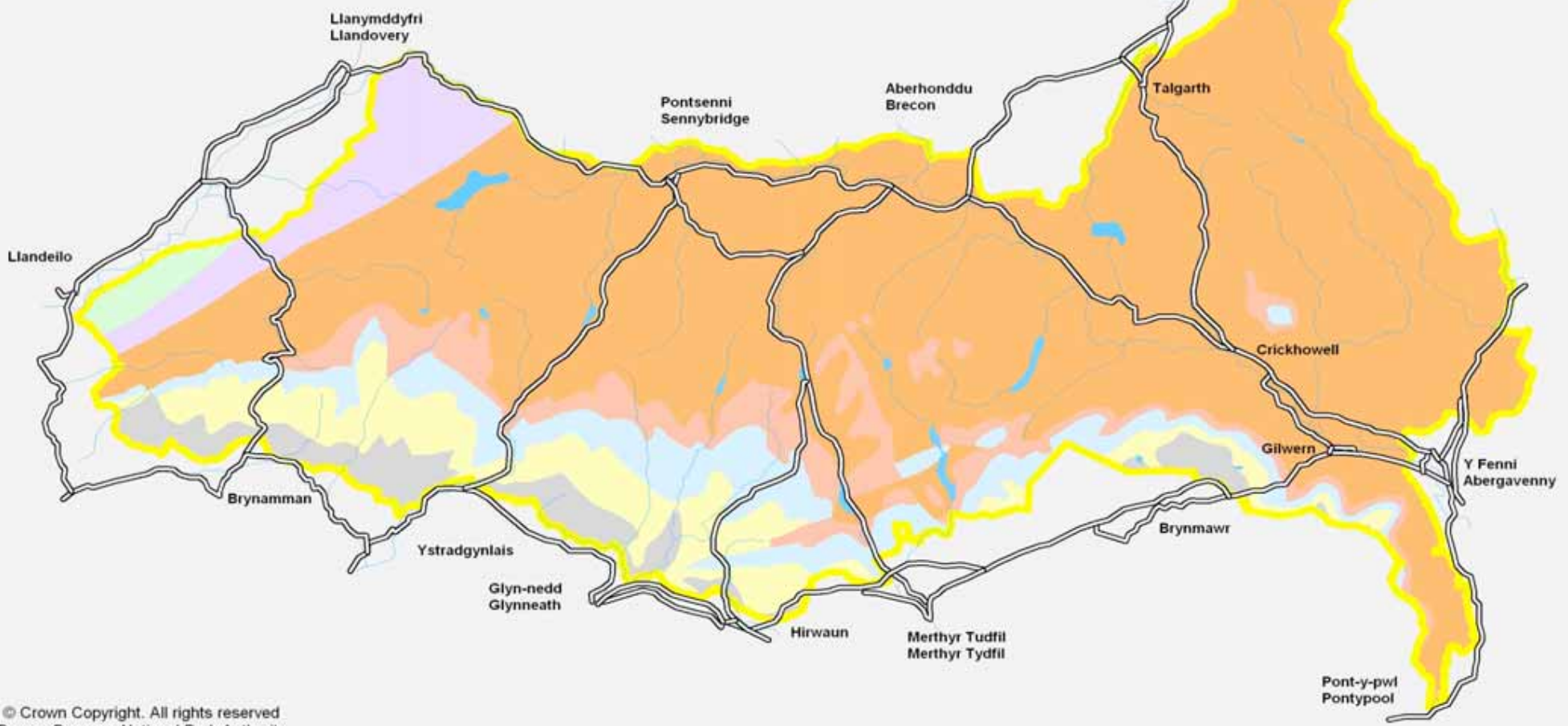
© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved  
 Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
 100019322 2009

© Hawlfraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl  
 Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog  
 100019322 2009

Map 2 : Brecon Beacons National Park Relief



Calchfaen Carbonifferaidd		Carboniferous Limestone
Cystradau glo		Coal measures
Tywodfaen Coch Hynafol Uchaf		Upper Old Red Sandstone
Tywodfaen Coch Hynafol Isaf		Lower Old Red Sandstone
Gruf Melinfaen a Chraig Ffarwel		Millstone Grit
Ordofigaidd		Ordovician
Silvraidd		Silurian

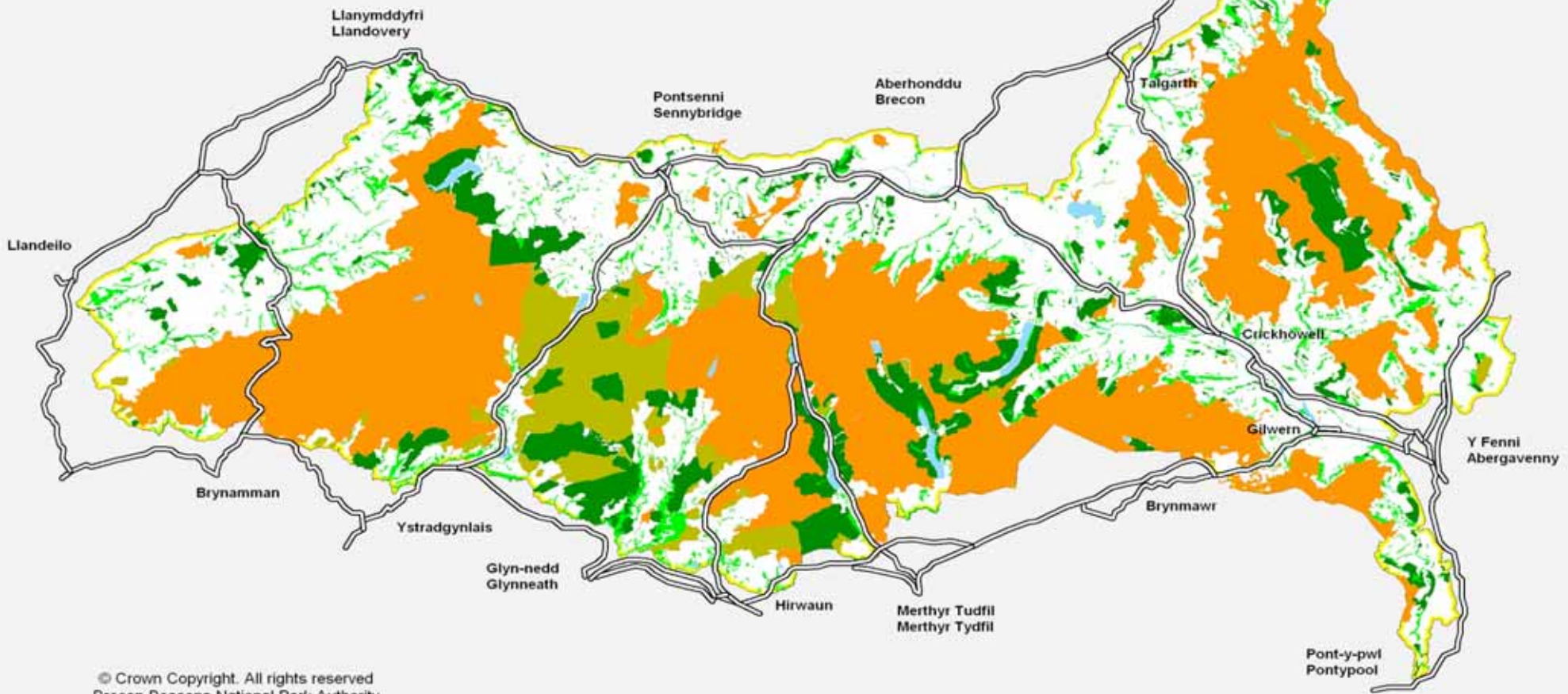


© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved  
 Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
 100019322 2009

© Hawlfraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl  
 Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog  
 100019322 2009

