

**Nature Recovery in English National Parks**  
**Case for Delivery**  
**Main Report**  
**May 2022**



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Front cover courtesy of Motmot Consulting Ltd

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## 1. Executive summary

England's nine National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority (NPAs) are committed to National Parks being beacons for a sustainable future, where nature, landscapes and people flourish, unlocking their potential as green engines for nature and climate recovery. These landscapes are dramatic, inspirational, large, and diverse, and contain many nature rich places that are abundant with wildlife. They are reservoirs of the nation's most important and special species and habitats and places from which nature recovery can build. Covering 10% of England and 5% of the UK, National Parks have a key role in delivering the Government's ambition to protect 30% of the UK's land for nature, reversing the decline of biodiversity, by 2030 in line with the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) global response to the nature crisis to become landscapes that are richer in nature and richer for people.

NPAs and National Parks England (NPE) have developed a collective ambition to deliver more for landscapes and nature in the [National Delivery Plan for Wildlife](#). NPAs are striving for a nature recovery vision where: ***National Parks are the pinnacle of the nation's Nature Recovery network; they should be places where wildlife flourishes, habitats are maintained, restored, and expanded, and where everyone can experience nature and wildlife at their best.***

The case for delivering nature recovery in English National Parks sets out how NPAs, and their partners working in National Parks, could collectively deliver more for nature. The approach builds upon existing strong partnership working to maximise gains for nature and calls for additional funding to deliver high value outcomes for biodiversity; climate resilience and society. It has been developed through research and discussions with NPA staff and 37 people working for strategic and key partner organisations across England.

### Summary of key findings

#### National Parks have significant potential to deliver more for nature

- With sufficient collaboration and resources English National Parks have the potential to collectively deliver 145,000ha of nature rich areas by 2030. The production of a nature recovery delivery plan and a portfolio of nature recovery projects in each National Park is needed to unlock this potential.

#### NPAs are sector leaders committed to working in partnership

- NPAs are best placed to lead and convene the nature recovery agenda in National Parks. They need to continue to collaborate with partners and stakeholders to develop innovative ways to pool knowledge, expertise, organisational resources and funding to deliver more for nature.

#### Significant additional resources are needed to transform delivery

- NPAs are delivering nature recovery at capacity. An estimated additional core resource of £4.5m is needed to scale nature recovery in National Parks. A detailed case needs to be developed to demonstrate the level of core funding needed and what it could deliver over the next 3 years.
- It is estimated that in the region of £800m is needed to deliver the above nature recovery ambition by 2030. This will need to be secured from a broad range of funders. NPAs are well placed to continue to work with partners to find new ways to finance nature recovery at scale building on their knowledge of private finance through the Revere Initiative.

#### NPAs work beyond their boundaries as key partners in the NRN

- Nature recovery goes beyond National Park boundaries. NPAs, with appropriate resources can support more work beyond boundaries. They are well placed to build on their work with Natural England, National Association for AONBs and organisations in the Nature Recovery Network Partnership to help build a nature recovery network across England.

#### There is an inspiring story to share and engage people with nature and its recovery

- National Parks are places where people can visit, experience and be inspired by nature. NPAs are well placed to use landscape scale nature recovery to share stories, improve access and inspire more people to be connected to and act to care for the nature within National Parks. They have a wealth of knowledge and skills they could share more to inspire action in others.

## **National Parks have significant potential to deliver more for nature**

With sufficient collaboration and resources English National Parks have the potential to collectively deliver 145,000ha of nature rich areas by 2030. The production of a nature recovery delivery plan and portfolio of nature recovery projects in each National Park is needed to unlock the potential.

By 2021 over 1.2 million hectares, or 44%, of land in National Parks was in positive management<sup>1</sup> for nature conservation. More work is needed. NPAs have identified a collective ambition to create, restore and manage around **145,000ha** of habitat in National Parks by 2030, a 12% increase in the land being managed for nature. Clear, strong nature recovery delivery plans and a portfolio of projects should be created for each National Park in collaboration with partners to achieve the ambition. This is an ambitious target yet NPAs see this as the beginning and expect the ambition to increase as discussions with partners develop.

## **NPAs are sector leaders committed to working in partnership**

NPAs are best placed to lead and convene the nature recovery agenda in National Parks. They need to continue to collaborate with partners and stakeholders to develop innovative ways to pool knowledge, expertise, organisational resources and funding to deliver more for nature.

