

English National Parks and the transition period (2020 to 2027)

Background

The English National Park Authorities support the need for a clear road map for the 2020 to 2027 transition period from current Basic Payment Scheme and agri-environment schemes to the new Environmental Land Management scheme (E.L.M.). We need to ensure that our national landscapes do not suffer harm while the new scheme is designed, piloted, launched, and taken up, and that public good delivery becomes part of normal land management. A summary of National Parks England's current position on the transition period, including risks and opportunities, is provided below:

1. Area of land in National Parks in an agri-environment schemes

- Maps of the area of land in agri-environment schemes in each English National Park and the rate at which these current agreements end are shown at Appendix 1¹.
- The “hay day” of the area of land in National Parks covered by agri-environment schemes was in 2014/15 when it was around **85%**.
- As of April 2020 the percentage of the area of English National Parks in agri-environment schemes is **52%** of which 41% of the area is in Environmental Stewardship (ES) & 11% of the area is in Countryside Stewardship (CS).
- Our understanding of the current trends for rollover or renewal of agreements are -
 - ES (HLS) - 75% is Natural England's anticipated extension approval rate. The majority of renewal offers are accepted with a final rollover percentage of around 60%
 - CS renewal offer acceptance rate based on the figures available in 2020 is 56%
- The profile of current agri-environment agreements expiry dates shows that by 2025 agreements covering 49% of the total land area in English National Parks reach their expiry date.
- Uptake of CS so far has been modest as evidenced by the **34%** reduction of the area of English National Parks in agri-environment schemes from 2014/15 to 2020/21.
- E.L.M. Tests and Trials learnings in the North York Moors and the Peak District suggest that E.L.M. payment rates will need to be around 3 times current CS upland rates to attract participation given reduction in BPS.
- Proposed changes to CS scheme are welcomed and could increase interest and participation in the scheme but this is as yet unknown.
- Whilst there is normally a 2 to 3-year time lag between the launch of a scheme and general take up it is hoped that the co-design, testing and piloting will reduce this period for E.L.M.

Given the above, it seems likely that the percentage of the area of land in National Parks covered by agri-environment schemes will at best remain at around **50%** if nothing changes. If CS and E.L.M. are made more attractive to farmers and land managers including payments, which recognize the value of the public goods delivered and the costs of managing the land for public good delivery, we may see greater uptake.

2. Potential impact of “white space”

- White space, which indicates areas of land not under an agri-environment scheme agreement in National Parks, has increased by **34%** since 2014/15.
- Some farmers and land managers have not gone ahead with a CS application once their ES agreement ended resulting in a loss of continuity, engagement and focus on environmental delivery.
- There is a danger that some farmers and land managers are being left with little option but to revert to the post-war food production mode of increasing stock numbers as this is what they are most familiar with. This, however, is likely to come at the detriment of the natural and cultural environments.
- Some National Parks are seeing increasing numbers of compliance matters, such as wall removals, tree felling, scrub removal, arising in ‘white space’ and therefore a loss of natural and cultural assets.

¹ Sources of the data used are set out in Appendices 3 and 4.

So the new scheme needs to be attractive enough to engage farmers and land manager interest, applications, and outcome delivery. This will require investment in the provision of support/advice to reanimate interest in applying, as well as support for the application process.

3. Farm and land management business resilience

- The extract from the Farm Business Survey 2018/19 at Appendix 2 shows that Basic Payment (BPS) and agri-environment schemes are important sources of farm income.
- The keeping of grazing livestock on farms both in the lowlands and Less Favored Areas is a cost rather than an income for these businesses.
- Farm income relies on the BPS, agri-environment schemes, and diversification enterprises.
- As BPS payments are reduced over the transition period there will be increasing pressure on these farmers and land managers to look for other sources of income. They will have two main options: intensify and produce more food or become more extensive and embrace enhanced public good delivery and E.L.M.

A main challenge for this transition period is how best to support farmers and land managers to better understand their options and, in particular, to encourage them to consider enhanced public good delivery through E.L.M. as their means to enhance business resilience.

4. Number of farm holdings

- A summary of the latest Defra statistics on the number of farm holdings in the English National Parks is provided at Appendix 3.
- There are almost 7,500 “commercial holdings” ranging from 180 in Northumberland to 1,376 in the Peak District.
- 2009 data showed that there were at least a further 5,900 holdings less than 5 hectares.

These numbers indicate the scale of engagement required to support farmers and land managers to engage with E.L.M. as well as the variation across English National Parks.

5. Future regulation and enforcement

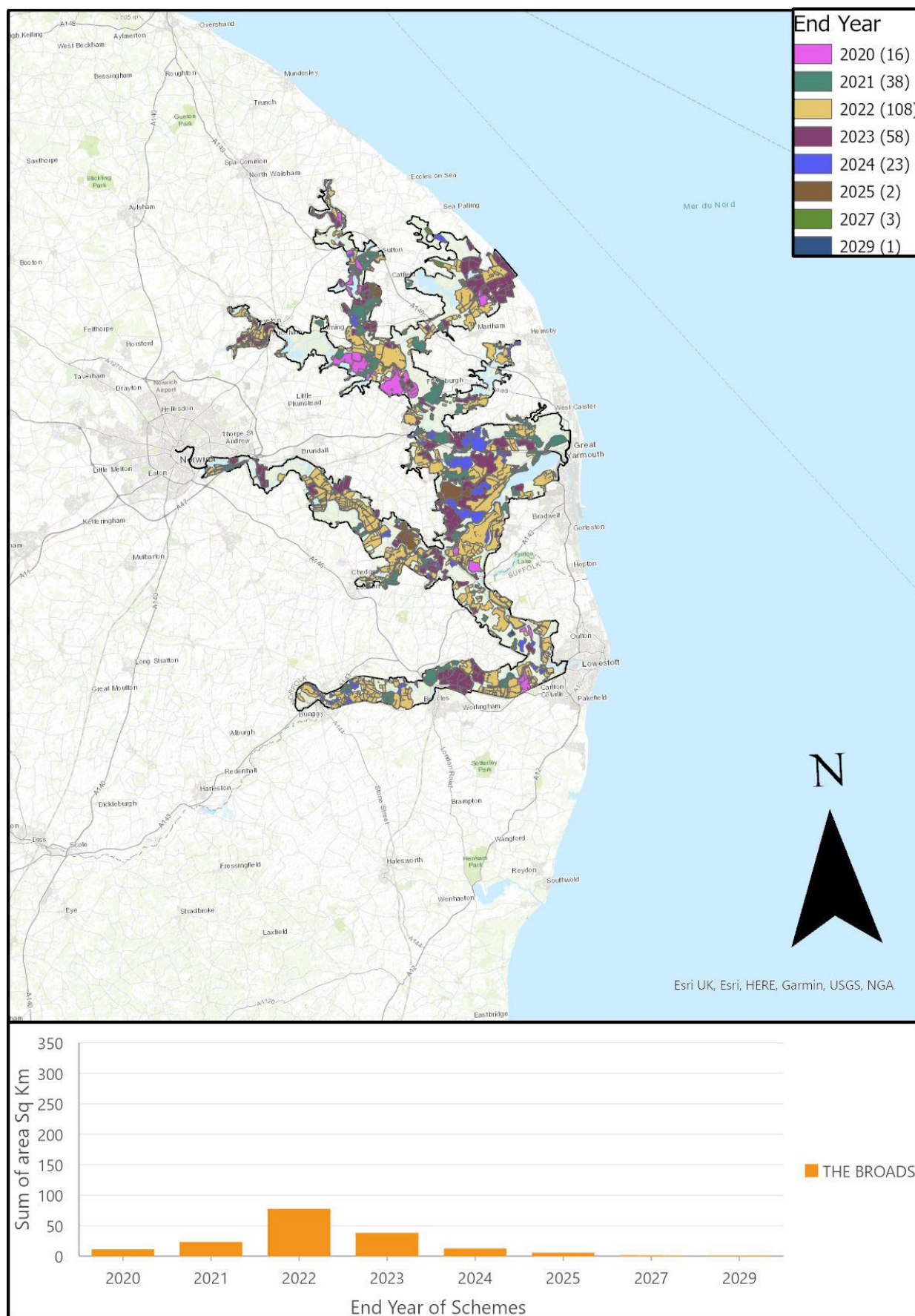
- The potential loss of Good Agricultural & Environmental Condition and regulatory cross-compliance when BPS ends is of concern. For example, because there will be no protection for dry stone walls a similar approach to Hedgerow Regulations may be required.
 - The design of future regulation provides the opportunity to address current issues such as the removal of scrub (natural regeneration) and BPS compliance, the impact of intensive game management on habitats and native species, and the delivery of wilder landscapes but disallowance of wild species grazing (deer).
 - A date for the baseline record of natural and cultural features is needed so that there are no perverse consequences prior to scheme launch and entry.
 - Additional detail can be provided via our E.L.M. consultation response which is available on request
- There is a need for a clear and effective regulatory baseline that protects natural and cultural assets. It needs as a basic minimum to carry forward existing cross-compliance requirements (but embedded in legislation) and to implement the polluter pays principle.