Map 3 : Geology

Tir comin agored		Open common land
Gweundir arall		Other moorland
Coedwigoedd conwydd a chymysg		Coniferous and mixed woodland
Coedwigoedd llydanddail		Broadleaf woodland
Llynnoedd a chronfeydd		Lakes and reservoirs



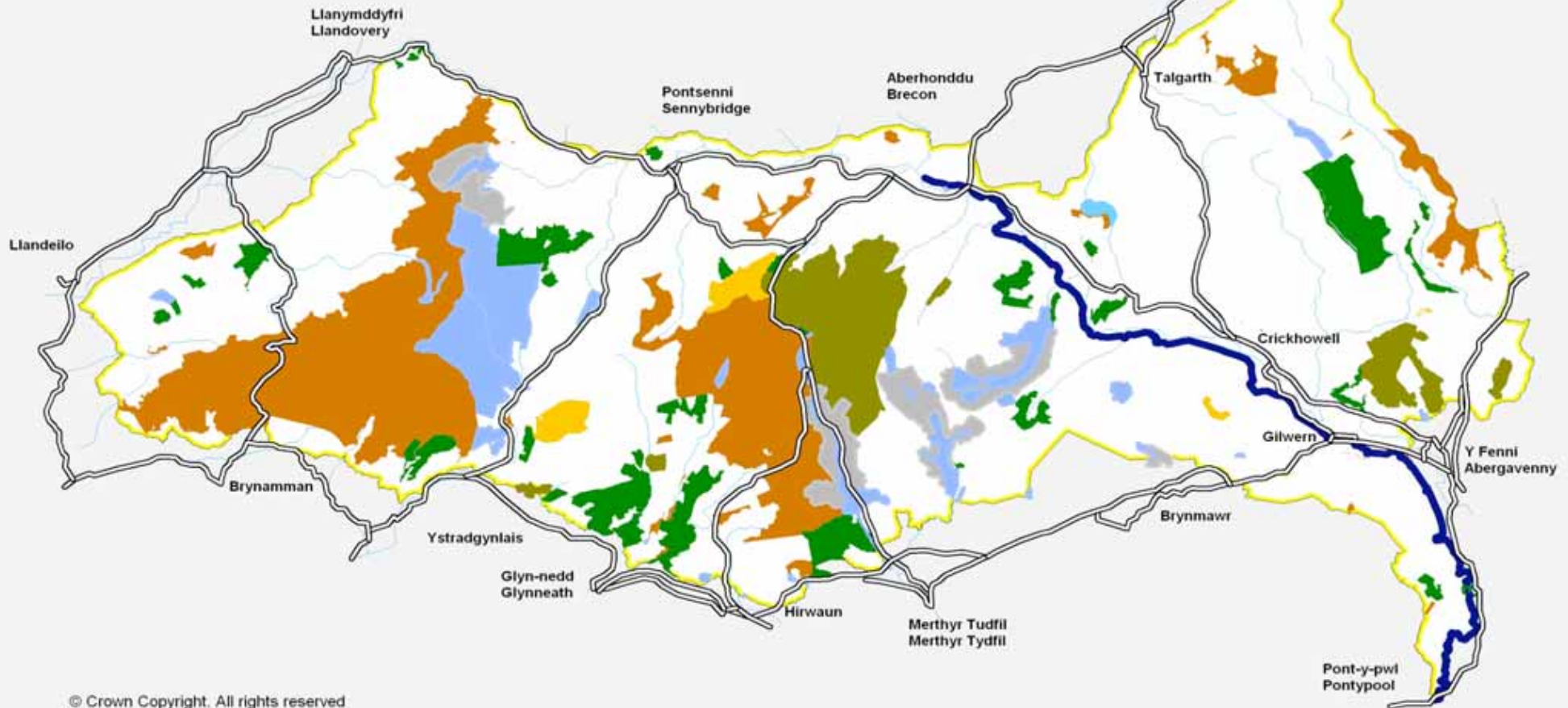
© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved  
 Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
 100019322 2009  
 © Hawffraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl  
 Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog  
 100019322 2009

Map 4 : Land Use



Awdurdod y Parc Cenedlaethol  
 Comisiwn Coedwigaeth  
 Comisiwn Coedwigaeth ar les gan DC-WW  
 Dwr Cymru-Welsh Water  
 Yr Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol  
 Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru  
 Dyfrffyrdd Prydain

 National Park Authority  
 Forestry Commission  
 Forestry Commission lease from DC-WW  
 Dwr Cymru Welsh Water  
 National Trust  
 Countryside Council for Wales  
 British Waterways



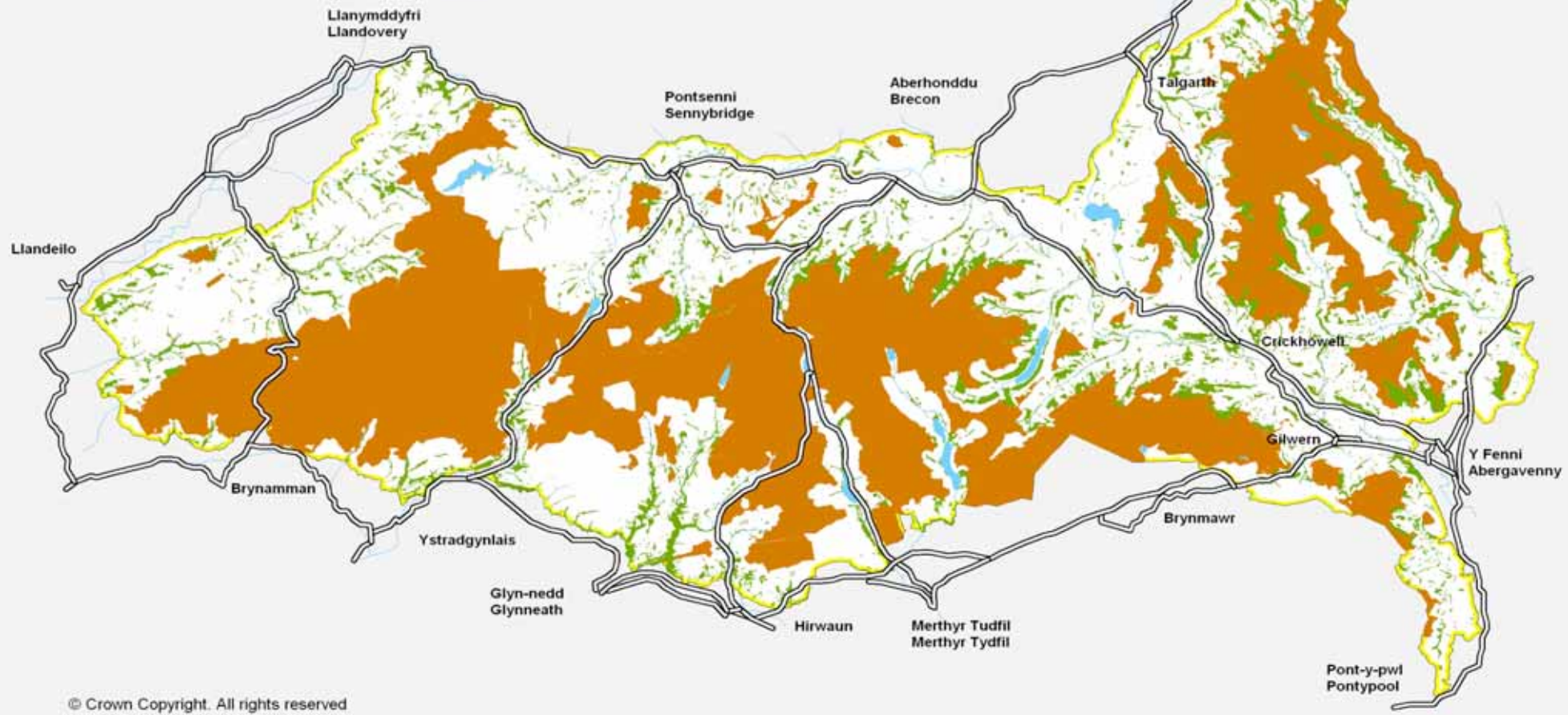
© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved  
 Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
 100019322 2009

© Hawlfraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl  
 Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog  
 100019322 2009

Map 5 : Land Ownership



Mynydd-dir, gweundir a rhostir	Mountain, moor and heath
Coetir	Woodland



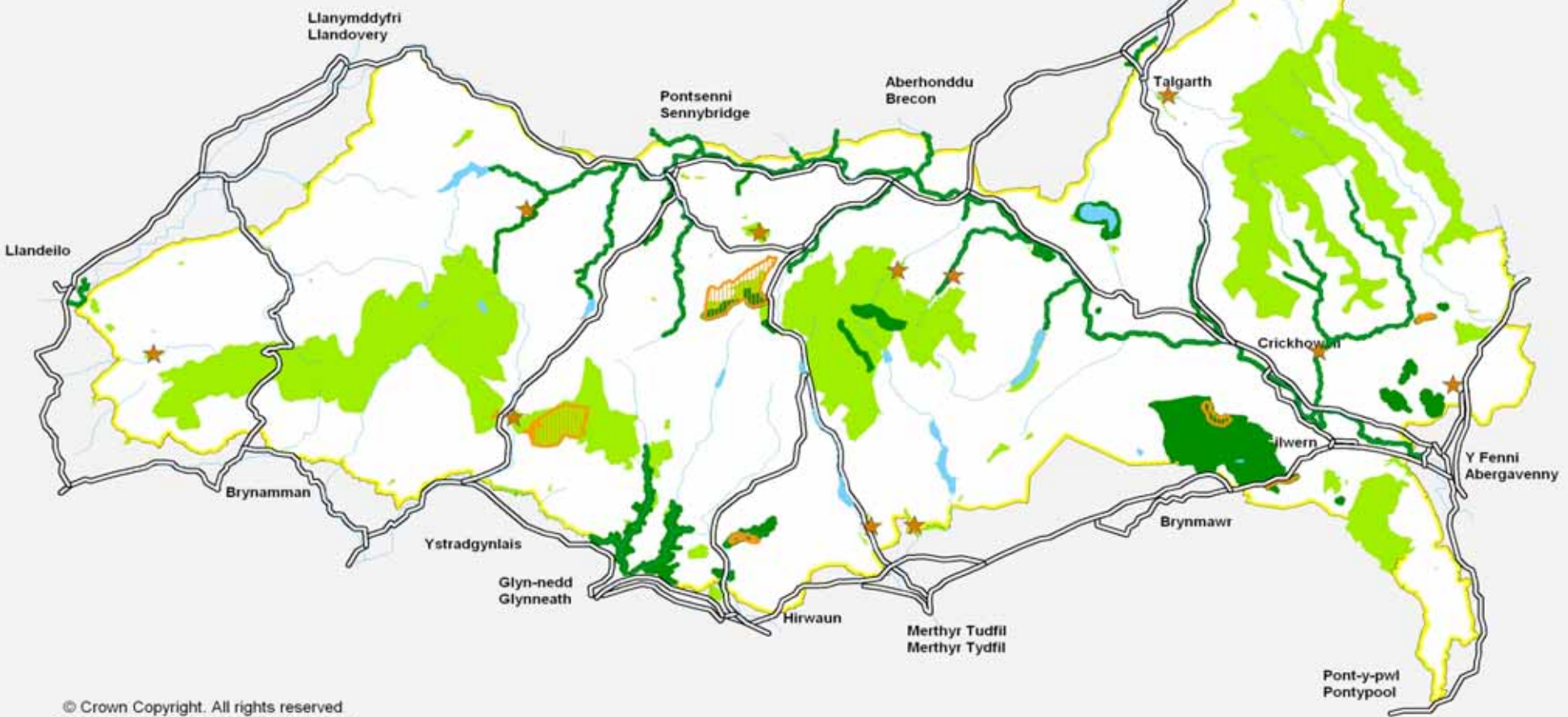
© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved  
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
100019322 2009

© Hawffraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl  
Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog  
100019322 2009

Map 6 : Conservation



Ardal cadwraeth arbennig		Special area for conservation
Safle o ddiddordeb gwyddonol arbennig		Site of special scientific interest
Gwarchodfa natur genedlaethol		National nature reserve
Gwarchodfa natur		Local /non-designated nature reserve



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved  
 Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
 100019322 2009

© Hawlfraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl  
 Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog  
 100019322 2009

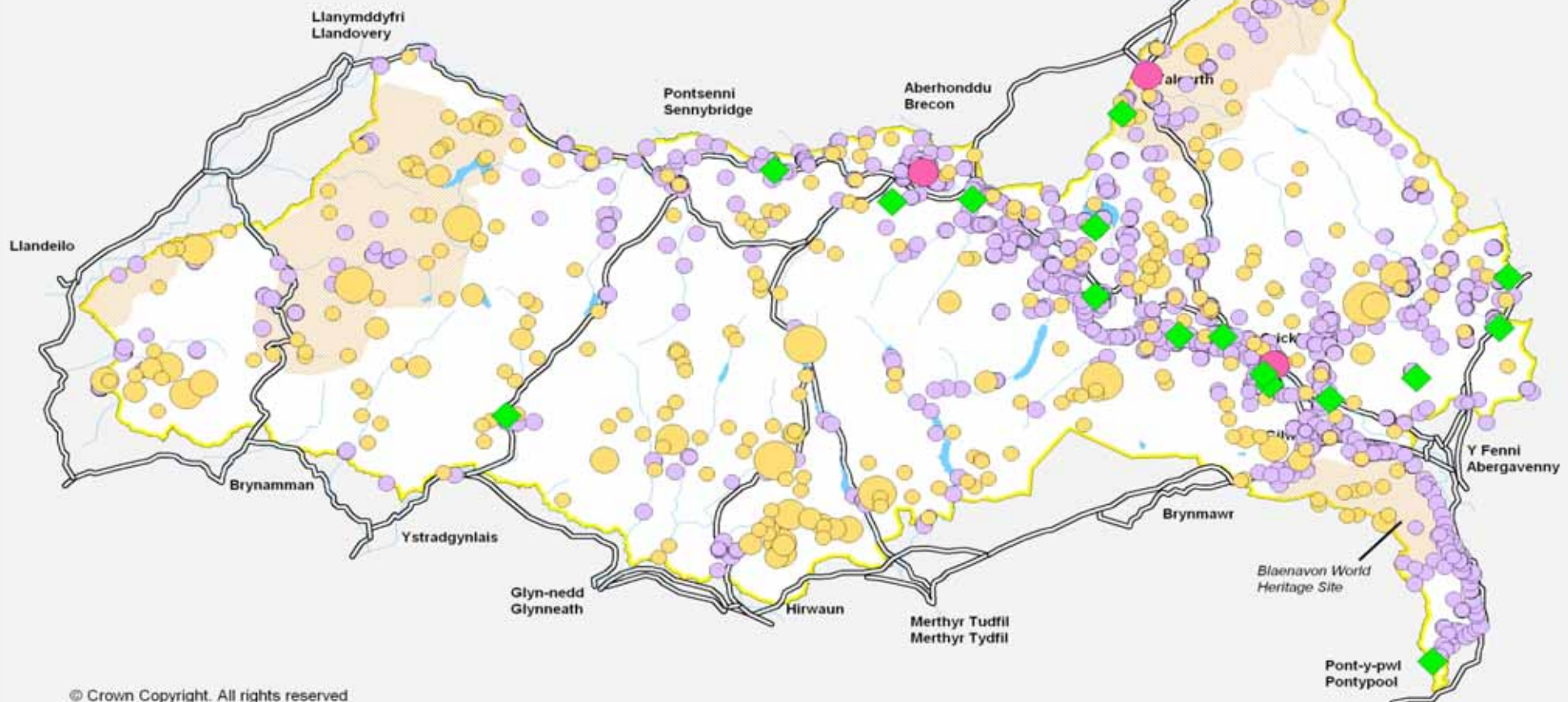
Map 7 : SSSI's & Nature Reserves



Henebion hynafol rhestredig (333)  
 Tirluniau o ddiddordeb hanesyddol  
 Parciau a gerddi hanesyddol (17)  
 Adeiladau rhestredig (1,763)  
 Ardal gadwraeth



