



## Help Shape the Future

Issues and Preferred Options Document for the review of  
the National Park Management Plan and Development Plan

May 2005

The Peak District National  
Park doesn't belong to us...  
we're just looking after it.



This is the first stage of a major review of the management of the Peak District National Park and the National Park Authority's land use policies.

This document is available for public comment for a 6-week period from 3 May to the 14 June 2005.

Following this the National Park Authority will be preparing draft documents for both the National Park Management Plan and the Local Development Framework. Using the contacts shown in this document, please make use of the codes and numbers beside each of the options.

The draft plans are intended for release at the end of 2005 for a further 6-week period. On completion of this phase of engagement the Authority will then look to prepare a final version of the new National Park Management Plan during 2006. At the same time it will be necessary to take the comments made on the draft LDF to an Independent Examination, to take place during 2006, with a view to publishing the final plan in 2007.

To achieve the vision we need to consider actions we undertake now! For this reason we will:

- Seek to establish a set of targets for the next 5 years
- Ask all responsible bodies to commit to these targets
- Establish a steering group of responsible bodies to produce draft plans

And ...

- Performance enabling us to set challenging targets to go on conserving and enhancing this special area into the future.

Throughout the document there are hyperlinks. If you are connected to the internet you can click on the links such as the planning and compulsory purchase act below - this will take you to the link on the web.

(On commencement of the new **[Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act](#)** in September 2004, the existing Development Plan is saved for a 3-year period).

Please e mail comments to [helpshapethefuture@peakdistrict.gov.uk](mailto:helpshapethefuture@peakdistrict.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

- I.1** The Peak District's National Park [Management Plan](#), and the Peak District National Park Authority's [local](#) and [structure plan](#) policies are being reviewed.
- I.2** The National Park Management Plan needs to look ahead at least 20 years and be ambitious in its vision. It also needs to be realistic and achievable. It is a plan for the Park itself.
- I.3** The land use policies (in the new Local Development Framework) should enable partners to achieve the management plan vision and objectives. The government requirement for 'spatial planning' in land use planning documents requires planning authorities to demonstrate clear linkage with the strategies and plans of other councils and organisations; such as those with responsibility for health, education, crime, housing, transport and economic development. The new emphasis on spatial planning leads to the more logical joint review of the Development Plan and National Park Management Plan.
- I.4** It is important to set the context in which these reviews are taking place. According to the [Environment Act 1995](#), National Parks are designated for the purpose of:
- **Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area**
  - **Promoting opportunities for understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public**
  - **Whilst pursuing these purposes National Park Authorities and partners have an associated statutory duty to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities within the National Park whilst pursuing Park purposes.**
- I.5** Many partners already contribute hugely to the management of the National Park Authority. The range of issues covered in this document demonstrates that whilst it is the responsibility of the park Authority to prepare these documents, everyone's support is needed to deliver action within the Park. The principles of sustainable development and partnership continue to play a central role.



## Consultation to date

**1.6** During 2004 (and since the last plans were adopted), evidence, opinions and thoughts on Park management have been gathered. A wide range of engagement has taken place during the last 5 years, and this has intensified during 2004 as we strive to understand better the key issues and directions for future National Park policy. An important principle in commencing this review is to acknowledge that we are not starting with a clean sheet of paper: Since the last National Park Management Plan was produced we have listened to local communities, visitors, and partners in a variety of ways. Here are just a few examples:

- Attendance at Parish Council meetings on an ongoing basis
- Workshops for preparing supplementary planning guidance
- Area management plans working with partners
- [Local Access Forum work](#)
- Involvement in Local Strategic Partnerships, particularly Derbyshire Dales and High Peak
- Involvement in the [Peak Park Transport Forum](#)
- Involvement in the Peak District Housing Forum
- Establishment of the Peak Park Recreation Forum
- Partner involvement in producing the Cultural Heritage Strategy and a new Promoting Understanding Strategy
- [Peak District Community Planning](#)
- [Moors for the Future](#) Partnership
- [Stanage Forum](#) work
- [Visit Peak District Partnership](#)

**1.7** Despite this extensive and often innovative culture of engaging with stakeholders, the Authority is determined to listen even more closely to the views of all those with an interest in the National Park. Over the last year we have built on the activity described above, with a comprehensive [series of events and contact](#) to allow everyone to have a voice in the future management of the National Park:

- Hosted 6 village meetings across the Park in 2004 (300 residents)
- Attendance at 4 Agricultural Shows where over 1000 surveys were distributed
- Parish Councils' Forum focus on plans review
- Hosted the Annual Constituent Council Forum focus on plans review
- Hosted the Peaks 11 Youth Conference (including plans review work)
- Posted web pages on the NPA web site allowing people to ["Help Shape the Future"](#)
- Prepared [6 new fact sheets](#) to help inform the debates
- Newly styled and focused National Park newspapers to all households
- Run 8 internal debates for staff and members of the National Park Authority.

**1.8** These methods of consultation focused on the most contentious areas of Park management as a means of sparking debate and raising levels of interest and involvement. The 6 issues raised were: affordability of housing; tourism and recreation; quarrying; farming and biodiversity; transport; and village life. There are many more issues in managing a National Park, which were raised in consultation and brought into this document.

**1.9** This document is based on consultation to date and also includes [quantitative evidence](#) of the main trends and issues seen over the past 5 to 10 years. Its purpose is to:

- present the broad issues affecting the National Park today;
- offer preferred options for its future management by all of us;
- invite comment and gather support for future Park management.

**1.10** The options are grouped under three main headings:

- Conserving and enhancing the National Park
- Promoting understanding and enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities by the public
- Fostering the social and economic well being (sustainable communities) of those people living in the National Park, working in the National Park, and moving around the National Park.

## Options and Preferred Options

**1.11** At the end of each section there is a box containing a series of options relating to that section. Please note that for the purpose of the future Local Development Framework it is necessary to identify some of these as Preferred Options for future policy. This is simply the current view of the National Park Authority and does not restrict stakeholders from offering views on these items. Views are invited on all the options set out in these boxes.

## Vision

**1.12** Both plans need a vision to inform subsequent objectives, policies and actions. The vision overleaf attempts to provide this. We need partner support for this vision, and we welcome comments and suggestions that will enable us all to agree and move forward with a common vision.





## Our Vision is for...

...a conserved and enhanced Peak District where the quality of the landscape and the settlements within it continue to be admired for their diversity and richness of biodiversity and cultural heritage.

...a welcoming Peak District where people from all parts of our diverse society have the opportunity to visit, understand and enjoy the Park's special qualities.

...a living modern Peak District which positively contributes to a vibrant resident community, and demonstrates innovative, high quality modern design whilst conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the Park landscape.

...a viable and thriving Peak District economy which capitalises on its special qualities and promotes a strong sense of local identity.