6. Further opportunities

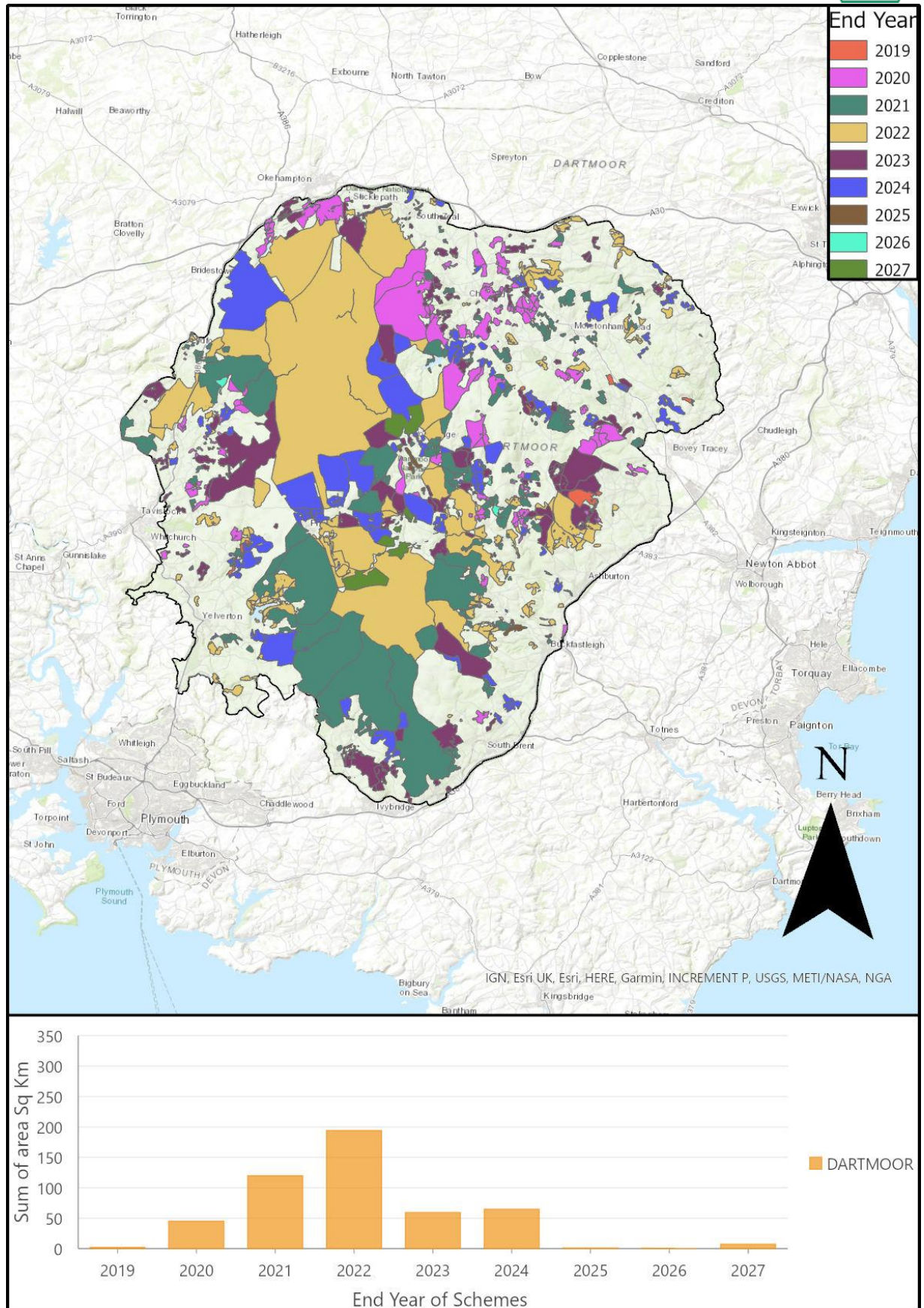
- The Landscapes Review recommendations set out an approach to ensure that National Landscapes form the backbone of nature recovery and provide access for health and wellbeing.
- Further animation, support and facilitation is needed by local trusted advisers to help farmers and land managers get E.L.M. ready.
- More collaborative working between farmers and land managers for landscape delivery and across National Landscapes.
- Simple business planning and carbon management tools and support provided by Government.
- Peer to peer learning opportunities including demonstration farms, more virtual working, skill set and training.

Appendix 1 - Maps by the 10 National Parks in England

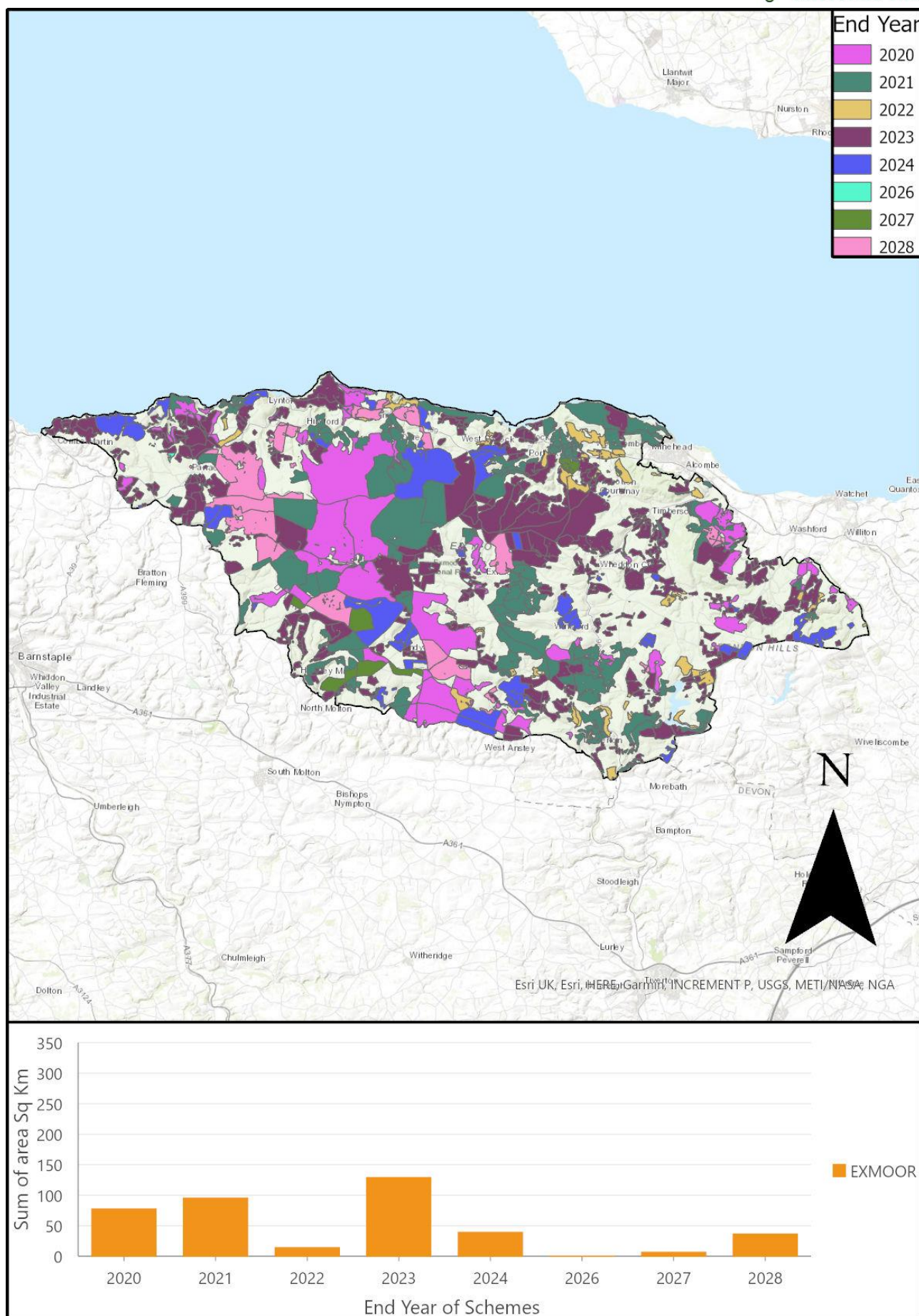
1.1 The Broads Authority - 55% is in agri-environment schemes