Scheduled ancient monuments (333)  
 Landscapes of historic interest  
 Historic parks and gardens (17)  
 Listed buildings (1,763)  
 Conservation areas



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved  
 Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
 100019322 2009

© Hawlfraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl  
 Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog  
 100019322 2009

Map 8 : Historic & Built Environments

Ardal dan bwysau

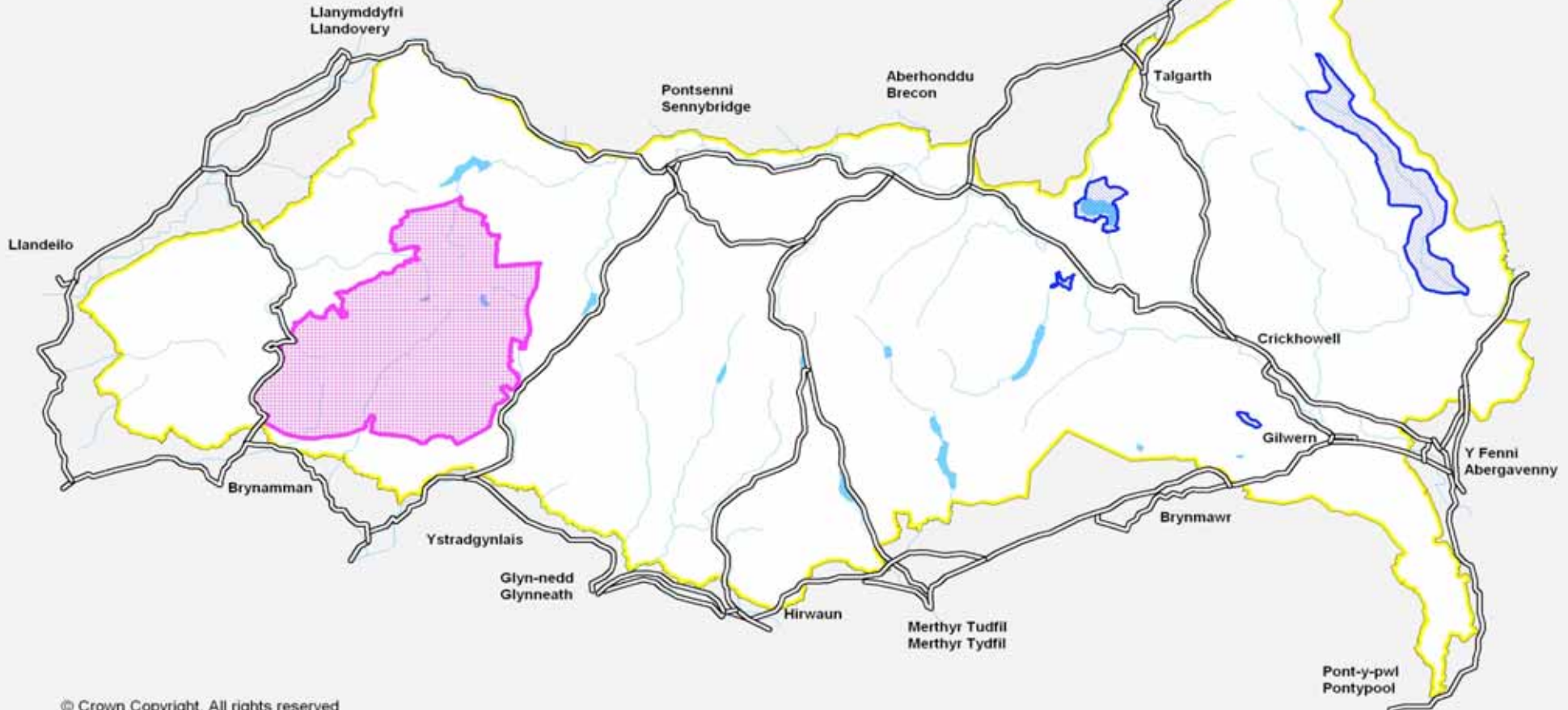


Pressure areas

Ardal anghysbell



Remote area



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved  
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
100019322 2009

© Hawlfraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl  
Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog  
100019322 2009

Map 9 : Pressure & Remote Areas

## Annex 2:

### List of Acronyms

AALA	Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority
AHOEC	Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ANPA	Association of National Park Authorities
BBNPA	Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
BGS	British Geological Survey
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
CPRE	Campaign for the protection of Rural England
CPRW	Campaign for the protection of rural Wales
CROW	Countryside and Rights of Way Act
DEFRA	Department for Environmental, Food and Rural Affairs
EA (W)	Environment Agency (Wales)
EC	European Commission
EGN	European Geopark Network
ESDGC	Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship
EU	European Union
FC (W)	Forestry Commission (Wales)
GGN	Global Geopark Network
GIS	Geographical Information System (computer based mapping)
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature (World Conservation Union)
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LDP	Local Development Plan
LEAP	Local Environment Agency Plan
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LTP	Local Transport Plans
MIPPS	Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NAW	National Assembly for Wales
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NPA	National Park Authority
NPMP	National Park Management Plan
ORS	Old Red Sandstone
PPW	Planning Policy Wales
RCAHMW	Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales
REAP	Renewable Energy Assistance Programme
RDP Wales	Rural Development Plan Wales
RIGS	Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites
ROWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan
SAC	Special Area for Conservation
SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
SDF	Sustainable Development Fund
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment

SEWTA	South East Wales Transport Alliance
SOPR	State of the Park Report
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SUDs	Sustainable Urban Drainage
SWWITCH	South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium
TAN	Technical Advice Note
UDP	Unitary Development Plan
UKCIP	UK Climate Impacts Programme
UKWAS	UK Woodland Assurance Standard
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WANPA	Welsh Association of National Park Authorities
WFD	Water Framework Directive
YHA	Youth Hostel Association

## Annex 3:

### Glossary

**Acid deposition** - The accumulation of acids or acidic compounds on the surface of the Earth, in lakes or streams, or on objects or vegetation near the Earth's surface, as a result of their separation from the atmosphere. Acid deposition can harm the environment in a variety of ways, as by causing the acidification of lakes and streams, the leaching of minerals and other nutrients from soil, and the inhibition of nitrogen fixation and photosynthesis in plants.

**Affordable Housing** - are defined as properties for rent at registered social landlord benchmark rent levels and intermediate housing such as properties available for low cost home ownership in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government.

**Agriculture** -The science, art, and business of cultivating soil, producing crops, and raising livestock; farming. Primarily the production of food for human consumption and food for livestock but more recently also includes the production of energy crops.

**Anthropocene** - is used to describe the most recent period in the Earth's history, starting in the 18th century when the activities of the human race first began to have a significant global impact on the Earth's climate and ecosystems.

**Archaeology** - The systematic study of past human life and culture by the recovery and examination of remaining material evidence, such as graves, buildings, tools and pottery.

**Biodiversity** - a contraction of "biological diversity," a term used to refer to whole range of living organisms and processes. It encompasses three key themes; habitat diversity, the variation in the places that organisms live such as a forest or coral reef; species diversity, the variation of distinct living organisms, such as a mouse, a butterfly or a bacteria; genetic diversity, the naturally occurring differences among the individual members of a species, as expressed by the differences in the genes making up each individual, this genetic variation powers evolution and adaption of species and the appearance of new species.