### **The special qualities referred to in the current management plan are:**

- outstanding beauty and character of the landscape
- significant geological features
- sense of wildness and remoteness
- clean earth, air and water
- importance of wildlife and the area's unique biodiversity
- thousands of years of human influence which can be traced through the landscape
- distinctive character of villages and settlements
- wealth of historic buildings, gardens and parks
- opportunities for quiet enjoyment
- opportunities for outdoor recreation and adventure
- easy accessibility for visitors from surrounding urban areas
- vibrancy and sense of community
- customs, legends, traditions and arts
- environmentally-friendly methods of farming and working the land
- craft and cottage industries
- the special value attached to the National Park by surrounding urban communities

## 2. Conserving and enhancing the National Park

### National Guidance

- 2.1** The Environment Act 1995 established National Park Authorities, redefined National Park purposes and placed a statutory duty on the newly formed authorities to prepare a National Park Management Plan which should be revised every 5 years. Indeed Section 62 of this Act places a duty on all relevant authorities to have regard to these purposes, when carrying out work affecting these specially protected areas.
- 2.2** Since the 1980's Government has continued to produce Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs), later reformed as Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) to strengthen their role. These cover a range of issues relevant to National Parks from broad protection of the countryside to the conservation of areas of historic merit, to issues of biodiversity and more recently to strengthen the concept of sustainable communities.
- 2.3** Other key national guidance includes the Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food DEFRA 2002 and the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

### Regional Guidance

- 2.4** The East Midlands' approach to sustainable development is set down in the Integrated Regional Strategy, out of which flows other documents such as the Regional Environment Strategy and statutory documents like the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands ([RSS8 for the East Midlands](#)).
- 2.5** This strongly restates the protection afforded to the Peak District and adds detail such as that relating to minerals which seeks to make provision for a progressive reduction in the proportion and amounts of aggregates from the Peak District National Park.
- 2.6** In emphasising a 'demand management' approach, development plans must include measures that seek to reduce the impact of traffic. Policies should make more efficient use of road space, discourage unsustainable travel, channel new investment into more sustainable transport provision, encourage greater use of telecommunications, promote development in the most sustainable locations and encourage mobile services in remoter rural areas.
- 2.7** Specifically relating to the National Park, traffic should be diverted away from the Park area where possible. Access to it and across it by public transport and other non-car modes should be improved.

### The current National Park approach

- 2.8** The 1994 Structure Plan carries forward general intentions (established with the creation of the National Park in 1951) to conserve and enhance its natural beauty and other valued characteristics; allowing these to be understood and enjoyed by everyone; and enabling local communities to improve their social and economic well-being within that context. The 2001 Local Plan adds detail to the Structure Plan policies.
- 2.9** The Natural Zone (moors and heaths, limestone hills and dales, and semi natural woodland) and other designated areas are rigorously protected.
- 2.10** We permit limited new developments outside towns and villages (where needed for agriculture or farm diversification, forestry, appropriate recreation or tourism, or mineral working).

- 2.11** All development needs to respect, avoid harming and where possible enhance the valued characteristics of the area (e.g. through housing policy), including existing development and especially [conservation areas](#) (over 100 Conservation Areas have now been designated, supported by detailed appraisals), listed and vernacular buildings, sites of significant importance (archaeological, geological ecological etc) and other landscape features.
- 2.12** [63 designated settlements](#) (in the Local Plan 2001) are considered most able to accommodate development and some degree of change without harm to their essential character. Smaller settlements are considered to be part of the open countryside – their character being more easily harmed by new development. The majority of development (including housing and employment) is focused on these designated settlements.
- 2.13** The Authority's Building Design Guide outlines design standards expected of new development in the National Park.
- 2.14** Planning policy on [mineral extraction](#) remains clear: it aims to restrict quarrying inside the National Park. Where quarrying does take place, conditions aim to limit environmental damage.
- 2.15** The Authority currently reviews mineral sites and permissions to ensure their current relevance and identifies where modern working standards are required.
- 2.16** The Authority operates a presumption against additional land allocation for working aggregates. There are many existing unworked permissions, so major new development is resisted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any new workings, aggregate or vein minerals, must be shown to be in the public interest, without a reasonable alternative source, and the site and means of production must not damage the National Park.
- 2.17** Currently the Authority permits small-scale developments for mineral working and waste disposal including variations to existing mineral working that result in benefits to the National Park. In effect this would not permit the importation of urban waste for disposal or processing within the National Park.
- 2.18** A minimal impact is sought from new workings; along with a high standard of restoration.
- 2.19** The Authority seeks to avoid pollution and disturbance to unstable or contaminated land and flood risk areas.

## Issues and Trends

- 2.20** There is particular cause for concern with decreasing quantities of dry stone walls and hedges, hay meadows, unimproved enclosure pastures, lead rakes, and ponds (State of the Park Report. 2000 and 2004 update).
- 2.21** 72% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the National Park are considered to be in an unfavourable condition (results published by English Nature in December 2003).
- 2.22** Since 2000 considerable action has been undertaken to conserve and enhance aspects of biodiversity, through the creation and implementation of a [Biodiversity Action Plan \(BAP\)](#) to protect and enhance sites and species, and create new habitats where appropriate.
- 2.23** In 1996, the Countryside Agency and English Nature produced a landscape character map of England, which shows the Peak District as having 3 distinct character areas, the Dark Peak, White Peak and South West Peak. Derbyshire County Council and High Peak Borough Council are producing landscape character maps; the National Park as yet has not done so.

- 2.24** Some Park landscapes have suffered from paper pulp spreading which causes changes to the soil acidity and affects plant species' ability to survive. Sheep dip, disposed of carelessly, adversely affects watercourses.
- 2.25** Water catchment could be improved in some areas to conserve the river quality. Improvements rely on landowners understanding the consequences of their actions and co-operating to bring about positive change.
- 2.26** Aside from these pressures, the National Park landscape and biodiversity is affected by climate change and this is an issue that becomes apparent when we monitor such rare landscapes as heather moorland under the Moors for the Future Project as well as the wider species monitoring undertaken by the Authorities Countryside and Economy team.
- 2.27** Where landowners will not co-operate, the Authority works with partners to bring forward a requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment. This has the potential to prevent the worst cases of environmental degradation, and relies on vigilance and quick reporting for positive landscape benefit.
- 2.28** The [new single farm payments scheme](#) will help increase our knowledge of the state of the National Park when land owners move onto Higher Level Schemes (HLS) which includes accurate recording of the current situation. In the early years many farms will be on the Entry Level Scheme (ELS) which does not require the same level of recording.
- 2.29** The internationally valuable heather moorland of the Park is primarily pressured by overgrazing and fires. The [Moors for the Future](#) partnership project is a 5-year, £4.73 million project to restore heather; promote an understanding of the importance of internationally important moors and to create opportunities for more people to enjoy their special qualities. The legacy will be a research base for future moorland monitoring and educational programmes to increase understanding of this special habitat. Future funding beyond the 5 year first phase is in question.
- 2.30** Future land management work depends on accurate baseline information; for much of the Park this is 10 years or more old. Updating this is important but resource intensive.