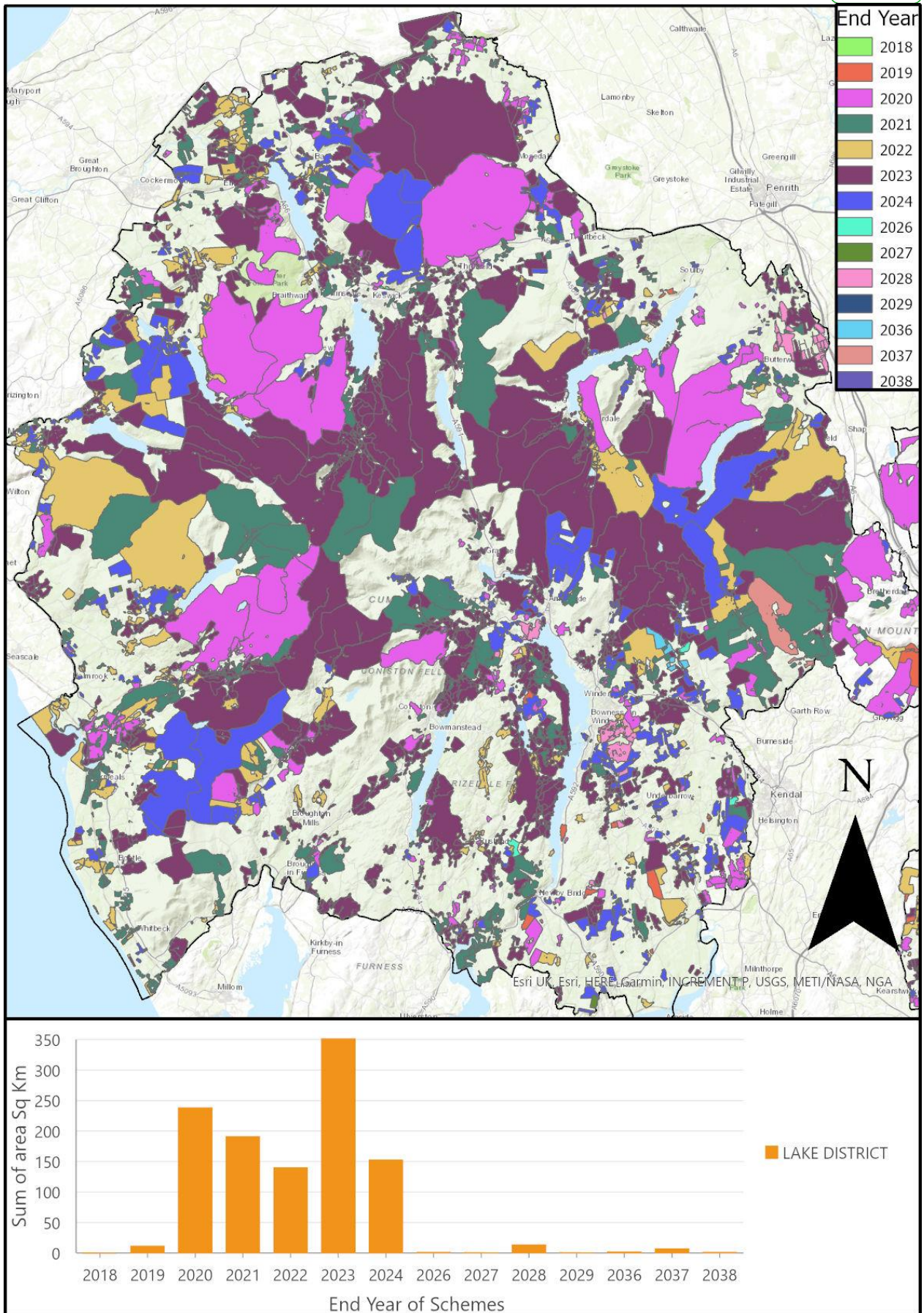
1.2 Dartmoor National Park - 52% is in agri-environment schemes



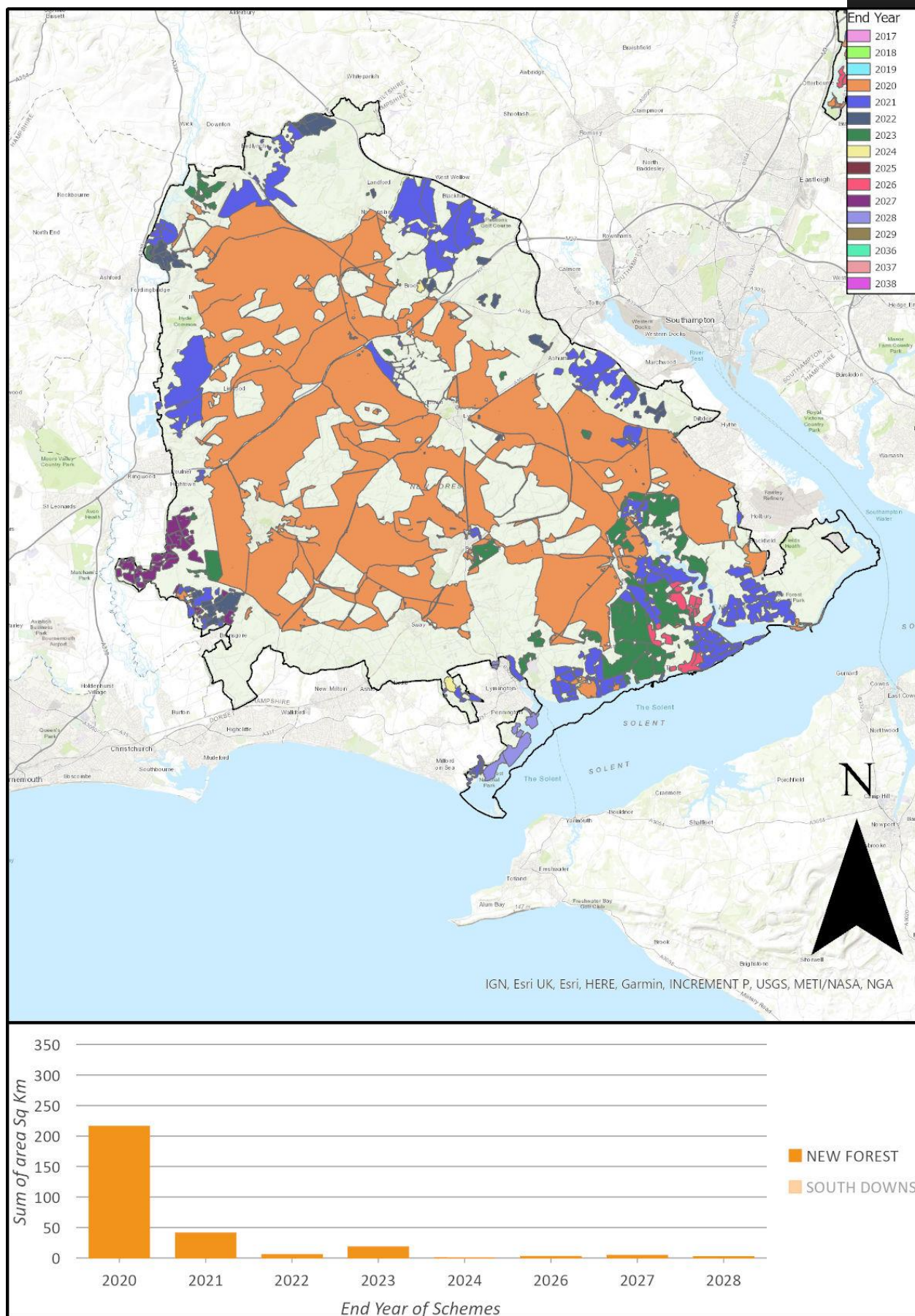
1.3 Exmoor National Park - 57% is in agri-environment schemes