**Cambrian** - The first geological period of the Paleozoic era, occurring between 570-505million years ago. The name derives from the Roman name given to Wales, Cambria. The whole period of time from the formation of the first rocks until 570 million years ago is termed pre-Cambrian.

**Carboniferous** - The fifth geological period of the Paleozoic era, occurring between 360-286 million years ago. The name literally means "to contain carbon", a reference to the frequent occurrence of coal bearing rocks from this period, formed from the time plants first covered the land surface.

**Carbon neutral or carbon neutrality** - refers to a project, development or other activity that has no net production of atmospheric carbon. Any carbon produced is offset by other parts of the project that absorb and store carbon, meaning that net production is zero. See also Carbon zero.

**Carbon zero/zero carbon** - a project development or other activity that produces no atmospheric carbon at all. This is distinct from Carbon neutral and low carbon.

**Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies** - One of the ways that this is done is through licensing water abstraction. We developed Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS):

- To inform the public on water resources and licensing practice.
- To provide a consistent approach to local water resources management.
- To help to balance the needs of water users and the environment.
- To involve the public in managing the water resources in their area.

**Climate change** - refers to the variation in the Earth's global climate or in regional climates over time. It describes changes in the variability or average state of the atmosphere over time scales ranging from decades to millions of years. These changes can be caused by processes internal to the Earth, external forces (e.g. variations in sunlight intensity) or, more recently, human activities.

**Coal Measures** - a collective term for the series of related rocks and coal seams, dating from the Carboniferous period that occurred across south Wales.

**Collaborate** -to work together, especially in a joint intellectual effort for mutual benefit and gain and usually as equals.

**Commons, Common Land, Commoners, Common Rights** -land designated under various Acts over which people other than the landowner hold rights in common with others. Commons are owned by an individual or organisation but those who hold rights (the Commoners) are entitled to undertake certain actions on the land such as turn out livestock or cut and take vegetation. The rights and commoners are unique to each particular Common land parcel. Owning Common land or exercising common rights has certain responsibilities.

**Coniferous** - trees that are characterised by the bearing of seeds within dry cones and those that have very narrow leaves. They are usually evergreen trees and within the Brecon Beacons are plantations grown as a crop. No conifers occur naturally in the National Park.

**Conservation** - the protection, preservation, management, or restoration of natural or historic environments, the ecological communities that inhabit them and the cultural and traditional elements that shape them. These will be specified throughout the text using specific modifiers, (e.g. "biodiversity" conservation).

**Conservation Area** - areas "of special architectural or historic interest, the appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance".(Planning, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990.)

**Curriculum Cymraeg** - the National Curriculum in Wales, adjusted to ensure that the Welsh language is included as a core subject

**Devonian** - the fourth geological period of the Paleozoic era, occurring between 408-360 million years ago. The name derives from the English county of Devon.

**Diffuse Pollution** - comprises true non point source contamination and pollution arising from a multiplicity of dispersed, often individually minor, point sources. Examples of true non point sources are sheet run off from fields or seepage of nutrients from soil into ground water. Examples of minor point sources are field drains or surface water drains in urban areas. Diffuse sources are often individually minor, but collectively significant.

**Ecclesiastical** -of or relating to a church, especially as an organized institution.

**Ecological footprint** - analysis measures human demand on nature. It compares human consumption of natural resources with planet Earth's ecological capacity to regenerate them. It is an estimate of the amount of biologically productive land and sea area needed to regenerate (if possible) the resources a human population consumes and to absorb the corresponding waste, given prevailing technology and current understanding. Using this assessment, it is possible to estimate

how many planet Earths it would take to support humanity if everybody lived a given lifestyle. Whilst the measure is widely used, some also criticize the approach.

**Ecology** - is the scientific study of systems of living organisms, the interactions among organisms and between organisms and their environment. The environment of an organism includes both physical properties, such as rainfall or sunlight, and biotic factors, such as other organisms that share its habitat.

**Economic** -

- Of or relating to the production, development, and management of material wealth, as of a country, household, or business enterprise.
- Of or relating to an economy: *a period of sustained economic growth.*
- Of or relating to the science of economics: *new economic theories regarding the effects of deficit spending.*
- Efficient; economical: *an economic use of home heating oil.*

**Eco-Schools** - is an international program of environmental and sustainable developmental education for schools.

**Ecosystem** - an association of plants, animals and micro-organisms that are inter-dependent on each other and with all the non-living physical factors of their environment.

**Ecosystem services** - useful services provided to humans as a by product of the interaction of biological activity within an ecosystem, such as the natural purification of water through wetlands, or the pollination of crops by bees.

**Ecotourism** - also known as **ecological tourism** is a form of tourism which appeals to the ecologically and socially conscious. Generally speaking, ecotourism focuses on local culture, wilderness adventures, volunteering, personal growth, and learning new ways to live on the planet; typically involving travel to destinations where flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. Sustainable development needs to social, economic and environmental needs all together to occur.

**ESDGC** -Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship is an approach which involves the whole curriculum and management of the school, not merely an 'add on' subject. It has its roots in environmental education and development education. As a result, many of the building blocks of education for sustainable development and global citizenship are already present in every school.

**Farm Diversification** - a business approach where other activities are operated on a farm in addition to (and often to supplement) agricultural production, such as a camping pitch, Bed & Breakfast or recreational activity. This can also include diversifying the agricultural produce, operating a farm shop or managing land for purposes other than production such as wildlife conservation. Economic Diversification is also linked to farm diversification as income is no longer from only one source.

- Diversification (finance), spreading investments around.
- Diversification (marketing strategy), new products and new markets.



**Geodiversity or geological diversity** - is the diversity of minerals, rocks (whether 'solid' or 'drift'), fossils, soils, land forms and geological processes that constitute the topography, landscape and the underlying structure of the Earth. This term can be applied to any particular region, county or country. The degree of geodiversity depends upon the range of geological and paleontological features relative to the region or area discussed. A relatively higher (richer) geodiversity occurs in areas which are characterised by the presence of many different geological structures, especially if these belong to differing geological eras (such as occur in the British Isles). A relatively lower diversity occurs in areas which are characterised by large tracts of similar geological structures, for example the Earth's deserts.

**Geographical -**

- Of or relating to geography.
- Concerning the topography of a specific region.

**Geological Period's** - is a geologic time scale that is used by geologists, palaeontologists and other earth scientists to describe the timing and relationships between events that have occurred during the history of the Earth.

**Geology** - the study of the physical development and process of Earth, particularly the formation of rocks and soils. Formation of landscapes is more specifically termed Geomorphology, though the two disciplines are intimately linked. (For further information on different geological periods and their relationship to each other visit: <http://www.breconbeacons.org/geopark/understanding/rocks-and-geology-of-the-geopark/glossary-of-geological-terms>)

**Geomorphology** - the study of the development, evolution and configuration of landforms.

**Geopark** - a territory encompassing one or more sites of scientific importance, not only for geological reasons but also by virtue of its archaeological, ecological or cultural value. They are identified and notified by UNESCO.

**Globalization (or Globalisation)** - refers to increasing global connectivity and integration in the economic, social, technological, cultural, political, and ecological spheres.

**Hierarchy** - the relational organisation of people or other bodies depending on levels of responsibility, involvement, etc.

**Historic Environment** - The 'historic environment' encompasses all those material remains that our ancestors have created in the landscapes of town and countryside. It covers the whole spectrum of human activity from the largest - towns, cathedrals or motorways, to the very smallest - signposts, standing stones or flint tools.

**Historic Landscape** - historical components that make up the landscape such as field boundary types, field shapes, buildings, settlement patterns, parks and gardens, roads and railways, industry, and archaeological sites are all taken into consideration during characterisation.