## Landscape character

- 2.31** The characteristic sparse nature of development outside settlements has been retained and in particular the wild, undeveloped character of the Natural Zone has been protected.
- 2.32** With the release of Policy Planning Statement 7, [Sustainable Development in Rural Areas](#) and on going revisions to RSS8, more emphasis is now placed on increasing the understanding of both the natural and historic landscape.

## Farming

- 2.33** There is a noticeable trend towards large agricultural buildings. Despite its limited powers of control over agricultural buildings, the Authority has agreed new [Supplementary Planning Guidance](#) to address their accommodation in the landscape. Agricultural diversification has sometimes led to proposals for industrial or office development, which has been resisted because it was felt to be too large and incongruous outside settlements.
- 2.34** Permitted developments rights can enable smaller buildings to be constructed, which are then used to justify bigger structures as the farm grows.

- 2.35** The farm assurance schemes mean that older buildings are less likely to be acceptable in terms of animal welfare than new purpose-built structures. As more new buildings are established, there will be pressure for their future re-use, but because of the environmental impact of large structures it is vital that there is a strong business need.
- 2.36** Cross compliance with biodiversity aims is one objective of the Single Payment Scheme which the Authority is likely to encourage. National Park staff can help farmers by advising on entry level schemes, working towards environmental audits, and helping to prepare whole farm plans. National grant schemes often lack an upland perspective, so the Authority and its partners must work hard to improve the benefits of local grant provision.
- 2.37** The importance of older buildings to the farming industry and to the National Park landscape should not be underestimated. Small old buildings near the farmyard or in more remote areas can be invaluable for storage purposes, and simple grants are vital to keep them waterproof and intact. The re-use of old buildings should also pay due regard to their value to wildlife.

## Mineral Extraction

- 2.38** In 2001, 7.826 million tonnes of limestone were extracted from the National Park (10% of all limestone extracted in England), leaving 272.808 million tonnes in permitted reserves.
- 2.39** Between 2000 and 2003 the area covered by active workings increased by 30% (although the number of active workings decreased) therefore the total area of land with permission for mineral extraction has grown by 4.6%.
- 2.40** More limestone is being extracted than ever before, but gritstone extraction is declining. There is now no active underground aggregates extraction.
- 2.41** Permission for many quarries and mines in the Peak District were granted some years ago when restoration was not emphasised so strongly. This situation is being rectified to some extent under the Minerals Review Procedures, the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, and the Environment Act 1995.
- 2.42** More recent permissions include conditions requiring restoration. In October 2003, 24 sites covering 1472.03 ha were in the process of being restored or were subject to aftercare provisions.
- 2.43** Although the minerals industry provides economic benefits to the Park's community, it conflicts with the principle of conservation of the Park's landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage - not only through the extraction process itself, but also as a result of the traffic generated. Mechanisation during the 1900s greatly reduced the number of jobs provided. Established policy is based on the only real justification for mineral working, being the need for material, rather than jobs generated. A strengthening of approach to the restraint of minerals and waste in National Parks has been supported by Government.
- 2.44** Traffic impact is a constant challenge, as operators seek to use larger and more efficient machinery and vehicles. The Authority must work with the industry to ensure the special qualities of the Park are not eroded by the activity of mineral extraction, waste management and transportation of materials around the park.
- 2.45** Quarrying continues to be part of the fabric and culture of the Park and presents potential opportunities for planning gain in line with purposes (e.g. recreational resource and new sites for flora and fauna).

**2.46** Difficult decisions have been required on proposals to extend existing mineral workings. Such impact has only been acceptable where an overall enhancement to the National Park can be delivered via improvements elsewhere. Other key debates have centred on the need for local building stone, and whether some old quarries, now rich in biodiversity, should be re-opened.

## Transport and Infrastructure impacts

**2.47** Transport pressures continue to impact on the National Park through immediate visual presence, through the conflict with pedestrians, and through the intrusion of roadside infrastructure.

**2.48** Pressure has increased for telecommunications infrastructure across the Park since 2000. Liaison groups, involving all major operators, raise greater awareness of the need for innovative and sometimes bespoke design to achieve appropriate integration in the landscape. To date the impact of masts has been minimised through effective siting and sharing of facilities between operators. Strategic roads such as the Snake Pass and Woodhead Pass have seen the greatest demand for coverage and the Authority has continued to pursue solutions which limit the need for additional infrastructure. The introduction of roaming agreements between operators could mean that users receive a service across a network of existing masts without the need for separate masts for each operator, thus reducing landscape pressure.

**2.49** Despite concern over the impact of large wind farms on the edge of the National Park, the limitation to small-scale technologies inside the Park is strongly supported. The Authority has recently produced [new guidance](#) to help people make use of domestic renewable energy sources such as solar panels or ground source heat pumps.

## Settlement character

**2.50** Attention to detail in development control has ensured that the quality of design, materials and finish of development is better than in the 1960s and 70s, when some settlements experienced new housing of a rather bland, urban estate character which did not reflect local styles and traditions.

**2.51** One or two new schemes have been distinctively modern in approach, notably Bakewell Agricultural Business Centre and Hathersage Station Yard. These have attracted a mixed response, although Government generally tries to promote such innovation.

**2.52** Research into the quality of the built environment shows a growing number of listed buildings 'at risk'. Without additional funding this number will continue to rise as more fall into disrepair than are rescued.

**2.53** Funding for the protection and enhancement of settlements of historic or vernacular merit has significantly declined. At the same time a commitment towards Conservation Area designation has been retained. There is also a need to complete the programme of appraisals to highlight the architectural and historic qualities of these designated areas. This work establishes the key attributes of an area and also identifies any need for enhancement.