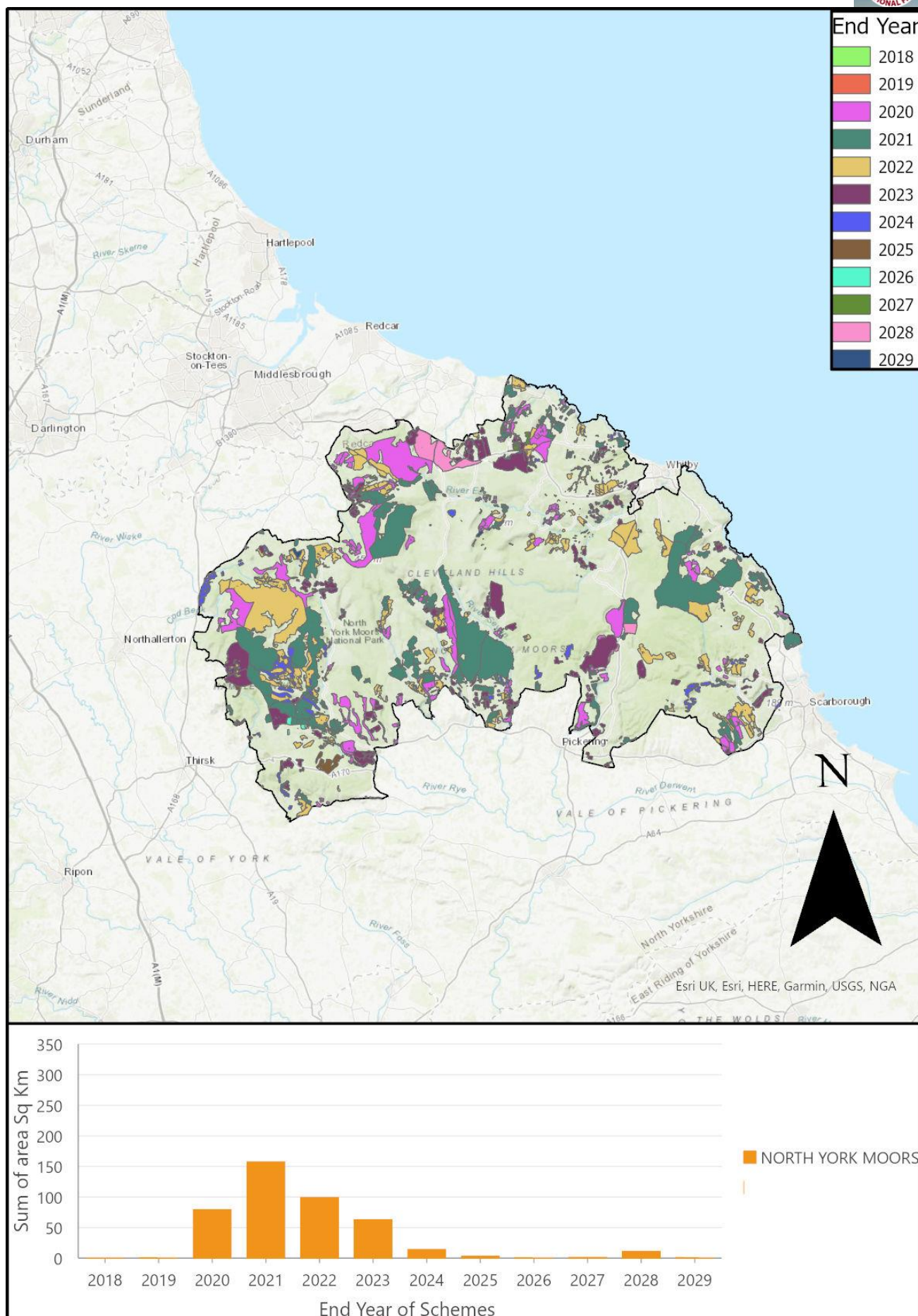
1.4 Lake District National Park - 58% is in agri-environment schemes



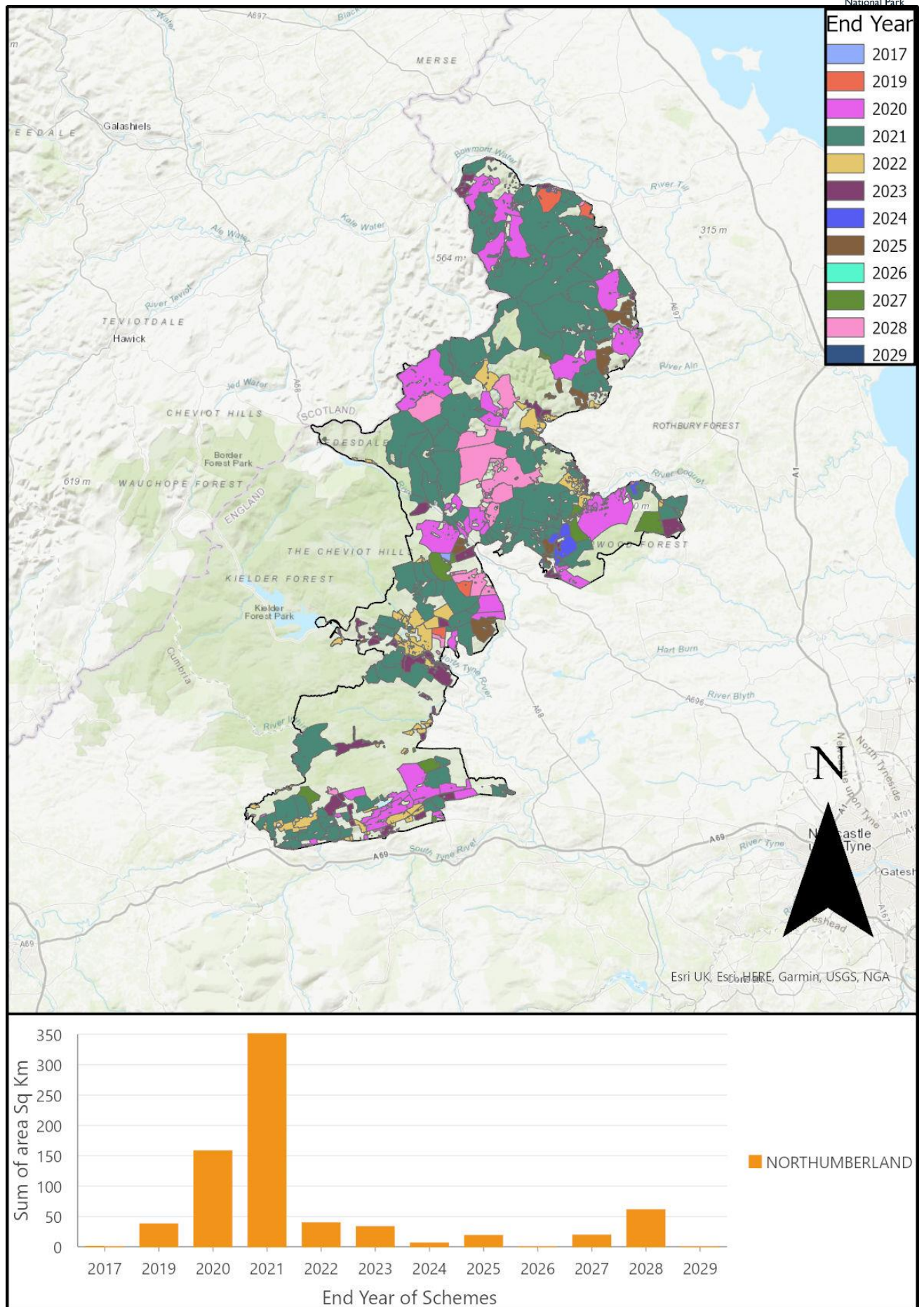
1.5 New Forest National Park - 51% is in agri-environment schemes