**Holistic** - emphasizing the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts.

**Integrated Land Management** - the combining or coordination of separate land management schemes to provide an organized or structured approach so the all constituent units function cooperatively.



**Interpretation** - the process of helping people to understand the significance of a place, object, event or topic so that they enjoy it more, appreciate better the heritage of the surroundings they are visiting or in which they live and develop a positive attitude to conservation.

**Key Stage 1, 2, 3, 4** - The National Curriculum has four key stages that set out what pupils must learn and when. Key stage 1 covers ages 5-7, stage 2 ages 7-11, stage 3 ages 11-14 and stage 4 ages 14-16.

**Kilowatt (kW)** - a measure of electrical supply and consumption a kilowatt is equal to 1000 Watts. A light bulb typically consumes 40-100 Watts, whilst a low energy light bulb consumes 10-15 Watts.

**Microgeneration** - is the generation of zero or low-carbon heat and power by individuals, small businesses and communities to meet their own local needs, usually 100kW or less.

**National Curriculum** -The National Curriculum covers all pupils aged 5-16 and is divided into 4 key stages. It sets out what must be taught to pupils in each key stage to ensure that a pupils learning is developed progressively. Whilst there is some flexibility of exactly what is taught, certain subjects must be covered and certain topics taught at a particular key stage.

**National Park Authority (NPA)** - a local Government body consisting of elected and appointed members who work with employed officers to deliver the National Park purposes as set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and Environment Act 1990. Responsibilities for determining planning applications within the National Park are held by the NPA along with other services such as land management, promoting access and enjoyment and social and economic development. Other core local authority services such as provision of schools and highways maintenance are retained by the constituent Unitary Authorities, whose land the National Park covers.

**Noise suppression** -

- Reduction of the noise power level in electrical circuits.
- The process of automatically reducing the noise output of a receiver during periods when no carrier is being received.

**Ordovician** - the second geological period of the Paleozoic era, occurring between 505-438 million years ago. The name derives from the Ordovices, a tribe resident in mid and south Wales at the time of the Roman occupation.

**Pastoral** - the management of both livestock and grazing land.

**Peak Oil** - is the point in time when the maximum rate of global petroleum extraction is reached, after which the rate of production enters terminal decline and/or the cost of extracting it becomes prohibitively expensive. Effectively global demand has outstripped global supply.

**Pollutant** - something that pollutes, especially a waste material that contaminates air, soil, or water.

**Recreation** - an activity done for pleasure, relaxation or personal enjoyment.

**Renewable energy** - energy that is generated from a natural resource such as sunlight, wind, tides, flowing water, bio-mass and geothermal heat, these resources are naturally replenished. Also known as Green Energy.

**Resilience** - the ability to recover from an adverse impact or effect.

**Resistance** - the action of opposing something. In an ecological context, it is the ability of an organism, habitat or community to withstand a stress or disturbance.

**Resource energy or non-renewable energy** - is an energy taken from a source which is depleted by extraction. It relies on consumable materials. Non-renewable energy sources come from the earth and appear as either solids such as coal, liquids such as oil and gases such as natural gas.

**Sediment** - material that settles to the bottom of a liquid lees or solid fragments of inorganic/organic material that come from the weathering of rock and are carried and deposited by wind, water, or ice.

**Semi Feral** - refers to animals that whilst partly domesticated and under individual ownership by people are allowed to live wild with little restriction on where they choose to roam or what they choose to eat.

**Silurian** - The third geological period of the Paleozoic era, occurring between 438-408 million years ago. The name derives from the Silures, a tribe resident in mid and south Wales at the time of the Roman occupation.

**Social inclusion** - pertaining to the involvement of all part of society, irrespective of race, gender, belief, economic circumstance or other factor commonly used the segregate social groups.

**Soil erosion** - the loss of soil from the ground surface or sub-surface caused naturally by wind or water, but also caused artificially by human activities such as agriculture and excavation.

**Soil Resources** - soil is regarded as a non-renewable resource because it cannot be re-created except within the context of geological timescales.

**Subterranean** - situated or operating beneath the earth's surface; underground.

**Sustainable** - a process or state that can be maintained at a certain level indefinitely. With regard to any natural resource, sustainable means that the resources can be used at a rate equal to or less than the ability of those resources to replenish themselves, allowing the resource to be used as much in the future as in the present, i.e., the resource will not run low or run out.

**Sustainable communities** - are communities planned, built, or modified to promote sustainable living. They tend to focus on environmental sustainability (including development and agriculture) and economic sustainability. Sustainable communities can focus on sustainable urban infrastructure and/or sustainable municipal infrastructure.

**Sustainable development** - is an approach to delivering projects that ensures social, economic and environmental factors are considered equally and that the realisation of the project does not detract from the ability of future generations to make use of the same resources.

**Social exclusion** - relates to the alienation or disenfranchisement of certain people within a society. It is often connected to a person's social class, educational status and living standards and how these might affect their access to various opportunities. It also applies to some degree to the disabled, to minority men, women of all races, and to the elderly. Anyone who deviates in any perceived way from the norm of a population can become subject to coarse or subtle forms of social exclusion.

**Social Impact** - In business and Government policy, *social impact* refers to how the organization's actions affect the surrounding community.

**Thematic** - relating to a particular theme or topic.

**UN decade on ESD** - In 2002, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 57/254 to designate the decade 2005-2015 as the "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development."

**Unitary authority(UA)** - is a type of local authority that has a single tier and is responsible for all local Government functions within its area or performs additional functions which elsewhere in the relevant country are usually performed by National Government or a higher level of sub-national government.

Typically unitary authorities cover towns or cities which are large enough to function independently of county or other regional administration. Sometimes they consist of national sub-divisions which are distinguished from others in the same country by having no lower level of administration. There are 24 Unitary Authorities providing local Government across Wales.

**Upland Management** - the management of land above the line of enclosure. This land is rarely agriculturally improved; it is often Common land or under shared ownership and forms large open areas free of fences and other structures.

## Annex 4:

# IUCN Management Principles for Category V Landscapes/Seascapes

Category V Protected Landscapes/Seascapes have been defined by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) as:

*“an area of land, with coast and seas as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural values, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area.”<sup>41</sup>*

According to 2002 World Conservation Union guidance, management of IUCN Category V landscapes/seascapes should be conducted with the following principles in mind<sup>42</sup>:

### Principle 1:

*Conserving landscape, biodiversity and cultural values are at the heart of the Category V protected area approach.* Though much emphasis is placed in this guidance on economic and social considerations, Category V is a conservation approach which should reflect the over-arching objectives of all protected areas. It is therefore about managing change in such a way that environmental and cultural values endure: change should take place within limits that will not disrupt those values.

### Principle 2:

*The focus of management should be on the **point of interaction** between people and nature.* To recall part of the definition used in the 1994 Guidelines: “Safeguarding the integrity of (the) traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of the area” (IUCN, 1994, p.22). Thus, whereas in many other kinds of protected areas it is nature itself that is the main focus of management, what distinguishes Category V is that management primarily addresses the **linkage** between people and nature.

### Principle 3:

*People should be seen as stewards of the landscape.* As the occupants of lived-in, working landscapes that are of great value to society as whole, the people living within Category V protected areas should be supported in their role as stewards of the landscape. They are the architects of much that we value in the landscape, and their support is needed to ensure its survival. Ideally, they help to shape and care for the environment with the traditions of the past, but with an eye to the future. In that sense, they may more correctly be described as ‘the managers’ of Protected Landscapes than the professionals who are employed with that formal title: good managers in the professional sense will therefore see their role as ‘facilitators’ and negotiators’.