## Options for Conservation and Enhancement of the National Park including **Preferred Options for LDF**

- CE1** Retain the [Natural Zone](#) to protect the distinctive character of the wilder areas of the Park, which combine areas of high wildlife value and minimal visible human influence.
- CE2** Undertake landscape character assessment to give detailed maps of the natural and historic character as the basis for management of landscapes and settlements in the landscape.
- CE3** Place the local biodiversity action plan and cultural heritage strategies at the centre of conservation and enhancement work in the National Park (research shows declining quality in parts of the built and natural environment).
- CE4** Consider integration of farm plans into area management plans with all relevant organisations having an input, taking into account the wider landscape value, and recreation and conservation issues.
- CE5** Strengthen current approaches to the design and quality of new development by updating the Authority's [Building Design Guide](#) and adopting it as a supplementary planning document (SPD).
- CE6** Consider the use of all available statutory powers to conserve the built environment, and seek grant support for increased practical work on the built environment particularly in Conservation Areas.
- CE7** Revisit the list of key settlements and reassess each settlement's ability to accommodate new development without detriment to its character.
- CE8** Promote green building techniques (via a guide to sustainable design and construction), and introduce design awards drawing on good examples from inside and outside the Park to inspire developers e.g. to encourage reduction in the ongoing cost of running buildings. This should include increased emphasis on the requirement for enhancement of the special qualities of the National Park as part of newly built development, e.g. incorporating more aspects of biodiversity, or giving more priority to traditional materials.
- CE9** Treat vernacular barns and other buildings as important features in their own right, and encourage more or new uses for redundant traditional farm and other buildings, to ensure their conservation.
- CE10** Retain a presumption against new mineral sites, and resist development other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when development is essential in the national interest or enhances the Park landscape).
- CE11** Tightly control mineral and waste management activity through permissions, conditions and monitoring, to reduce the adverse impact on the Park landscape.
- CE12** Encourage small scale recycling sites across the Park.
- CE13** Lobby at national and regional level for National Parks to provide ever smaller amounts of the regional supply of aggregates.
- CE14** Continue to permit the small-scale extraction of building stone and stone roofing slate to secure supply for improvements to traditional buildings, providing the development is environmentally acceptable. This also minimises transport movements across the Park, and upholds the tradition of using local materials in the built environment.
- CE15** Continue to enforce against unauthorised minerals development (including sites where the permissions are open to interpretation and where the status of the site is challenged), to safeguard the environment of the Park.

- CE16** Encourage small-scale renewable energy technologies, but retain tight control over the location and design of large infrastructure in the open landscape (such as telecommunications and larger renewable energy technologies).
- CE17** Consider the potential for a roaming pilot scheme for telecommunications operators across the Snake Pass to reduce the need for the development of further masts.
- CE18** Investigate charging an environmental levy to drive in or across the Park. This could reduce traffic and provide more money for public transport, visitor and resident services or park and ride services. It could be designed to focus on cross-park traffic and visitors. (During a [recent survey](#) one third of respondents supported the idea of charging a toll to drive in or across the Park).
- CE19** Seek to reduce the impact of quarrying (traffic noise, dust etc) by seeking green travel plans (e.g. at Lafarge to get more freight onto the trains); by seeking to secure improved working methods; restoration and aftercare on sites through the provisions of the [Environment Act 1995](#), and through consolidating applications or negotiating alternatives (exchanging permissions) in the interests of the environment and local communities.
- CE20** Aim to achieve a general reduction in traffic speeds in the Park in recognition of the continued value of tranquillity as a special quality of the environment.
- CE21** Ensure the highest standards of environmental design for new transport infrastructure, and oppose cross-park infrastructure improvements unless they result in an overall environmental benefit to the Park.
- CE22** Establish a National Park car parking strategy to guide management of the overall level of parking.
- CE23** Limit tourism development in the Park landscape (e.g. accommodation and attractions) to villages and farms. The majority of new tourism development should be by conversion of traditional buildings on farms or in settlements or by extensions to existing accommodation.
- CE24** Continue to enable development of touring caravan and camping based development rather than static caravans, chalets, or other features which have a permanent visual presence in the countryside.
- CE25** Retain current approaches to mineral extraction and restoration, but further explore sites both inside and outside the National Park for sources of local building materials.



## 3. Promoting understanding and enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities by the public

### National Guidance

- 3.1** The 1995 Environment Act amended the statutory purposes to include 'promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public'. This widens the responsibilities of National Park Authorities and partners from the traditional emphasis on conservation and enhancement of the Park's special qualities to the creation of opportunities to enjoy these special qualities.
- 3.2** [PPG17 \(Leisure and recreation\)](#) stresses the key elements of sustainability and accessibility in planning for recreation and tourism. It states that recreational facilities should be accessible by a range of modes. Heavily visited recreational areas should be accessible by public transport, encouraging access to recreational facilities, taking into account the mobility needs of the local population. Development plans must protect and enhance open space and rights of way.
- 3.3** The Government requires local authorities to assess their communities' needs and opportunities for open space and recreational land and buildings, to set standards for new provision; and to protect existing facilities.
- 3.4** [DEFRA Review of National Parks 2002](#) Recommendation 15: states that the Countryside Agency and National Park Authorities should attach a higher priority to promoting understanding of National Parks. DEFRA should, in consultation with the Department for Education and Skills, encourage Park Authorities to develop, with partners, programmes and initiatives to promote greater understanding among a wider audience, including those from urban areas, ethnic minorities and young people.
- 3.5** [Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000](#) created a new right to access open country and in 2004 significant new areas of the Peak District landscape were made available for open access by the public in addition to strong promotion of existing Rights of Way.
- 3.6** **Regional Guidance: Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS8) East Midlands Policy 87 – *Managing Tourism and Visitors in the Peak Sub-Area*** states that "development plans and the policies of local authorities, economic development, countryside and tourism agencies should seek to manage tourism and visitor pressures sustainably. Development plans covering areas adjacent to the National Park should consider whether there is potential for further tourism development that could ease pressure on the Park itself".

### The current National Park approach

- 3.7** The 1994 Structure Plan carries forward general intentions (established with the creation of the National Park in 1951) to conserve and enhance its natural beauty and other valued characteristics; allowing these to be understood and enjoyed by everyone.
- 3.8** Divide the Park into three zones, where different types and intensity of recreation and tourism use might be acceptable, depending on landscape character, land use patterns and accessibility.
- 3.9** Provide for visitors and local people seeking quiet enjoyment of the valued characteristics of the National Park.
- 3.10** Seek a more even spread of visits over the year and increase the number of visitors who stay one night or more as a means of increasing spend in the area.

- 3.11** Restrict tourism and recreation developments to that which relates to the special qualities and resources of the Park, and does not harm other visitors' and residents' quiet enjoyment of the Park's special qualities (therefore legitimate activities which cause noise, disturbance, visual intrusion, or restrict public access or enjoyment are discouraged.)
- 3.12** Safeguard and improve recreation sites and facilities, such as playing fields in the communities; and crags, caves and water areas in the countryside.
- 3.13** Restrict development of chalet and static caravan sites, whilst allowing touring camping and caravan sites of modest size with acceptable impact on landscapes and local communities.
- 3.14** The current structure plan policy was adopted (1994) and was based on the requirements of the 1949 National Park and Access to the Countryside Act. This contained no specific reference to promoting opportunities for understanding of the Park's special qualities by the public.

