



A Greater London National Park City – NPE Position

September 2015

England's ten National Parks:

- represent our most beautiful rural landscapes that create a sense of wonder;
- are living working landscapes with thriving rural businesses;
- are treasure troves of significant historic sites spanning the ages;
- have been the source of inspiration for some of our greatest works of art and literature;
- provide unparalleled opportunities for outdoor recreation in inspiring surroundings;
- are home to some of our rarest plants and creatures; and
- are hugely popular and visited by millions of people every year.

National Parks are an internationally recognised brand that successfully enhance wildlife, people's well-being, and demonstrate the practical application of sustainable development. Across the globe National Parks vary in their purposes, powers and geographical coverage.

A National Park City would not be the same as a traditional National Park; could not be designated under existing legislation; and would need to acknowledge the differences as much as the similarities. However this should not blind people to the benefits that a National Park City could bring in helping people to celebrate and connect with nature, with London's rich cultural heritage, and to the opportunities for people to play an active role in its conservation and enhancement.

A National Park City has the potential to inspire millions of people to better understand the natural world around them. This can help the traditional National Parks whose statutory purpose includes to increase people's understanding of the special qualities of these places. We believe an important role of any National Park City should also include showcasing the beauty that exists and is available to all its residents in our existing National Parks. We stand ready to work in partnership to this end.

We believe there is merit in seriously exploring the concept of a National Park City and welcome the active debate that is underway. A National Park City would be a new concept that requires careful thought. Yet working through how the principles of National Parks might be applied to a city context; and how the National Park City might differentiate itself given its very different context; represents an exciting opportunity.

Resources willing, National Parks England is happy to provide limited technical support to those considering the idea, drawn from the considerable expertise of our ten National Park Authority members.