---

<sup>41</sup> International Union for the Conservation of Nature 1994. *Guidelines of Protected Area Management Categories.*

<sup>42</sup> Adapted from Phillips, A. 2002. *Management Guidelines for IUCN Category V Protected Areas Landscapes/Seascapes* IUCN. IUCN—World Conservation Union.

#### **Principle 4:**

*Management must be undertaken **with and through** local people, and mainly **for and by** them.* This principle recognises that the full involvement of local people is essential, and that Category V protected areas should never be planned **against** their long-term interests. It also recognises that local communities should play an important role in delivering protected area objectives and be among the principal beneficiaries of these. But note that local people are not the only source of expertise. Moreover, there are other stakeholders who can derive benefits from protected landscapes: for example, visitors from nearby urban areas or further afield, resource users from afar (e.g. consumers of water supplies downstream), or the wider community interested in biodiversity or landscape protection.

#### **Principle 5:**

*Management should be based on co-operative approaches, such as co-management and multi-stakeholder equity.* It follows from Principles 2–4 that structures and processes are needed to ensure that people are involved fully in shaping management decisions and come to see the protected area as theirs. This will require the operation of open, transparent procedures based on democratic principles. Co-management approaches may be particularly appropriate to Category V protected areas.

#### **Principle 6:**

*Effective management requires a supportive political and economic environment.* The foregoing principles cannot be followed unless broader governance structures and practices in society at large are committed to certain standards. The management of Protected Landscapes will be easier to achieve if the Government recognises the need for a quality of life perspective, follows democratic processes, and engages willingly in participatory planning based upon a fair and equitable approach to all groups and respect for a plurality of cultures. It will also be greatly helped by a top-level national commitment to sustainability, the alleviation of poverty, addressing the root causes of inequality, promoting gender equity and supporting civil society.

#### **Principle 7:**

*Management of Category V protected areas should not only be concerned with protection but also enhancement.* Because Category V protected areas are lived-in landscapes, the environment will have been manipulated more than is the case with other categories of protected areas. It follows that a more active role for management is appropriate, not only in the protection but also in restoration of natural or cultural values that have been eroded or lost. It may on occasion also include the creation of new environmental and social assets which are ecologically or culturally appropriate: examples would be a new woodland or forested areas established on degraded soils, and the development of a new market for goods produced by local people.

#### **Principle 8:**

*When there is an irreconcilable conflict between the objectives of management, priority should be given to retaining the special qualities of the area.* Because Protected Landscapes have important social as well as environmental objectives, there is considerable potential for conflict between objectives. As far as possible, management should seek to reconcile such conflicts. In the last analysis there need to be clear rules about what would have priority in such a situation. This principle states that when this happens, priority should be given to protecting the qualities that make the area special (what economists sometimes call 'critical environmental capital'). Because such a claim is likely to be contested, the principle may need to be embodied in legislation.

### **Principle 9:**

*Economic activities that do not need to take place within the Protected Landscape should be located outside it.* As a lived-in, working landscape, a Category V protected area will contain a variety of economic activities and land uses, such as agriculture, forestry, tourism and some forms of industry, commerce and retailing, as well as residential areas, some infrastructure, etc. The tests for whether such an activity or use is acceptable within the protected area, are whether (i) it is sustainable, (ii) it contributes to the aims of the area, and (iii) there are strong reasons for it to be located within it. Where the proposed activity fails these tests, it should either be totally re-designed to fit Category V objectives or located outside the area altogether.

### **Principle 10:**

*Management should be business-like and of the highest professional standard.* Notwithstanding the strong social and environmental emphasis in the management of Protected Landscapes, the operation of management should be business-like, and hard-headed if necessary. It requires effective marketing of conservation approaches too. Whilst this may be difficult to achieve in the short term, financial sustainability should be an aim, rather than 100% reliance on public funding<sup>1</sup>. Procedures should be put in place to ensure that public, private and voluntary funds and other resources are used with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness. And all decision-making concerning the use of resources should be transparent and accountable.

### **Principle 11:**

*Management should be flexible and adaptive.* Like protected area management in general, that of Category V protected areas needs to be capable of adjustment over time in light of experience and changing circumstances – but since its scope embraces both natural and human systems, the need for flexibility is all the greater. Management of Protected Landscapes should also be flexible and adaptive in the sense that it should respond to the very different social, cultural and economic situations in which it takes place: it should always be culturally appropriate and economically relevant.

### **Principle 12:**

*The success of management should be measured in environmental **and** social terms.* Though absolutely central, biodiversity measures are only one of several indicators: others include social and economic welfare and the quality of life for local and other people, other environmental considerations such as energy efficiency or natural resource management, and measures relating to the conservation of the cultural environment. An aim should be to demonstrate the maximum social and economic benefits for the local community with the minimum environmental impact. The setting of objectives, allocation of resources and monitoring of effectiveness should all be undertaken with this breadth of interest in mind.

## Annex 5:

### Definition of Natural Beauty

Definition of Natural Beauty; created by Sheffield University and used by the CCW as of 2006.

*“Natural beauty” relates, first and foremost, to unspoiled rural areas free from the effects of urbanisation and industrialisation. It does not apply only to landscape where nature may appear to dominate - arguably there are no ‘natural’ landscapes in the British Isles - but includes rural landscapes which have been shaped by human activities, including, for example farmland, fields and field boundaries, designed parkland, small settlements, larger villages and small towns, provided that they are integral to, and in keeping with, the character of the ‘landscape’<sup>1</sup>.*

*“Natural beauty” is a broad concept that is concerned with landscape and the way this is perceived by people, both visually, in terms of aesthetic aspects like colour, form, texture and pattern, and by other senses, and also through our perceptions and preferences, which are affected by people’s cultural backgrounds and interests.*

*“Natural beauty” therefore embraces all of these components and aspects of landscape.*

*“Natural Beauty” is related to landscape character, in that it will find expression in areas of landscape which have a degree of unity and distinctiveness in character and a strong sense of place. Landscape character is, however, found everywhere whereas “natural beauty” is found in valued landscapes.*

## Annex 6:

### Policy Context of the NPMP

The table below shows all the policies used to construct the Management Plan and the chapter headings to which they apply.

Policy context	Chapters
Agri-environment schemes (Tir Gofal)	Landscape, Historic Landscape, Built Environment
National Economic Development Strategy - A Winning Wales (2002)	Sustainable Communities
Aggregates Regional Technical Statements (various)	Planning & Development
BBNP Local Development Plan (forthcoming)	Built Environment
BBNP Sustainable Design Guide	Energy
BBNP Unitary Development Plan	Built Environment, Transport
Convention of Biological Diversity (1992)	Landscape
Climbing Higher (2005)	Outdoor Access and Recreation
Commons Act (2006)	Landscape, Biodiversity, Farming, Uplands Management, Outdoor Access and Recreation
Community Strategies (Local Authority)	Landscape, Biodiversity, Historic Landscape, Built Environment, Culture and Traditions, Sustainable Tourism
Conservation Regulations (1994 as amended)	Water Recourses
Consultation Draft Regional Technical Statement	Minerals
Countryside Act (1968)	Landscape, Biodiversity
Countryside Rights of Way(CRoW) Act 2000	Landscape, Biodiversity, Historic Landscape, Built Environment, Farming, Woodland Management, Uplands Management, Outdoor Access and Recreation
Cultural Strategy for Wales	Historic Landscape, Built Environment, Culture and Traditions
Cultural Tourism Strategy for Wales	Historic Landscape, Built Environment, Culture and Traditions