Partnership working is key to delivery of nature recovery in National Parks. NPAs rely on working effectively with and through the large number of individual landowners, land managers and farmers, who are custodians of 70% of land within National Parks. NPAs are one of the sector leaders in partner based landscape scale projects. There is increasing partner buy in to nature recovery and recognition that NPAs are well placed to lead and convene a shared nature recovery agenda at a landscape scale. Key partners have expressed an interest in finding new ways of working together in and around National Parks, from sharing information and data, to pooling funding and resources, and looking for ways to joint fund shared staff. One way to do this, locally, could be to create a 'Team Nature' where staff from different organisations (NPAs, partners and stakeholders) come together to combine skills, expertise, resources and funding in new ways to deliver nature recovery jointly.

## **Significant additional resources are needed to transform delivery**

NPAs need to demonstrate the case for additional core resources to unlock nature recovery at scale in National Parks. It is estimated that this in the region of £4.5m is needed over the next 3 years.

Existing resourcing and ways of working are already presenting challenges to support the status quo. NPAs and national partners consider that additional publicly funded core resources are needed for the transformative change required to accelerate the scale and pace of delivery and to unlock wider finance for nature recovery. A detailed case needs to be developed to demonstrate the level of core funding needed and what it could deliver over the next 3 years to support discussions with Defra and its family of arm's length bodies to see how additional core funding can be secured.

It is estimated that in the region of £800m is needed to deliver the above nature recovery ambition by 2030. This will need to be secured from a broad range of funders. NPAs need continue to work with partners to find new ways to finance nature recovery at scale building on their knowledge of private finance through the Revere Initiative.

The cost of achieving the nature recovery ambition in National Parks between 2021-2030 is estimated to be in the region of £800m. NPAs and partners are both clear that the ambition for nature recovery far exceeds the funds available. Future funding is likely to come from a mix of public and private sources. NPAs are committed to continue to work with partners to secure public funding for nature recovery projects in National Parks and are leading the way with new and innovative approaches to secure private finance, including Revere – a private finance initiative between National Parks Partnerships and Palladium. NPAs are well placed to use their experience and successes from the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme to work with Defra to maximise the opportunity for the new Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMs) across National Parks and explore the possibility of bespoke funding for landowners and land managers. If the scale of ambition for nature recovery were to increase, the funding required will also need to scale up in line with this.

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<sup>1</sup> In HLS and Countryside Stewardship June 2021.

Stable long-term incentives and skills programmes will be needed for land managers to make the changes required to deliver nature recovery at scale.

### **NPAs work beyond their boundaries as key partners in the NRN**

Nature recovery goes beyond National Park boundaries. NPAs, with appropriate resources can support more work beyond boundaries. They are well placed to build on their work with Natural England, National Association for AONBs and organisations in the Nature Recovery Network Partnership to help build a nature recovery network across England.

National Parks are only part of the nature recovery story. Nature rich areas within National Parks should be connected with places beyond their boundaries, linking with the wider network of nature rich areas across England. These include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), protected sites, nature reserves, and nature rich areas and should involve working with Defra ALBs, eNGOs, local authorities, national partners and new national and local partners. National Parks, AONBs, eNGOs and public land holdings should be the core of nature recovery connecting and reinforcing each other's work. Local Nature Recovery Strategies can be used to support this.

### **There is an inspiring story to share and engage people with nature and its recovery**

National Parks are places where people can visit, experience and be inspired by nature. NPAs are well placed to use landscape scale nature recovery to share stories, improve access and inspire more people to be connected to and act to care for the nature within National Parks. They have a wealth of knowledge and skills they could share more to inspire action in others.

NPAs should start a dialogue with partners, nationally, to find better ways to promote nature recovery in National Parks together. National Parks should be promoted as places rich in natural investable assets that support livelihoods, communities and people. Places where people can invest to inspire nature recovery at scale. Existing and new networks should be used to learn and share knowledge, good practice, expertise and learning with others.

The following diagram sets out a summary of key findings and potential actions based around six key areas of focus for nature recovery work in National Parks. These aim to give an outline of the potential services and activities NPAs could offer for Nature Recovery.

## Key findings and recommended actions for delivery

### Develop Nature Recovery Plan and Portfolio of Projects

- Build on nature recovery scoping prospectuses, working with partners to develop a local nature recovery delivery plan and portfolio of projects.
- Bring partners together through nature recovery delivery plan process to audit skills and resources and negotiate ways to pool resources, sharing skills, learning and expertise and targeting funding to priority partner projects.
- Use NR delivery plan and project portfolio to showcase 'investable assets' and underpin funding bids to public and private sources.