## Issues and Trends

- 3.15** There is rising popularity of activities such as hang-gliding and paragliding, mountain biking, trail bikes and 4x4 off-road vehicles.
- 3.16** Some activities however may have a greater impact on the landscape and character of the Park than many traditional leisure pursuits such as rambling.
- 3.17** There is a continuing increase in car ownership and use for recreation. The number of visitors arriving by car has a major negative impact on the environment. (The impact often causes the local community to remark that the National Park Authority cares more for visitors than for local residents.)
- 3.18** The estimated 22 million visitor days per year puts enormous pressure on the National Park. The emphasis is now on sustainable tourism, which recognises the present and future needs of the environment, the economy, and society, including visitors and local communities. Sustainable tourism should integrate all of these and neither spoil the National Park nor overwhelm local communities and services.
- 3.19** The Authority has worked with partner authorities and agencies to develop the [Peak District Sustainable Tourism Strategy](#), leading to successful joint marketing under the Peak District banner.
- 3.20** The new right to access open country may create new pressure points, but as it is relatively new legislation (September 2004), trends are not yet apparent.
- 3.21** The recent circular on National Parks re-enforces the importance of all sectors of society being able to enjoy the National Park. The National Park Authority has sought to create opportunities for involvement across various underrepresented groups including young people and black and ethnic minorities. Government will set targets on this and ask the Park Authorities and partners to provide for these groups as well as existing user groups.



## Options for promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities by the public including Preferred Options for LDF

- PU1** Value beautiful landscapes as assets in themselves and actively promote appropriate activities for enjoyment, recreation and understanding of the National Park.
- PU2** Value 'quiet enjoyment' of the Park, and seek ways to manage the negative impacts of legitimate but more environmentally damaging sports.
- PU3** Monitor recreational use of the Park in light of the roll out of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and develop the role of the Local Access Forum (established as part of the Act).
- PU4** Encourage farmers to explore environmentally sustainable forms of diversification, e.g. farm walks, excursions related to biodiversity, local traditions which increase people's enjoyment and understanding of the Parks special qualities.
- PU5** Work with partners to link the travel experience to the whole visitor experience, e.g. Park and Ride and cycling, to encourage a quieter/slower pace to enjoy the special character of the area.
- PU6** Investigate ways to rationalise parking, to harmonise the parking needs of visitors and residents, encouraging visitors to park in designated spaces.
- PU7** Create ways to move around the Park by bus instead of car (e.g. feeder buses from the edge of the Park to a circuit inside; a regular 'hop on hop off' service around the Park, and regular service to cars parked on the edge of the Park. Encourage greater use of public transport by subsidies, Park wide wayfarer tickets).
- PU8** Promote understanding of the National Park's special qualities (in line with new Promoting Understanding Strategy [under production]) e.g. increase links with partners in the surrounding urban areas in recognition of the fact that large numbers of people who live nearby don't access, enjoy, or understand the National Park.
- PU9** Encourage visitors to learn about the National Park by wider promotion, the development of better quality facilities, and encouraging tourism providers to promote National Park purposes in customer brochures and information.
- PU10** Increase community involvement in biodiversity work through continuation of work piloted in the [BAP Vision project](#) at a practical and academic level.
- PU11** Increase community involvement in land use planning exercises at village level (conservation area work, housing site search etc), to increase their understanding of the Park's special qualities and encourage local governance of these qualities.
- PU12** Use a variety of media when providing information on new developments in the Park (not limiting this to physical information boards which can become dated and incorrect).

## 4. Fostering social and economic well being (sustainable communities)

### National Guidance

- 4.1** 'Sustainable communities' are at the heart of Government policy, which highlights the need for sustainable development to be accessible, reducing the need to travel wherever possible.
- 4.2** The Government:
- Sees market towns such as Bakewell as the main service centres, providing a range of facilities, shops and services at a scale appropriate to their needs and the size of their catchment. Policies should ensure that the importance of local shops and services is taken into account when assessing proposals that would result in their loss.
  - Stresses the importance of creating mixed and inclusive communities, offering a choice of housing. In rural areas, policies should support development needed to facilitate economic and social well-being, including housing to meet identified needs.
  - States that sufficient land should be made available either within or adjoining existing villages to enable local housing needs to be met, including on land which would not otherwise be released and where this would contribute towards the attainment of mixed, sustainable communities.
  - Recommends a 'needs led' approach to housing delivery. Authorities should conduct District wide surveys to indicate the need for houses in their areas, with more detailed research where necessary including a programme of parish needs surveys.
  - States, in guidance that authorities should plan for a mix of house types and sizes, widening choice and encouraging better social mix. For this reason, the Authority believes that both the private sector and social landlord provision of new homes is acceptable provided that a need can be proven.
  - Initiatives such as the requirement on authorities to produce community strategies create opportunities to get National Park messages over to local people through involvement in Local Strategic Partnerships.

### Regional Guidance

- 4.3** Regional Planning Guidance endorses the balance needed between the Park's statutory purposes and duty and promotes a relationship to sustainable development in rural areas. Services are directed to market towns and other identified centres, addressing the social and economic needs of communities. Emphasis is placed on the role of towns surrounding the National Park in easing development pressure on the designated area. Unlike other planning authorities, the National Park is not expected to deliver a prescribed number of houses through its development plan. [RSS8 for the East Midlands](#) simply shows a nominal annual figure of 50 homes thus acknowledging that homes are delivered as an exception to the general restriction.

### The Current National Park Approach

- 4.4** The 1994 Structure Plan carries forward general intentions (established with the creation of the National Park in 1951) to conserve and enhance its natural beauty and other valued characteristics; allowing these to be understood and enjoyed by everyone; and enabling local communities to improve their social and economic well-being within that context. The 2001 Local Plan adds detail to the Structure Plan policies.
- 4.5** The current National Park Management Plan seeks to foster sustainable communities with a range of local services and 'affordable' homes and reduced travel needs by focussing new development on designated local plan settlements.

- 4.6** Land use plans are designed to enable an adequate supply of housing, shops and services and employment sites to meet the essential needs of local residents, communities, and businesses whilst conserving and enhancing the valued characteristics of the Park.
- 4.7** Local housing need survey results show a need for about 50 additional affordable houses for local need each year in the Park.