Curriculum Cymreig (2007/8) Draft	Education
Disability Discrimination Act (1995)	Outdoor Access and Recreation
Draft Climate Change Action Plan	Biodiversity, Farming, Woodland Management, Uplands Management
EC Habitats Directive	Biodiversity, Farming, Woodland Management, Uplands Management
EC Soils Framework Directive [forthcoming]	Biodiversity, Farming, Uplands Management
Energy Route Map for Wales (2008)	Energy, Sustainable Communities
Energy White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge (2007)	Energy
Environment Act (1995)	Water Resources, Landscape, Biodiversity, Transport
Environment Strategy for Wales (2006)	Geodiversity, Historic Landscape, Built Environment, Air Resources, Water Resources, Soil Resources, Minerals, Energy, Woodland Management, Outdoor Access and Recreation, Education, Interpretation, Waste Management
Environment Strategy for Wales Action Plan (2008)	Biodiversity, Farming, Woodland Management, Uplands Management
EU Air Quality Framework Directive (2008)	Air Resources
European Landscape Convention (2004)	Landscape, Historic Landscape, Built Environment, Culture and Traditions
Farming for the Future (2008)	Landscape
Fforest Fawr Geopark Management Plan ( <i>to be formulated</i> )	Geodiversity, Fforest Fawr Geopark
EU Habitats Directive (1992)	Water Resources
Highways Act (1980)	Outdoor Access and Recreation
Local Biodiversity Action Plan	Farming, Uplands Management
Local Vision – Preparing Community Strategies (forthcoming)	Sustainable Communities
Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales	Sustainable Communities
Mid-Wales Transport Plan	Transport
Minerals Planning Policy Wales (2002)	Minerals, Planning & Development
MIPPS Planning for Renewable Energy (2005)	Energy

(MTAN) Wales : Aggregates (2000)	Minerals
National Housing Strategy for Wales (2001)	Minerals
National Parks and Access to Countryside Act (1949)	Landscape, Biodiversity
National Parks Ecologists' Joint Statement: The Conservation of Landscapes in a Changing Climate - Action for Ecosystem Services	Uplands Management
Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006)	Landscape, Biodiversity, Farming, Woodland Management, Uplands Management, Outdoor Access and Recreation, Water Resources
One Wales : Connecting the Nation, Wales Transport Strategy (2008)	Sustainable Communities
Overcoming the Barriers: Providing Physical Access to Historic Buildings (2005)	Historic Landscape, Built Environment
Planning Policy Wales (2002)	Water Resources, Planning & Development, Transport, Historic Environment
Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities for Wales	Energy
PROW Delegation Agreements	Outdoor Access and Recreation
Regional Tourism Strategies	Sustainable Tourism
Regional Transport Plans (various)	Planning & Development
Regional Waste Plans (various)	Planning & Development
River Basin Planning Guidance DEFRA & WAG (2006)	Water Resources, Soil Resources
Rural Development Plan Wales (2008)	Landscape, Historic Landscape, Built Environment, Culture and Traditions, Water Resources, Minerals, Sustainable Communities, Waste Management, Farming
SEWTA Transport Plan	Transport
South East Wales Regional Waste Plan	Waste Management
South West Wales Regional Waste Plan	Waste Management

Starting to Live Differently (2004)	Education
Sustainable Development Action Plan (2007-2008)	Geodiversity, Fforest Fawr Geopark, Sustainable Communities, Landscape, Education
Sustainable Farming and Environment: Action Towards 2020	Sustainable Communities
SWITCH Transport Plan	Transport
TAN 12 Design (2002)	Historic Landscape, Built Environment
TAN 21 Waste (2001)	Waste Management
TAN 8 Renewable Energy (2005)	Energy
The Taff and Ely Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy June (2006)	Water Resources
The UK National Curriculum	Education
The Usk Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy Consultation Draft August (2006)	Water Resources
The Vision, Mission, Aims and Objectives of the Wildlife Trusts	Biodiversity
The Wye Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy Consultation Draft February (2007)	Water Resources
This Common Inheritance: Britain's Environmental Strategy (HMSO) (1990)	Transport
Town & Country Planning Act (+ Technical Advice Notes) (1990)	Landscape, Biodiversity
Traffic Management in Historic Areas (1998)	Historic Landscape, Built Environment
UK Air Quality Strategy (2007)	Air Resources
UK Biomass Strategy (2007)	Energy
UK Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future	Sustainable Communities
UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (2005)	Sustainable Communities
UNESCO: UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014)	Education
WAG - Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) – A Strategy for Action (2008)	Education

WAG Renewable Energy Route Map (2008)	Energy
Achieving Our Potential 2006 - 2013 Tourism Strategy	Sustainable Tourism
Wales Biodiversity Strategy	Farming, Woodland Management, Uplands Management
Wales Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan	Water Resources
Wales Spatial Plan (2008)	Historic Landscape, Built Environment, Culture and Traditions, Air Resources, Water Resources, Soil Resources, Minerals, Energy, Planning & Development. Transport, Waste Management
Wales Transport Strategy (2004)	Historic Landscape, Built Environment, Air Resources, Water Resources, Energy
Wales Woodland Strategy (FCW)	Woodland Management
Wales: A Better Country (2003)	Education, Interpretation, Sustainable Communities
Water Framework Directive (2000)	Biodiversity, Water Resources, Soil Resources, Farming, Woodland Management, Uplands Management, Water Resources
Water Industry Acts (1999)	Water Resources
Water Resources Acts (1991)	Water Resources
Welsh Commitment to Address Climate Change (2006)	Sustainable Communities
Welsh Office Circulars 60/96 and 61/90	Historic Landscape, Built Environment
Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (1985)	Landscape, Biodiversity
Wise About Waste: The National Waste Strategy for Wales (2002)	Waste Management
Woodlands for Wales Strategy (2001)	Woodland Management, Landscape, Biodiversity
World Heritage Convention (2008)	Landscape
Zero Carbon Britain: An Alternative Energy Policy (2007)	Energy

## **Annex 7:**

# **Draft Guidelines for the Use of Stone within the Brecon Beacons National Park**

### **Dry Stone Walls**

In rebuilding dry stone walls stone from the wall being rebuilt should be used.

The style of the wall should copy that of the original wall to maintain the regional character and diversification of style across the Park.

If there is not enough stone then stone can be used from derelict walls within a 50 m radius on the same farm. At least a trace (20 cm above ground) should be left to indicate the line of the original wall.

Stone should not be brought on to the farm in order to rebuild walls. (This is in direct conflict with the policy of Tir Gofal which offers a supplement of £9 per square meter for importing stone.)

BBPS should agitate for increased grants for the rebuilding of traditional dry stone walls within Tir Gofal and Tir Cynnal schemes. The present rate of £40 per square metre is unrealistic.

Grants for the rebuilding of drystone walls should be available to farms not in Tir Gofal or Tir Cynnal.

### **Stone used in New Building**

The use of stone for providing facing to new buildings should in most cases be discouraged. Traditionally most rural and urban houses in the Park were lime rendered and lime washed. If stone is used then it must be from a sustainable source, an existing quarry within the park. All new building that uses stone should be monitored by the BBNPA to ensure the source is sustainable. The "robbing" of stone from walls or farm buildings, whatever their condition, for use in new build should be opposed.

### **Stone used in repairing Traditional Stone Buildings**

Wherever possible stone should be sourced from the building itself. If extra stone is required then the agreed use of some stone from other derelict buildings on the site may be acceptable. The use of stone from other traditional stone structures elsewhere, whatever their condition, is unacceptable. The source of extra stone used must be local quarries.

### **Stone Roofing Tiles**

Stone roofing tiles are the vernacular roofing materials of the Park and should be encouraged and supported. Stone roofing tiles must not be stripped off existing traditional buildings for use in new build. Where traditional buildings require extra stone tiling in their reconstruction the supply should be carefully monitored and either be from approved quarries in the Park, other quarries utilising the same stone beds or, by agreement in exceptional circumstance, from a derelict building where the tiles are in imminent danger of falling and breaking, to be replaced by a corrugated metal roof.

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
Plas y Ffynnon, Cambrian Way,  
Brecon, Powys. LD3 7HP  
[www.breconbeacons.org](http://www.breconbeacons.org)