### Working in Partnership

- Lead and convene nature recovery partnership working locally building on NPA strengths of good governance and varied skills to work with multiple organisations on complex projects.
- Build stronger supportive partnership working with national eNGOs and land management bodies committed to Nature Recovery.
- Use land owned by eNGOs and ALBs to highlight and share good practice and act as nuclei for connectivity across the NPs and beyond.

### Secure and develop core resources

- Develop a local 'Team Nature' bringing NPA and partner staff together to pool and share resources, working across Parks on nature recovery.
- Develop a detailed case for additional core funding for NPAs (and protected areas) to expand core nature recovery team to support discussions with Defra and ALBs.
- Work with partners to develop baseline evidence and data for planning and monitoring.

### Secure public and private funding

- Develop Revere partnership to involve more projects and partners at a landscape scale.
- Support farmers/land managers to integrate nature recovery into their farm businesses through advice, good practice and peer networks. This could build on Farming in Protected Landscapes and support bespoke funding packages via ELMs.
- Use portfolio of nature recovery projects to work nationally to register a portfolio of sites on the national Biodiversity Net Gain Register and to be ready for future funding bids/investment opportunities.

### Working beyond boundaries

- Develop stronger working with Natural England and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty through the Joint Delivery Agreement.
- Use the Nature Recovery Network Partnership to connect with organisations managing and supporting nature rich areas outside NPs.
- Build on existing relationships with Local Authorities, as neighbouring planning authorities with a duty to cooperate, through the Local Nature Recovery Strategy process.
- Develop place based working through Nature Based Solutions and Catchment Based Approaches.

### Sharing our story

- Develop stronger national coordination with national partners to develop shared messages on nature recovery nationally and locally to inspire people to invest in National Parks and their natural assets that support nature, livelihoods, communities and people.
- Share knowledge, good practice, expertise and learning with protected landscapes and partner organisations using existing and new networks.

## 2. Introduction

England's nine National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority (NPAs) are committed to National Parks being beacons for a sustainable future, where nature, landscapes and people flourish, unlocking their potential as green engines for nature and climate recovery. National Park landscapes are dramatic, inspirational, large and diverse, and contain many nature-rich places that are abundant with wildlife.

As landscapes with reservoirs of the nation's most important species and habitats, National Parks have a key role in delivering the Government's ambition to protect 30% of the UK's land for nature, reversing the decline of biodiversity by 2030 in line with the IUCNs global response to the nature crisis.

To achieve this, nationally, NPAs are focussing on four, integrated, areas of work. These are:

- Nature Recovery
- Sustainable Farming & Land Management
- Climate Leadership
- Landscapes for Everyone.

Delivery Plans are available on the National Parks England [website](#). NPA and NPEs latest work showcasing delivery in all these areas can be found in [Supporting people, places, climate and nature](#). NPAs are striving for a nature recovery vision where:

**National Parks are the pinnacle of the nation's Nature Recovery network; they should be places where wildlife flourishes, habitats are maintained, restored, and expanded, and where everyone can experience nature and wildlife at their best.**

The national ambition is founded on delivering goals locally and in partnership with others. During 2021 each NPA scoped out the potential for nature recovery across the National Park. Through this work they began to develop a vision and indicate the potential for nature recovery, mapping high level opportunities for nature rich landscapes delivered in partnership.<sup>2</sup> The information drawn together through this work underpins the delivery case. It provides a foundation for local discussions to shape detailed nature recovery delivery plans and programmes for integration into future National Park Management Plans. The ambition complements and connects with the AONBs commitment to the [Colchester Declaration](#) and the nature recovery plans they are developing for each AONB.

### Steps to Nature Recovery in National Parks



<sup>2</sup> The scoping work (or prospectuses) were largely based on goals, ambitions and targets collated from existing partnership and partner plans, strategies and reports.

The approach reflects key Government policies, plans and initiatives, supporting the delivery of goals in the 25 Year Environment Plan and shows how NPAs could, with additional powers and funding, deliver on many of the recommendations of the Landscapes Review; supporting a country that is cleaner and greener for all, where plants and animals are thriving, air and water is cleaner, people are connected to the environment and the effects of climate change are being addressed.

The case for delivering nature recovery sets out how NPAs, and National Parks, could collectively deliver more for nature, crucially, in partnership with others. It has been developed through research and discussions with NPA staff and 37 people working with strategic and key partner organisations across England. The work took place during November 2021 and April 2022. The approach taken and organisations engaged are set out in appendix A.