### Issues and Trends

- 4.8** The aim over the past 20 years has been to sustain the Park's population at about 38,000 and this has been achieved ([2001 Census](#)).
- 4.9** There were proportionally fewer services per parish in the Peak District National Park than nationally ([2000 Survey](#)).
- 4.10** 51 parishes have seen a loss of services since 1994, a trend that has been accelerating. Shops, Post Offices, pubs and banks have closed and without the strong tourism industry this figure would be even higher.
- 4.11** Service providers cannot justify the high cost of retaining local services in a rural area. (Recently, there have been proposals to remove nearly 50 telephone kiosks across the Park).
- 4.12** There has been nearly a doubling of supermarkets in and around the Park between 1995 and 2002. (Although distant for most residents, these can provide online shopping and delivery, and some have supermarket buses; this can lead to a reduction in small village shops, which cannot compete on price and range of goods).
- 4.13** Many villages have developed village plans with support from the [Peak District Community Planning Project](#), working in partnership with the voluntary sector. These have led to community led projects coming forward, including some aimed at creating or retaining key services, but all aimed at sustaining community vibrancy. These commonly include references to the need for affordable housing.
- 4.14** Community facilitators (both at the Authority and in the voluntary sector) are often externally funded. Continuity is important and short-term funding sometimes prevents this.
- 4.15** Village Action groups have produced village plans and Parish Councils remain a vital partner; (unaffected by short term funding streams).
- 4.16** Sustainable development principles have helped to direct development to larger settlements with higher levels of services. This is backed up by national sources of funding from organisations such as the Housing Corporation (a key funder of social housing). Without this focus, local shops, services and buses may not survive, and increased traffic movements to services further afield are inevitable.
- 4.17** Bakewell is the largest settlement in the National Park, and acts as a service centre for a wide rural area. As a result the town is subject to greater development pressure than anywhere else in the Park.
- 4.18** The 'Bakewell Project' (1996 -2000) and other associated developments have provided the town with a state of the art agricultural business centre, new shops, housing and community facilities. The livestock market is very successful and has secured its role serving the region's farmers.

- 4.19** Business Link has dealt with record numbers of interviews and business start-ups in Bakewell and its catchment area. However, wider changes to job patterns are having an impact in Bakewell: home working is increasing, and there is less demand for office space. Business development has gone ahead at Deepdale (Ashford Road) and at Riverside, but the Cintride site remains vacant and there is underused space at Lumford Mill related to the requirement for a new access bridge.
- 4.20** Car and coach parking was reorganised as part of the Bakewell Project, and residents' parking permits have been introduced in parts of the town. The Local Plan sought to limit car parking spaces to 2000, based on meeting future needs without causing undue overcrowding problems. However, the volume of cars seeking parking spaces continues to increase.
- 4.21** Community engagement takes many forms depending on the type of groups and the reasons for doing it. New work is looking at ways to find out the needs of the mid to late teen age group living in the Park - The Peaks I I schools conference was the basis for developing work with this age group.
- 4.22** The National Park Authority has used external funding opportunities to establish a number of programmes, such as [New Environmental Economy](#), [Environmental Quality Mark](#), and [BESST](#). The purpose of these schemes is the conservation and enhancement of special qualities through targeted support to local people for business development, towards a healthier; more sustainable rural economy. Short term funding threatens its ongoing success, and future work requires commitment and resources from partners.
- 4.23** Employment opportunities are steered towards sites in settlements as a sustainable way of conserving and enhancing the wider Park landscape. The trend towards farm diversification creates a temptation for the Authority to relax its policies and adopt a more pro-active (but possibly less sustainable) approach to economic development in the open countryside.
- 4.24** Unemployment within the Park continues to be below the national level. But, residents, on average, work longer hours than nationally and there are higher levels of self-employment and lower levels of full time workers.
- 4.25** Proportionally more Park residents (than the national average) work in agriculture, forestry, mining and quarrying, hotels and catering, and education; and fewer in the wholesale and retail trade, motor vehicle repairs, transport storage, communication and financial intermediation services.
- 4.26** Proportionally there are more Park residents employed as managers, senior officers, professional and skilled tradesmen than nationally, and fewer in administrative and secretarial, personal services, sales and customer service occupations.



## Options for fostering social and economic well being, including Preferred Options for LDF

- SE1** Review the 63 'designated settlements' in terms of the possibility of a settlement being classified as a key settlement to which 'higher order' services serving several settlements and parishes should be steered or their possible closure resisted (e.g. surgeries, schools, sports halls, larger stores).
- SE2** Adopt a more proactive approach in securing a greater number of affordable homes. This will mean retaining the current approaches but also trying to secure more homes in settlements through the conversion of existing buildings.
- SE3** Consider allocating sites for affordable housing in designated settlement when a proven need is demonstrated.
- SE4** Restrict all conversions to local need housing.
- SE5** Seek to enable Community Strategy and village plan ideas to be positively addressed where possible within Park purposes, through closer links with LSPs.
- SE6** Investigate how best to achieve sustainable communities by considering cultural associations between settlements as well as the traditional measure of distance and parish connection (useful when considering local needs for housing and services).
- SE7** Encourage and promote sustainable communities, by closer working with service providers and partners to understand the needs of different groups within communities.
- SE8** Seek to prevent loss of employment, and retail and community services by resisting the conversion of shops to residential use across all settlements.
- SE9** Increase our understanding of the impact of recreation and tourism activity on the local community.
- SE10** Review our work with partners on village plan development in light of emerging community strategies and availability of funding streams.
- SE11** Seek partner commitment to mainstream proven approaches to strengthen the rural economy (e.g. NEE, EQM,) which currently suffer from short term funding regime.
- SE12** Encourage modernised infrastructure such as visitor accommodation and transport links, to ensure that resident communities share the economic and employment benefits of tourism.
- SE13** Consider development site allocations for Bakewell to recognise the development pressure (greater here than across the rest of the Park) and its role as a key service centre.

## 5. Living in the National Park

### National guidance

- 5.1** Under changes to Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG3) the Authority is now able to allocate sites solely for affordable housing, on land within or adjoining existing villages. Such housing will be expected to meet local needs in perpetuity and all such consents should therefore be subject to planning obligations.
- 5.2** The Government has introduced the idea that key workers, such as teachers and health workers, should be given priority for affordable housing.

### Regional guidance

- 5.3** Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) recognises the special status of the Peak District National Park and proposes a notional 50 houses a year to reflect the protection that should be afforded to the National Park.

### The current National Park approach

- 5.4** The NPA acknowledges the concern from local people that there is a lack of affordable housing in the National Park particularly for those who wish to set up a home for the first time.
- 5.5** The National Park Authority is not a housing authority itself, so it works closely with the many District and Unitary authorities across the National Park to help deliver housing.
- 5.6** Structure and Local Plan policies over the past 15 years (and by the addition in 2003 of [SPG Meeting the needs for Affordable Housing in the National Park](#)), try to give priority to modest new homes with local occupancy restrictions that will remain available to those people most needing them.
- 5.7** In exceptional circumstances new homes restricted to those people with a local need are permitted in or on the edge of a settlement, where there is evidence of need and the new house will remain more affordable to those in need.
- 5.8** Such housing is provided in the parish where the need arises, or, where this is not possible, in a neighbouring parish, provided there is sufficient capacity and service provision.
- 5.9** Conversion of traditional buildings in the countryside is possible where this meets a local need for affordable housing.
- 5.10** Caravans, mobile homes or other non-permanent structures for use as permanent residences are not permitted.