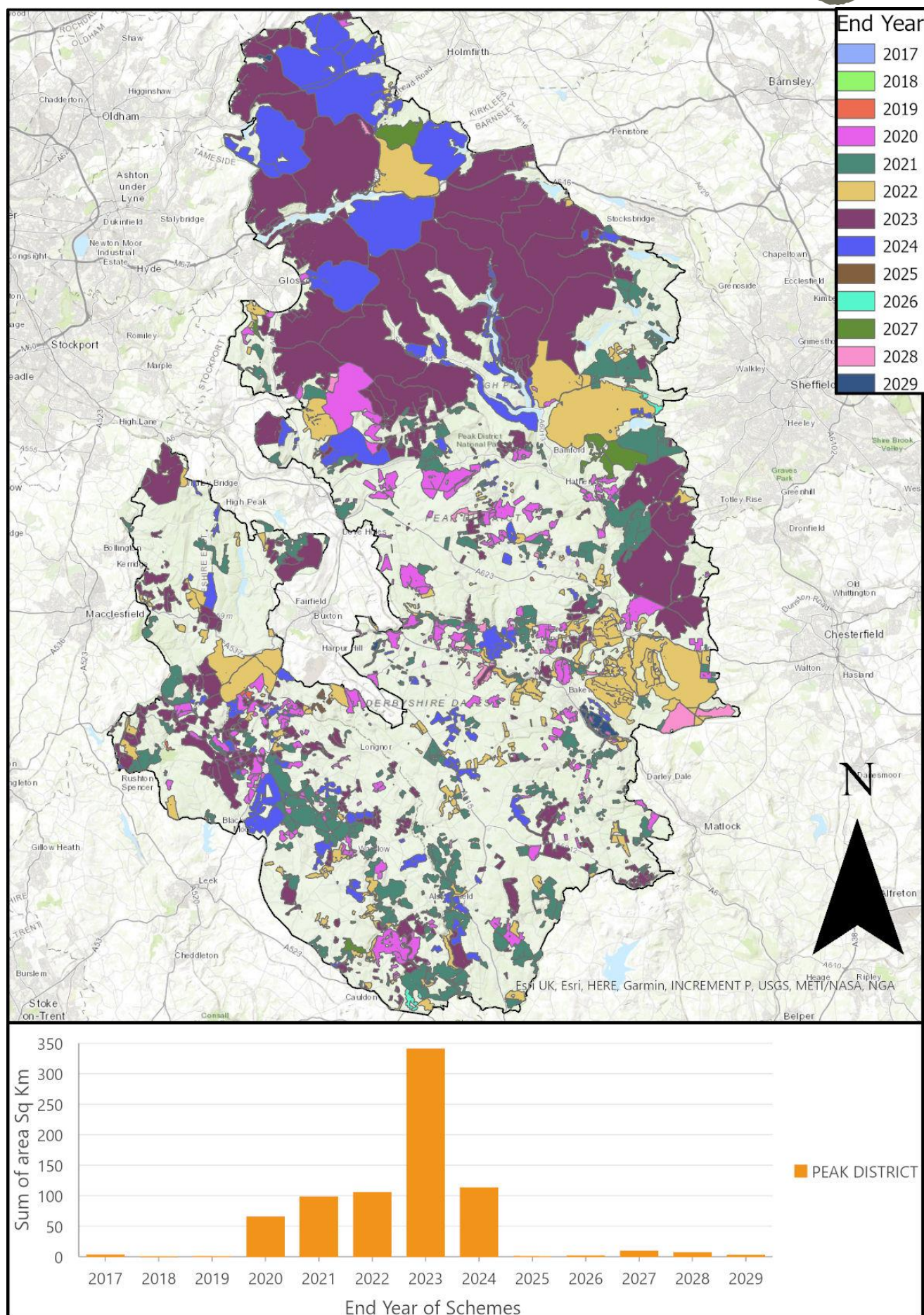
1.6 North York Moors National Park - 30% is in agri-environment schemes



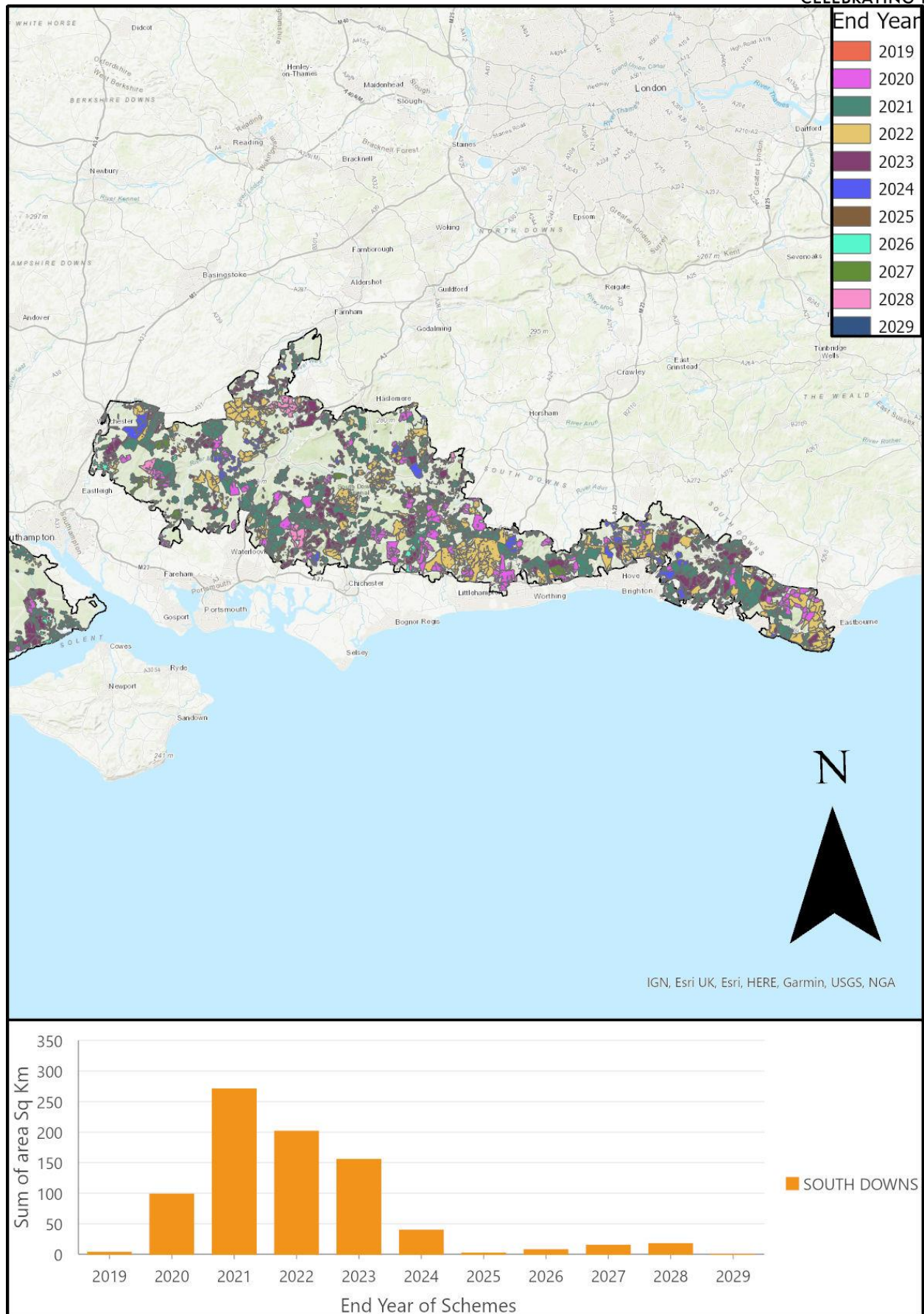
1.7 Northumberland National Park - 72% is in agri-environment schemes