The reports have been developed to support discussions across the English NPAs, with Defra and its family of Arms Length Bodies (ALBs), the National Association of AONBs (NAAONB), and key partners regarding the acceleration of the pace and scale of nature recovery in National Parks and neighbouring areas during the next 8-10 years.



### 3. Delivering Nature Recovery Now

**Around 44% of land in National Parks is in positive management that is seeking to enhance farmland and other habitats for nature.**

National Parks are one of the sector leaders in landscape scale projects. NPAs have been the lead or major partner in over £50m of landscape management schemes in the past 10 years, working with landowners, farmers, land managers, communities and partners across all National Parks to manage the special qualities of National Parks and to conserve and enhance nature. It is part of their reason for being. National Parks cover 10% of England's land area and 5% of the UK and are working on core nature areas and areas around them to unlock the potential to become landscapes richer in nature.

Across Park landscapes significant natural (and cultural) habitats provide homes to important, scarce and rare mammal, bird, plant and insect species. Key habitats include:

- Woodlands, forests, hedgerows and trees
- Species rich meadows, grasslands and heathland
- Rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands and coasts
- Peatlands

A review of recent activity indicates that over 1.2 million hectares (ha) of land in National Parks is in positive management<sup>3</sup> that is seeking to enhance farmland and other habitats for nature. On average, this accounts for 44% of the land in National Parks. A detailed breakdown by National Park is set out in appendix B). Around 450,000 ha of the land is UK priority habitat (36%). Over 24% of land (approximately 300,000ha) in the National Parks is designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), of these 26% are in favourable condition. Around 50% are in unfavourable recovering condition reflecting positive management for nature that is supporting nature recovery. Despite this, many studies and reports demonstrate that nature needs more support, including the British Ecological Societies 'Protected Areas and Nature Recovery report (April 2022). Some current management approaches aren't working and there are huge areas of priority habitat that are not in any sort of positive management.

But steps are already being taken to reverse declines and support nature recovery across National Parks. A selection of nature recovery and climate resilience projects that are delivering multiple public benefits in National Parks across England are illustrated in a suite of Case Studies in appendix C. NPAs and their partners are already learning from these to help develop collaboration and scale up nature recovery work. One significant collaborative programme between National Parks and AONBs in the north of England is the Great North Bog.

#### **The Great North Bog**

The Great North Bog Partnership is an ambitious and large-scale peatland restoration initiative that covers 7,000 square kilometres of peatland soils in the protected landscapes of northern England, storing 400million tonnes of carbon.

Peatland is the UK's rainforest – a key natural asset that stores a huge amount of carbon that helps tackle the climate emergency. Around 11000km<sup>2</sup> of peatland has been restored in the last decade, led by just three of the Peat Partnerships. This is a great start but despite the massive effort it is still less than 20% of the total area that needs restoring. So, they came together with the other three Peat Partnerships working

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<sup>3</sup> In HLS and Countryside Stewardship June 2021.

in the north of England to make a revolutionary change in the rate of restoration in England's upland peatlands.

The GNB is a working partnership aiming to deliver a 10-year funding, restoration, and conservation plan to make a significant contribution to the UK's climate and carbon sequestration targets. It brings together skills, knowledge, and resources from four National Parks, three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the proposed South Pennines Park and six Peatland Partnerships. It has already secured £2.7m for shared staff resources and has stimulated significant grant investment needed to transform the rate and scale of peatland restoration. Its goal is to secure £200million to restore peat over the next 5 years.

As a result of the work more carbon is being stored, emissions from degraded peat are reducing, flood risk is reduced, nearby communities are safer, biodiversity is better, the historic environment of peat is protected, and drinking water quality is improved and supply costs reduced.

Cumbria Peat Partnership is restoring upland peat across Cumbria, including parts of the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks.

In one project it worked with a private landowner to restore 8.8km<sup>2</sup> of degraded peat, at a cost of £171,000. The vegetation was degraded, extensive micro-erosion had led to gullying, haggging and some areas of bare peat, all leading to significant peat loss through erosion as well as increasing the speed of rain washing off the bog, increasing flood risk downstream.