## Issues and trends

**5.11** During the 1980s house building took place at almost double the level planned in the 1979 Structure Plan. Council houses continued to be sold off, reducing the stock of lower cost housing across the Park. Since 1991 over 1,000 new dwellings have been built as shown below:

Number	Type	Comment
494	Open market conversions completed	Double the anticipated number in the Structure Plan
268	New open market houses completed	Many had consent before structure plan adopted
110	Dwellings linked to agriculture	Over double the number anticipated in the Structure Plan
123	Dwellings as enhancements to built environment	Over double the number anticipated in the Structure Plan
303	Dwellings with restricted occupancy	Three quarters the number estimated in the Structure Plan

Source: 2004 Annual Housing Report

**5.12** The Park continues to be under great pressure for both second home and holiday accommodation. These reduce the number of smaller properties for local need, and increase frustrations amongst local people. The message from local people is that more needs to be done to meet the needs of those seeking an affordable home to buy or rent.

**5.13** Achieving a mix of housing types, especially more affordable housing, is extremely difficult. Planning conditions and legal agreements are increasingly important, along with ongoing monitoring and enforcement to ensure houses remain as the type and tenure intended.

**5.14** Other housing needs include the needs of the elderly and disabled. Housing delivery needs to take account of accessibility as well as affordability of new development

## Options for living in the National Park

- SE14** Apply the same space standards to new farm houses as apply to local need affordable housing to ensure their potential to serve local housing need.
- SE15** Lobby housing authorities to levy higher council tax on second homes.
- SE16** Lobby for use of levies raised on second homes to be re-invested on affordable housing developments.
- SE17** Agree with partners the value of rural housing enablers and seek ways of paying for this.
- SE18** Consider the introduction of a policy for key workers' eligibility for affordable housing in the National Park.
- SE19** Review with partners the 'per person floor space' upper limit guidelines for affordable housing.
- SE20** Improve monitoring and enforcement of housing development (through closer working with housing providers) to ensure retention of more affordable housing.
- SE21** Consider the introduction of a policy that all newly built 1 and 2 bed houses are built so they can accommodate the elderly or disabled, to increase the range of accessible dwellings.
- SE22** Agree with partners the need for housing data and Constituent Authority Housing Strategies to be regularly shared with the National Park Authority to aid the delivery of its land use policies.
- SE23** To explore the potential for the National Park Authority to use Compulsory Purchase Powers to secure land and buildings for new local need affordable housing.
- SE24** Reconsider Structure Plan policy C2, which currently permits development outside the confines of towns and villages for various uses including for recreation and tourism (such as holiday accommodation) where it is deemed necessary and the character and setting of the buildings is not adversely affected.



## 6. Working in the National Park

### National guidance

- 6.1** The Government wants to see a balance between protection of the countryside and a sustainable rural economy. Recent guidance has increasingly stressed the need for a positive approach to economic development in rural areas, particularly to support farming enterprises. However, new building should be strictly controlled in open countryside, and mainly focused on towns and villages, where improvements to access and public transport should be sought. Sufficient land should be available, with good infrastructure and readily capable of development, to meet expected needs. Authorities are encouraged to be flexible on the re-use or replacement of existing buildings for businesses.

### Regional guidance

- 6.2** Regional Planning Guidance accepts that office and industrial space is constrained in the Park, but encourages partners to work together to promote continued diversification and further development of the rural economy, where consistent with a sustainable pattern of development and environmentally sound management of the countryside.

### Issues and trends

- 6.3** The area's traditional economic bases of farming, quarrying and manufacturing have suffered job losses in recent years. The changes have also affected those who provide services to these sectors. By 2001, 304 residents worked in mining and quarrying as their main job. Over 3,000 people worked in agriculture in the Park, but it is the main job for only a third of them. (State of Park Report 2004 update)
- 6.4** Unemployment continues to be below the national figures, and many of the jobs are part-time and/or low paid. Information is not yet available from the 2001 Census of Population on jobs within the Park and commuting patterns between the Park and other travel to work areas. A repeat of the 1997 survey of businesses in the Park is planned for 2004/5, which will provide more in depth information on the numbers and types of jobs available in the Park.
- 6.5** Tourism provides a third of all employment. However while there are real issues surrounding local tourism employment – it is poorly paid, low skilled and seasonal by nature - it is seen by many as the sector most likely to replace the incomes of farming and quarrying. Farm income has declined since 1995 for all types of farms – by 56% for dairy and the same for cattle and sheep.
- 6.6** The increasing provision of holiday accommodation, particularly self-catering accommodation by conversion of traditional buildings on farms, has undoubtedly helped farm businesses to survive during the difficult times of BSE, Foot and Mouth, and changes in grant regimes. (There has been a 45% increase in farm-based holiday accommodation since the 1990s.)
- 6.7** Sustainable tourism development is seen as the best way forward to enable the growth of the industry whilst conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the National Park.
- 6.8** New technology has made it possible for many businesses to operate in the countryside, and has led to an increase in home working.
- 6.9** Some existing employment sites and buildings remain vacant, and some come under pressure for residential use.

- 6.10** Craft based industries seek business space both inside and outside settlements. The re-use of traditional and non-traditional buildings can contribute to the quality and character of the landscape of the National Park. However, relaxing land use policies to enable greater economic development may increase pressure for growth in the open countryside. A lack of focus on settlements may lead to further loss of local shops, services and buses, and increased traffic movements. There may be calls for new dwellings to accompany these enterprises, and in future years, it may undermine the achievement of sustainable development.
- 6.11** Agriculture has experienced particular problems in recent years with BSE and Foot and Mouth Disease, and the business is only beginning to recover. BSE and Foot and Mouth Disease have caused some farmers to quit the business. Others, whilst not wanting to give up have realised that they can no longer rely on agriculture alone, thus the need for diversified incomes or family members finding additional employment to help keep the agriculture viable.
- 6.12** Additional challenges are presented by current changes to the farm grant and subsidy systems.
- 6.13** 2005 sees a watershed in agriculture as farming is separated from production. Payments will be linked to environmental compliance. In the context of The Curry Report – (A sustainable Strategy for Food and Farming DEFRA 2002), people's expectations about the quality, choice and sourcing of food are ever increasing. This has knock on effects for local Peak District livestock markets. Despite the new and successful Agricultural Business Centre in Bakewell there has been a reduction in smaller markets elsewhere.
- 6.14** The impact of Farm Assurance Schemes and associated animal welfare issues has been to squeeze smaller farms.
- 6.15** At the same time as older farmers retire there is a shortage of younger farming families taking their place. The succession of the family farm is increasingly affected by the sale and consequent fragmentation of the traditional holding. This then contributes to the buying up of lots either by bigger farms, or by smaller tenant farmers, or by those termed as hobby farmers. Each scenario has consequences for the National Park landscape in terms of the nature of farming being employed and the associated need for development.
- 6.16** The Peak District [Rural Action Zone](#) (RAZ) has produced an Interim Development Plan, which is designed to deliver elements of the Regional Economic Strategy. The RAZ strategic objective is to create a high skills – high wage economy in the Peak District. The RAZ identifies problems including a shortage of appropriate development sites, a lack of private sector investment, poor ICT infrastructure, and the inability to match financial incentives offered by neighbouring areas to attract business.