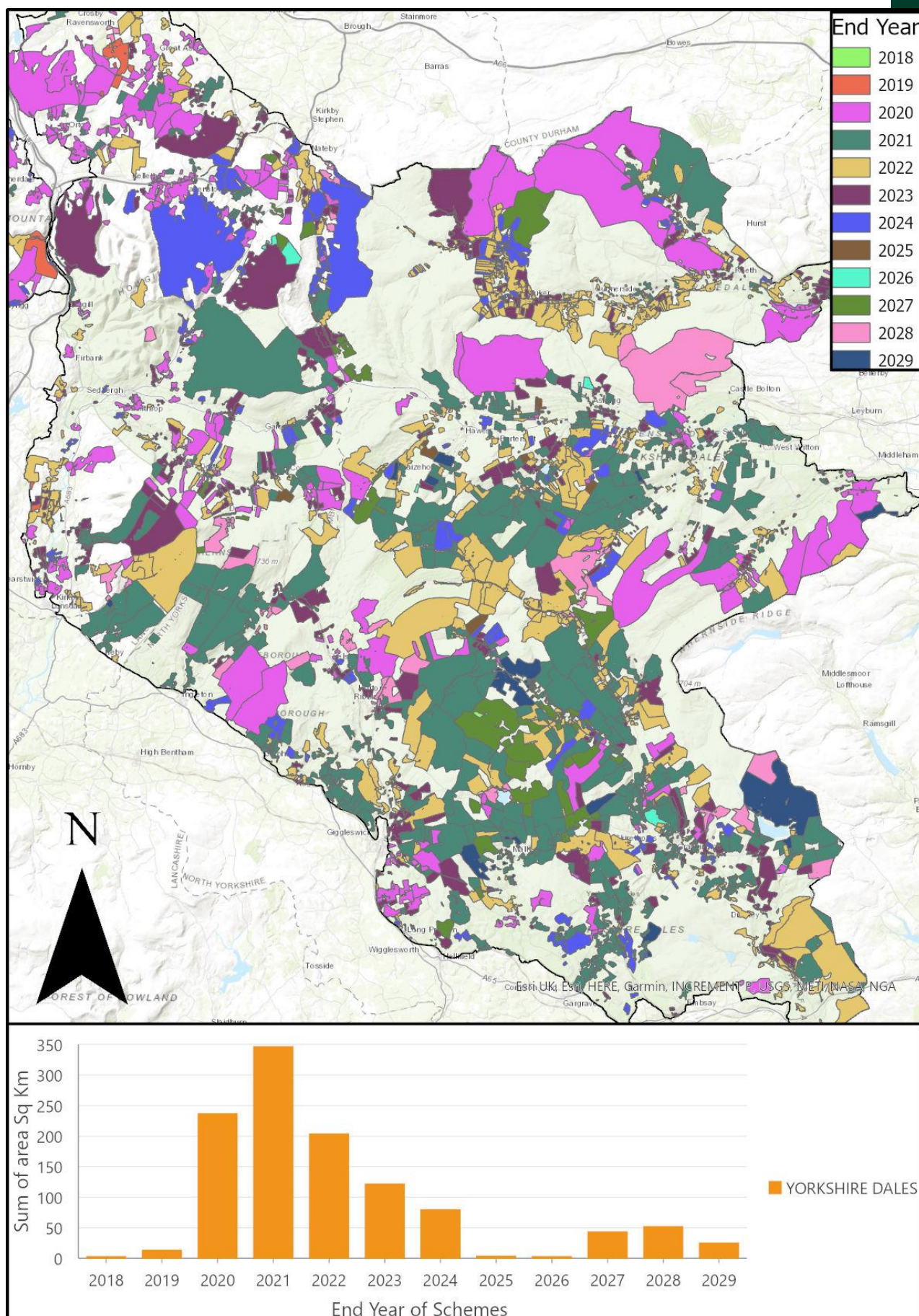
1.8 Peak District National Park - 52% is in agri-environment schemes



1.9 South Downs National Park - 49% is in agri-environment schemes



1.10 Yorkshire Dales National Park - 52% is in agri-environment schemes



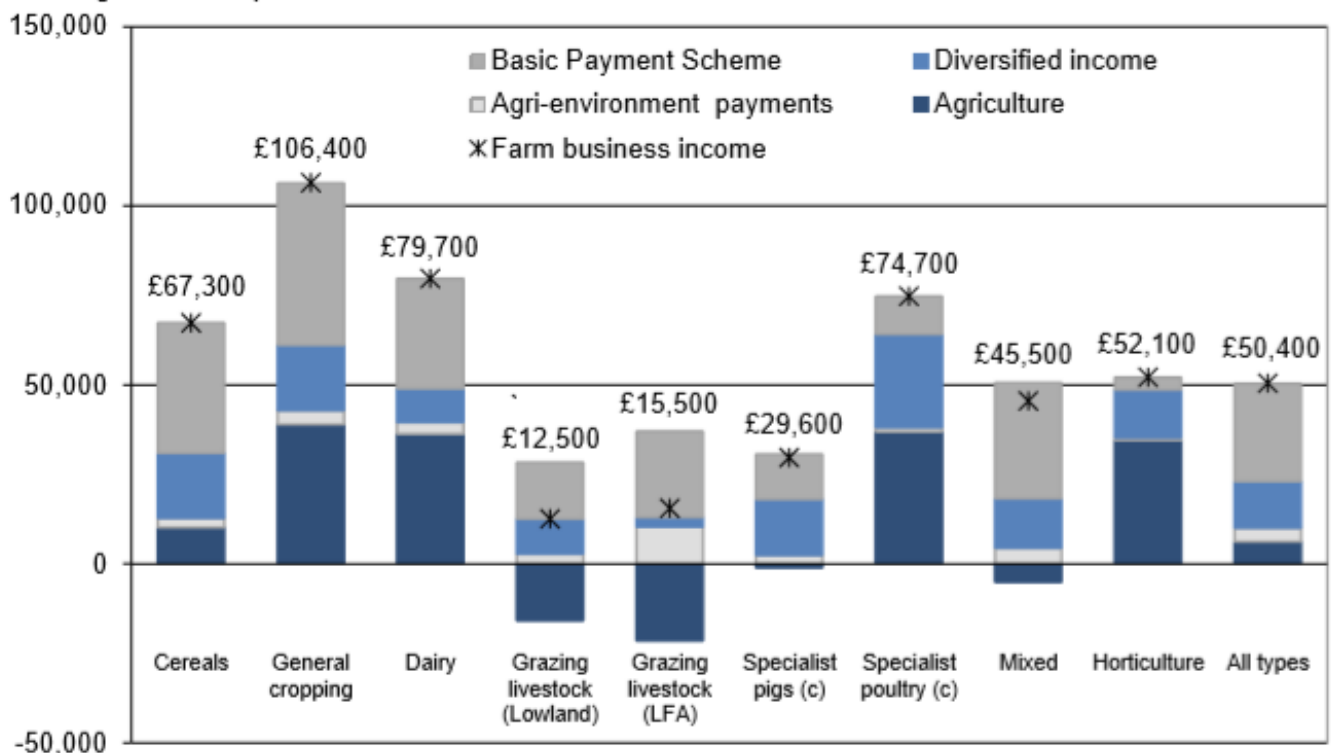
Appendix 2 - Extract from the Farm Business Survey

Please see the full report at: -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/847722/fbs-businessincome-statsnotice-21nov19.pdf

Figure 3: Farm Business Income ^(a) by Cost Centre ^(b) 2018/19

Average income £ per farm



(a) Rounded to the nearest hundred.

(b) The data shown are the averages across all farms in the sample including those that do not have any income within some of the cost centres. The resulting Farm Business Income is shown by the star and in text at the top of each column.

(c) The sample sizes for specialist pig and poultry farms are relatively small with average incomes subject to greater variation. A few new specialist pig farms entered the FBS sample in 2018/19 and are very influential. Further details on the impact of these farms can be found on page 10. In previous years there was a similar situation with specialist poultry, but in 2018/19 there were no very influential poultry farms in the sample.

Appendix 3 – Summary of data sources used for the number of holdings and the area of land in agri-environment schemes in English National Parks



Summary Farming Statistics DEFRA - number of holdings

There are approximately 7,500 commercial holdings in England's National Parks covering 68% of the total area of the National Parks. Please note that there are considerably more holdings recorded on local data sets than fall outside the commercial holding definition for example in the Peak District National Park whilst there are only 1,376 commercial holdings the local data indicates over 3,000 holdings. The farmed area ranges from around 30% in the New Forest to 80% in the Peak District. Around 55% is owner occupied and 45% rented, although again this varies significantly between National Parks (from 15% rented in the Broads to 65% in Northumberland National Park).

The average farm size in English National Parks is above that of the National Level. However, due to the data collection not all farms are included, which skews the average farm size data. Moreover, this will be an underestimate of the Utilised Agricultural Area in National Parks. Please note that the last time all sizes of holdings were reported (2009) by Defra there were an additional 5,900 holdings less than 5 hectares across all the English National Parks.

Please note that the Total Utilised Agricultural Area and the Total Farmed Area is not available consistently for all English National Parks so the % of the Total Area of each National Park in agri-environment schemes has been used for the %'s used in Appendix 1.

National Park	Number of Holdings*	Total Farmed Area (ha)	Average farm size (ha)
The Broads National Park	186	18,157	98
Dartmoor National Park	787	63,332	80
Exmoor National Park	559	55,083	99
Lake District National Park	1,162	152,777	131
New Forest National Park	337	17,845	53
North York Moors National Park	1,021	92,561	91
Northumberland National Park	180	77,063	428
Peak District National Park	1,376	114,378	83
South Downs National Park	950	115,594	122
Yorkshire Dales National Park	890	147,158	165
National Park England	7,448	853,948	115
England	106,853	9,120,623	85

**Results for 2010 onwards relate to commercial holdings only. Commercial holdings are those with significant levels of farming activity. These significant levels are classified as any holding with more than 5 hectares of agricultural land, 1 hectare of orchards, 0.5 hectares of vegetables or 0.1 hectares of protected crops, or more than 10 cows, 50 pigs, 20 sheep, 20 goats or 1,000 poultry.*

Summary of the data used for the Area of land in agri-environment schemes in English National Parks

- Countryside Stewardship Scheme 2016-2020 Management Areas²:** This is a spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of all land under management within the Countryside Stewardship Agri-Environment Scheme from 01/01/2016 onwards. The data has been produced by linking tabular information extracts from the scheme administration system against a national extract of the Land Parcel Information System held by the Rural Payments Agency.
- Environmental Stewardship Scheme (England) holdings agreement³:** polygons (includes farm business and payment info).