## Options for working in the National Park including Preferred Options for LDF

- SE25** Encourage economic development in the countryside, where it is linked to the farm and based at the farmstead or focused upon identified key settlements.
- SE26** Increase support for the preparation of whole farm plans to pursue more environmental benefits as part of agriculture related development.
- SE27** Continue to tie new farm houses to the farm business.
- SE28** Work with partners to create an integrated advisory service for farmers e.g. on Single Payment Scheme regulations and by interpreting the complex bureaucracy, and assisting with Environmental Audits.
- SE29** Lobby government to recognise and address the proven link between intensified land management and demand for large modern agricultural buildings in a Park landscape characterised by smaller buildings.
- SE30** Continue to work for a more sustainable tourism industry providing better quality jobs (via Visit Peak District partnership) and maximising local social and economic benefits of tourism (subject to the conservation priority).
- SE31** Positively support some craft based businesses through conversion of traditional and non traditional buildings on farms and in settlements where this positively helps the viability of the rural economy. (E.g. joinery, smithy , and small cottage industries).
- SE32** Instigate a review of need for employment sites in order to encourage businesses to move in and set up in the Peak District.
- SE33** Safeguard existing employment sites from residential development pressures (given the difficulty in finding such sites when demand does occur).
- SE34** Aim to secure further high tech business improvements to help minimise the remaining disadvantages of rural location for industry and business.
- SE35** Give greater encouragement and advice to farmers to explore environmentally sustainable forms of diversification, e.g. farm walks, excursions related to biodiversity, local traditions.
- SE36** Monitor EQM standards whilst ensuring there is substantial take up.
- SE37** Encourage consumer choices that will change emphasis of production in line with Biodiversity Action Plan targets through product promotion (e.g. Farmers Markets).

## 7. Moving around the National Park

### National Guidance

- 7.1** This emphasises integration and accessibility. Integrated transport policy can be understood as integration between and within different types of transport, with policies for the environment, with land use planning and with policies for education, health and wealth creation. Integrated transport can provide benefits for the social and economic well being of the Park population as well as minimising the impact on the environment by reducing the need to travel by residents and visitors. The basic premise of accessibility planning is that transport policy and transport provision should increase the opportunities for local communities to access employment, education, health care, and food shops.
- 7.2** [The Rural White Paper](#) recognises that accessibility issues can be particularly pertinent in rural areas. The decline and centralisation of local shops and services means that rural residents have to travel further to access them. The problems facing rural residents are greater for those without access to a car. Sparsely populated areas are less well served by public transport, increasing difficulties for accessing employment, food shops and other essential services.
- 7.3** More flexible solutions to accessibility problems must be sought in rural areas. Improvement may be brought about not only by improved transport but also by reducing the need to travel and effective planning in other policy areas.
- 7.4** [Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 \(PPG 13\)](#) aims to integrate planning and transport at the strategic, regional and local levels. The objectives are to reduce the overall need to travel by car, while promoting access to essential services by alternative modes such as walking and cycling. The guidance also promotes more sustainable choices for the movement of freight. Planning policy plays an important role in these objectives by shaping the pattern of development to enhance travel choices.
- 7.5** The Guidance stresses the Government's desire to promote widespread use of travel plans amongst business to deliver locally achievable sustainable transport objectives.
- 7.6** Best Practice published by the ODPM and DfT states that we need to explicitly state the role of travel plans in our planning and other policy documents, clarifying why, when and what is required of travel plans. The rationale for travel plans should also be embedded within wider policy objectives (e.g. those relating to social inclusion and economic development).
- 7.7** Draft Planning Policy Statement PPS 12 emphasises the importance of integration between spatial planning and transport in order to deliver an effective Local Development Framework. (PPS 12 indicates that a proposals map is produced as part of the Local Transport Plans (LTPs); the map must contain improvements to the transport network in support of the core strategy. However, local transport investment priorities are set out in LTPS produced by the Highways Authorities not the National Park Authority. The contents of these plans should be consistent with clear transport objectives relating to National Park purposes in our own core strategy.
- 7.8** Other Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG3 – Housing) state that local authorities should create more sustainable patterns of development by building in ways which deliver accessibility by public transport to jobs and essential services. Car dependence should be reduced by facilitating more walking and cycling, and improving linkages between housing, employment and other essential services.

## Regional Guidance

**7.9** The general thrust of the guidance is to reduce dependency on the private car and encourage accessibility to essential services by alternative modes, by close integration of the transport and land use planning system.

## The current National Park approach

**7.10** The National Park Authority is not a Highways Authority and has no direct transport planning powers. As a result, the Authority aims to influence others and work in partnership to implement strategies such as the [South Pennines Integrated Transport Strategy \(SPITS\)](#). SPITS has been devised with partners from Highways Authorities, Passenger Transport Authorities, District Councils and other agencies.

**7.11** The partnership approach must balance conservation of the environment, the needs of residents and business, the needs of visitors and the requirements of cross-park traffic. Where these factors appear to be in conflict, the Authority must favour conservation.

**7.12** The main aims of SPITS are to improve the route along the A628, restrain traffic on other routes, and improve public transport.

## Issues and Trends

**7.13** The Peak District is the most accessible and most visited in the country due to its close proximity to several large urban conurbations.

**7.14** The National Park is a barrier to movement between urban conurbations affecting regional and national economic development.

**7.15** Car borne visitor and cross Peak traffic have significant environmental and social impact on the National Park.

**7.16** Access and arrangements for traffic circulation, alongside demands for parking, can threaten environmental quality of the National Park.

**7.17** Increased provision of transport infrastructure can increase traffic levels in sensitive landscapes.

## Options for moving round the Park

**SE38** Formulate a clear, integrated accessibility strategy that can be implemented via authority wide policy processes.

**SE39** Promote public transport and better marketing of existing public transport and review the current subsidy to bus services.

**SE40** Investigate ways to secure the more sustainable use of the car (e.g. by car sharing and considerate parking, and robust use of travel plan guidance), acknowledging the important role of the car in rural areas and the difficulty created by flexible working patterns.

**SE41** Ensure that travel and traffic implications are taken into account when making decisions that affect local services, ensuring that communities are balanced and have access to the services they need.

## What happens next?

All stakeholders will automatically receive consultation documents throughout the plans review process.

We encourage you to share this document with friends and colleagues and invite comments from anyone with an interest in the future of the Peak District National Park.

## Contact us

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