² <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/countryside-stewardship-scheme-2016-management-areas-england>

³ <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/environmental-stewardship-scheme-agreements-england>

3. **National Parks (England)**⁴: Polygon boundaries includes alterations: Yorkshire Dales and Lake District National Park (Designation) boundaries modified 1st August 2016. South Downs National Park (Designation) modified on 2nd June 2010.

The Total Utilised Agricultural Area and the Total Farmed Area is not available consistently for all English National Parks so the % of the Total Area of each National Park in agri-environment schemes has been used for the %'s used in Appendix 1.

A summary of the methodology to extract the information from the data is shared in Appendix 4.

⁴ <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/national-parks-england>

Appendix 4 – Data sources used for the number of holdings and the area of land in agri-environment schemes in English National Parks



1.10.1 Area of Live Environmental Stewardship agreements

Currently, Environmental Stewardship agreements cover every 4 in 10 square kilometres of National Parks in England. This rises to nearly every 6 in 10 square kilometres or 60% of the total farmed area.

National Park	Live ES Agreements (sq km)	Area of National Park (sq km)	% of ES by Area of NP	Farmed Area (sq km)	% of ES by Farmed Area
The Broads National Park	125.1	302	41%	181.57	69%
Dartmoor National Park	442.7	956	46%	633.32	70%
Exmoor National Park	287.2	693	41%	550.83	52%
Lake District National Park	1243.1	2362	53%	1527.77	81%
New Forest National Park	251.7	567	44%	178.45	141%
North York Moors National Park	313.7	1441	22%	925.61	34%
Northumberland National Park	538.9	1051	51%	770.63	70%
Peak District National Park	644.9	1438	45%	1143.78	56%
South Downs National Park	501.4	1653	30%	1155.94	43%
Yorkshire Dales National Park	865.4	2185	40%	1471.58	59%
National Park England	5010.6	12648.0	41%	8539.48	61%

1.10.2 Area of Live Countryside Stewardship agreements

Approximately, Countryside Stewardship agreements cover every 1 in 10 square kilometres of National Parks in England. This rises to 16% of the total farmed area.

National Park	Live CS Agreements (sq km)	Area of NP (sq km)	% of CS by Area of NP	Farmed Area (sq km)	% of ES by Farmed Area
The Broads National Park	39.7	302	13%	181.57	22%
Dartmoor National Park	51.8	956	5%	633.32	8%
Exmoor National Park	110.5	693	16%	550.83	20%
Lake District National Park	131.5	2362	6%	1527.77	9%
New Forest National Park	37.7	567	7%	178.45	21%
North York Moors National Park	115.9	1441	8%	925.61	13%
Northumberland National Park	221.2	1051	21%	770.63	29%
Peak District National Park	100.1	1438	7%	1143.78	9%
South Downs National Park	308.0	1653	19%	1155.94	27%
Yorkshire Dales National Park	264.8	2185	12%	1471.58	18%
National Parks England	1381.2	12648	11%	8539.48	16%

1.10.3 Total area of Live Environmental & Countryside Stewardship agreements

Three quarters of National Parks in England are covered by Environmental or Countryside stewardship Scheme.

National Park	Live E&CS Agreements (sq km)	Area of NP (sq km)	% of E&CS by Area of NP	Farmed Area (sq km)	% of E&CS by Farmed Area
The Broads National Park	164.8	302	55%	181.57	91%
Dartmoor National Park	494.5	956	52%	633.32	78%
Exmoor National Park	397.6	693	57%	550.83	72%

Lake District National Park	1374.6	2362	58%	1527.77	90%
New Forest National Park	289.4	567	51%	178.45	162%
North York Moors National Park	429.6	1441	30%	925.61	46%
Northumberland National Park	760.1	1051	72%	770.63	99%
Peak District National Park	745.0	1438	52%	1143.78	65%
South Downs National Park	809.5	1653	49%	1155.94	70%
Yorkshire Dales National Park	1130.2	2185	52%	1471.58	77%
National Park England	6959.3	12648	52%	8539.48	77%

1.10.4 Area of Live Environmental Stewardship agreements by type (sq km)

96% of Environmental stewardship schemes in National Parks are Entry Level plus Higher level Stewardship schemes.

National Park	Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship	Higher Level Stewardship	Organic Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship
The Broads National Park	116.3	8.7	0.0
Dartmoor National Park	436.9	0.0	5.8
Exmoor National Park	244.4	5.9	36.9
Lake District National Park	1231.4	5.6	6.1
New Forest National Park	230.4	21.3	0.0
North York Moors National Park	308.2	1.0	4.5
Northumberland National Park	530.4	0.0	8.5
Peak District National Park	621.1	20.9	2.9
South Downs National Park	434.8	28.8	37.8
Yorkshire Dales National Park	861.3	0.5	3.7
National Park England	5015.2	92.7	106.3

1.10.5 Area of Live Countryside Stewardship agreements by type (sq km)

Nearly 80% of Countryside stewardship agreements in National Parks England are either Higher Tier (50%) or Mid-Tier (29%).

National Park	Feasibility Study	Feasibility Study And Historic Building Restoration	Hedgerows And Boundaries	Higher Tier	Implementation Plan	Mid Tier	Tree Health Improvement	Tree Health Restoration	Woodland Management Plan
The Broads National Park	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.2	0.0	28.7	0.0	0.0	0.8
Dartmoor National Park	0.0	0.1	0.0	20.5	1.3	25.3	0.1	0.2	4.3
Exmoor National Park	0.0	0.0	0.0	57.4	0.0	47.7	1.5	0.0	3.8
Lake District National Park	0.0	3.6	0.2	68.6	10.6	36.9	0.4	0.1	10.9
New Forest National Park	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.7	0.0	2.9	0.0	0.0	11.2
North York Moors National Park	0.0	12.2	0.0	41.0	0.0	53.4	0.0	0.0	9.3
Northumberland National Park	0.0	17.7	0.0	115.8	72.4	12.5	0.0	0.0	2.8
Peak District National Park	0.0	15.8	0.1	51.7	3.1	28.6	0.0	0.0	0.8

South Downs National Park	0.0	0.0	0.0	169.8	0.0	90.1	0.0	0.0	48.2
Yorkshire Dales National Park	9.4	36.6	0.6	138.5	6.2	68.0	0.4	0.0	5.1
National Park England	9.4	85.9	1.0	697.3	93.5	394.0	2.4	0.3	97.3

1.11 By year, what is the area of land by which Land Management Schemes will be ending?

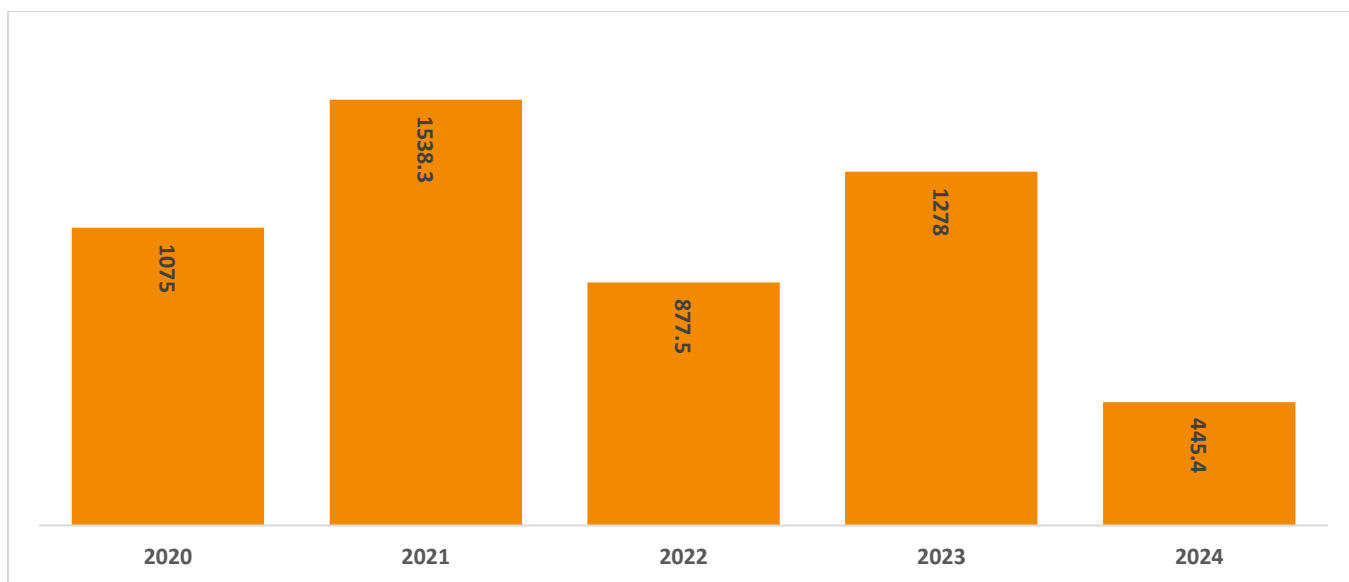
By the year 2025 we will have lost 6202.7 sq km of countryside or environmental stewardship schemes. This represents nearly half (49%) of total land area in National Parks England or 73% of the total farmed area (8539 sq km) in National Parks England.

1.11.1 Area of Environmental Stewardship agreements by end year (sq km)

There is no trend by area of land and live agreements ending per year. However, each National can display trend differently depending on the landscape characteristics and size of farms.

National Park	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
The Broads National Park	9.0	12.9	63.1	31.4	8.6
Dartmoor National Park	41.3	115.8	182.4	44.8	58.4
Exmoor National Park	73.7	83.6	2.4	94.0	33.4
Lake District National Park	244.7	177.4	128.4	551.0	141.7
New Forest National Park	207.2	34.2	1.7	8.7	0.0
North York Moors National Park	52.4	135.8	81.0	43.7	0.8
Northumberland National Park	103.4	373.2	30.0	26.4	6.0
Peak District National Park	45.2	82.6	85.4	328.1	103.7
South Downs National Park	79.7	208.4	134.6	58.5	20.2
Yorkshire Dales National Park	218.4	314.5	168.6	91.3	72.6
National Park England	1075.0	1538.3	877.5	1278.0	445.4

Graph of Environmental Stewardship agreements by end year (sq km) for National Parks England

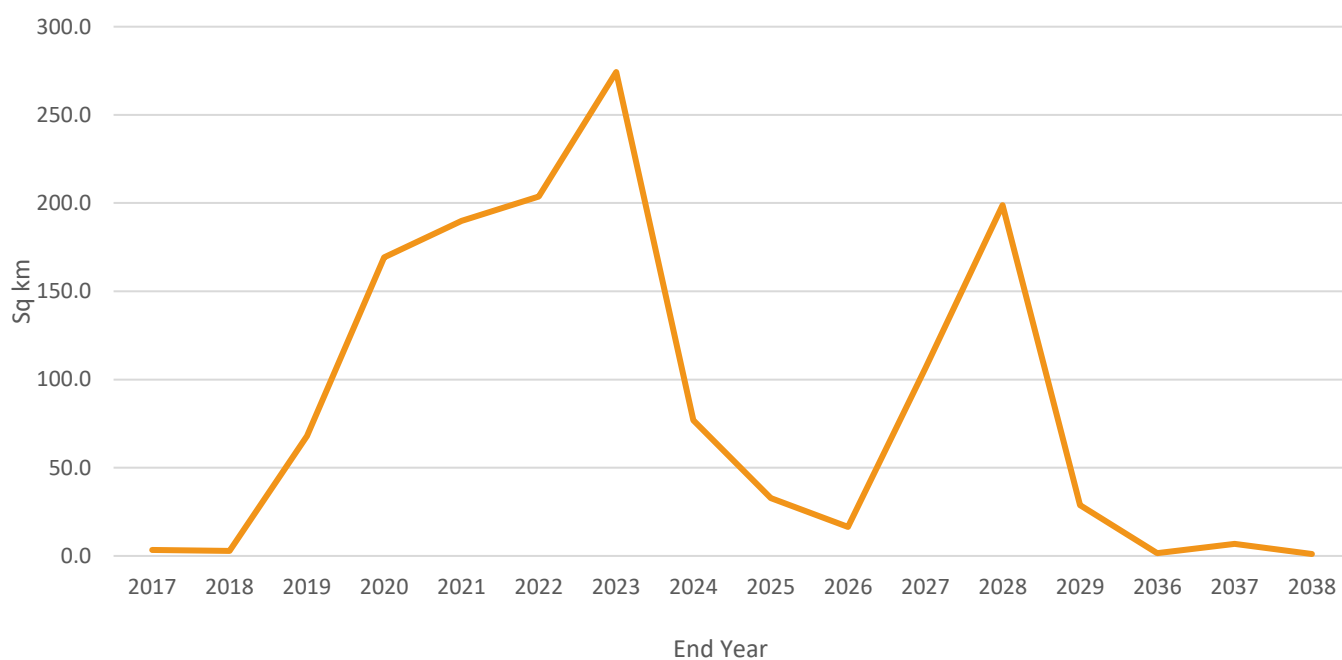


1.11.2 Area of Countryside Stewardship agreements by end year (sq km)

72% of Countryside Stewardship agreements end before 2025.

End Year	The Broads National Park	Dartmoor National Park	Exmoor National Park	Lake District National Park	New Forest National Park	North York Moors National Park	Northumberland National Park	Peak District National Park	South Downs National Park	Yorkshire Dales National Park	National Park England
2017	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	2.8	0.0	0.0	3.5
2018	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	2.9
2019	0.0	2.2	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.5	37.5	0.4	3.0	13.2	68.0
2020	1.2	3.9	3.9	13.4	8.5	26.8	54.5	20.3	18.8	18.0	169.2
2021	9.7	4.0	11.6	13.5	6.9	21.8	13.1	15.3	62.1	32.0	190.0
2022	13.9	11.5	11.6	13.3	4.1	18.1	9.5	20.0	67.0	34.7	203.8
2023	6.2	14.6	34.8	44.1	9.4	19.0	6.7	12.3	96.4	30.6	274.3
2024	3.2	6.4	5.9	11.5	0.4	13.4	0.3	8.9	19.4	7.6	76.8
2025	4.7	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	18.5	0.5	1.8	3.3	32.8
2026	0.0	0.7	0.1	1.0	2.3	0.7	0.0	1.3	7.5	2.8	16.4
2027	0.8	7.4	6.5	0.5	4.1	0.9	19.2	9.2	14.9	43.1	106.4
2028	0.0	0.0	36.1	13.0	2.0	10.9	61.0	6.7	17.2	51.8	198.8
2029	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.7	0.1	2.3	0.1	24.9	28.9
2036	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6
2037	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.8
2038	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1

Graph of Countryside Stewardship agreements by end year (sq km) for National Parks England



1.12 How was this analysis undertaken?

This information uses three sources of data from the Natural England open data publication⁵ subject to the Open Government Licence. For a detailed methodology of how this was undertaken in GIS please follow this [link](#)⁶.

1.12.1 Data used in this analysis

4. **Countryside Stewardship Scheme 2016-2020 Management Areas**⁷: This is a spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of all land under management within the Countryside Stewardship Agri-Environment Scheme from 01/01/2016 onwards. The data has been produced by linking tabular information extracts from the scheme administration system against a national extract of the Land Parcel Information System held by the Rural Payments Agency.
5. **Environmental Stewardship Scheme (England) holdings agreement**⁸: polygons (includes farm business and payment info).
6. **National Parks (England)**⁹: Polygon boundaries includes alterations: Yorkshire Dales and Lake District National Park (Designation) boundaries modified 1st August 2016. South Downs National Park (Designation) modified on 2nd June 2010.

1.12.2 Brief Methodology

1. Spatial data has been clipped to National Park boundaries. Agreements or the parcels of land that overlap the National Park Boundaries are cut and area re calculated to show only parts of the polygon inside the National Park Boundaries.
2. Using the End date column, a formula has been used to create a year-end date
3. Data has been merged to create the final maps
4. Upland ELS can apply to any agreement with an ELS or OELS component and therefore their figures are subsumed in the ELS, ELS/HLS, OELS and OELS/HLS categories.
5. Countryside Stewardship is an agri-environment scheme with Higher Tier, full Mid tier, Mid Tier wildlife packages and Hedgerows and Boundaries grant schemes.
6. Woodland Grant Scheme not included in this analysis
7. NPA's have their own small scale Land Management Grant Scheme not currently in this analysis

⁵ <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/>

⁶ https://nbviewer.jupyter.org/github/DGalexander/ARC_notebooks/blob/main/1L%20LM%20Schemes.ipynb

⁷ <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/countryside-stewardship-scheme-2016-management-areas-england>

⁸ <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/environmental-stewardship-scheme-agreements-england>

⁹ <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/national-parks-england>