Working with the landowner, Cumbria Peat Partnership surveyed the land and oversaw the restoration work. An area of approximately 20,000m<sup>2</sup> of bare peat was covered with a mixture of mosses and other vegetation harvested from the site. 48,000m of eroding hag faces and 11,000m of gullies were reprofiled, and sediment traps were constructed in 7,300m of erosion gullies to enable them to infill. The work will improve water quality, slow the flow of water, increase good quality blanket bog and support a host of rare species that need wet habitats. *Images © Cumbria Wildlife Trust*



## 4. Planning for Nature Recovery

**With sufficient collaboration and resources English National Parks have the potential to collectively deliver 145,000ha of nature rich areas by 2030. The production of a nature recovery delivery plan and a portfolio of nature recovery projects in each National Park is needed to unlock the potential.**

NPAs already have a bold ambition for nature and it is clear that they need to go beyond the status quo for this to happen. NPAs are well placed to build 'bigger, better, more joined up' human networks across the landscapes to support the drive to create 'bigger, better, more joined up'<sup>4</sup> nature. Human networks will involve partners, stakeholders, landowners, farmers and land managers, residents, communities, businesses and visitors. NPAs should continue to work with partners to develop investment ready projects that harness the beauty, geology, nature, culture, history and sense of identity of the landscapes to inspire wonder and reverence delivering multiple benefits for communities and people. All parts of the landscapes should be used to connect more people to these places and motivate them to care for them and their nature.

Although part of a family of National Parks, each Park is different in size, place, landscape, habitats, partners and people. Each NPA is also different and at various stages of delivery for nature recovery. All have nature focussed programmes and are working to bring together a nature recovery delivery plan and investible portfolio of projects with partners. The way this is done varies according to resources, local circumstances and partners. NPAs should continue to work together to share skills and knowledge and develop joint national projects with partners to secure more resources to move all National Parks forward in their nature recovery ambition.

### Nature Recovery Plans and Project Portfolios

NPAs know that there are challenges ahead. They own just 10% of land in National Parks, with over 70% of the land being in private ownership. Only 44% of all land is currently under positive management for nature. Around 35% (450,000ha) of land in National Parks is priority habitat with huge potential for nature recovery, but almost 40% of this land is not protected in law or is not being actively managed for nature.

Nature recovery will only happen through collective effort. Nationally NPAs are already working with the NAAONB and Natural England (NE) to deliver more nature across Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves, AONBs and National Parks. Together these places support a national Nature Recovery Network, with core places acting as growth engines for nature, linking together via green veins that allow wildlife to move and thrive, and for people to connect with these places from cities, towns and villages across the county.





Clear, strong nature recovery delivery plans for each National Park should be created in collaboration with partners to address nature decline. A recent review of nature recovery opportunities for each National Park identified a collective ambition to create, restore and manage around 145,000ha of habitat in National Parks by 2030. An additional 145,000ha would increase the land being managed for nature by 12%. NPAs see this as a beginning. The ambition is likely to grow further as nature recovery delivery plans are developed with partners and stakeholders. A summary of ambition for nature recovery in each National Park is set out in appendix D.

The ambition was identified in different ways by each NPA but largely involved the review of existing National Park, partnership and partner plans and strategies, pipeline projects and discussions with partners, landowners and land managers of future aspirations and potential.

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<sup>4</sup> Making Space for Nature, Lawton Report 2012

## Overview of ambition for nature recovery in key habitats across National Parks in England.

 <p><b>36,890 ha of new native woodland</b> (including woodlands, forests, hedgerows and trees)</p>	 <p><b>170 km of freshwater system improvements</b> (including rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands and coast)</p>	 <p><b>55,390 ha of grassland and heathland restoration</b> (including species rich meadows, grasslands and heathland)</p>	 <p><b>53,650 ha of peatland restoration</b> (including blanket bog, raised mires, flushes and fens)</p>
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The four key habitat themes NPAs are focussing on can be found in all National Parks, but other habitats and areas of land will also be key for nature recovery. Farmland is the greatest amount of land by % cover across every National Park. It could work even harder for nature and climate and the future Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMs) plan to support this. The creation of new habitats on this land will be critical for connectivity, providing corridors and stepping stones across the landscapes. These pockets of nature recovery on marginal land and scrubby habitats are not covered in these figures. Detail on farmland and other habitats could be incorporated into individual National Park nature recovery delivery plans.

Each park has identified the key mammal, insect, fish, bird, amphibian, and plant species related to its habitats. Collectively they are working to create and connect habitat to benefit 85 species. Several species are important to multiple parks including dormouse, otter, beaver, red squirrel, water vole, salmon, curlew, black grouse, hen harrier, lapwing, nightjar, ring ouzel, snipe, Barbastelle bat, Duke of Burgundy, high brown fritillary, sphagnum, sundew and orchids. They will also aim to remove Invasive Non-Native Species, especially those related to water courses.

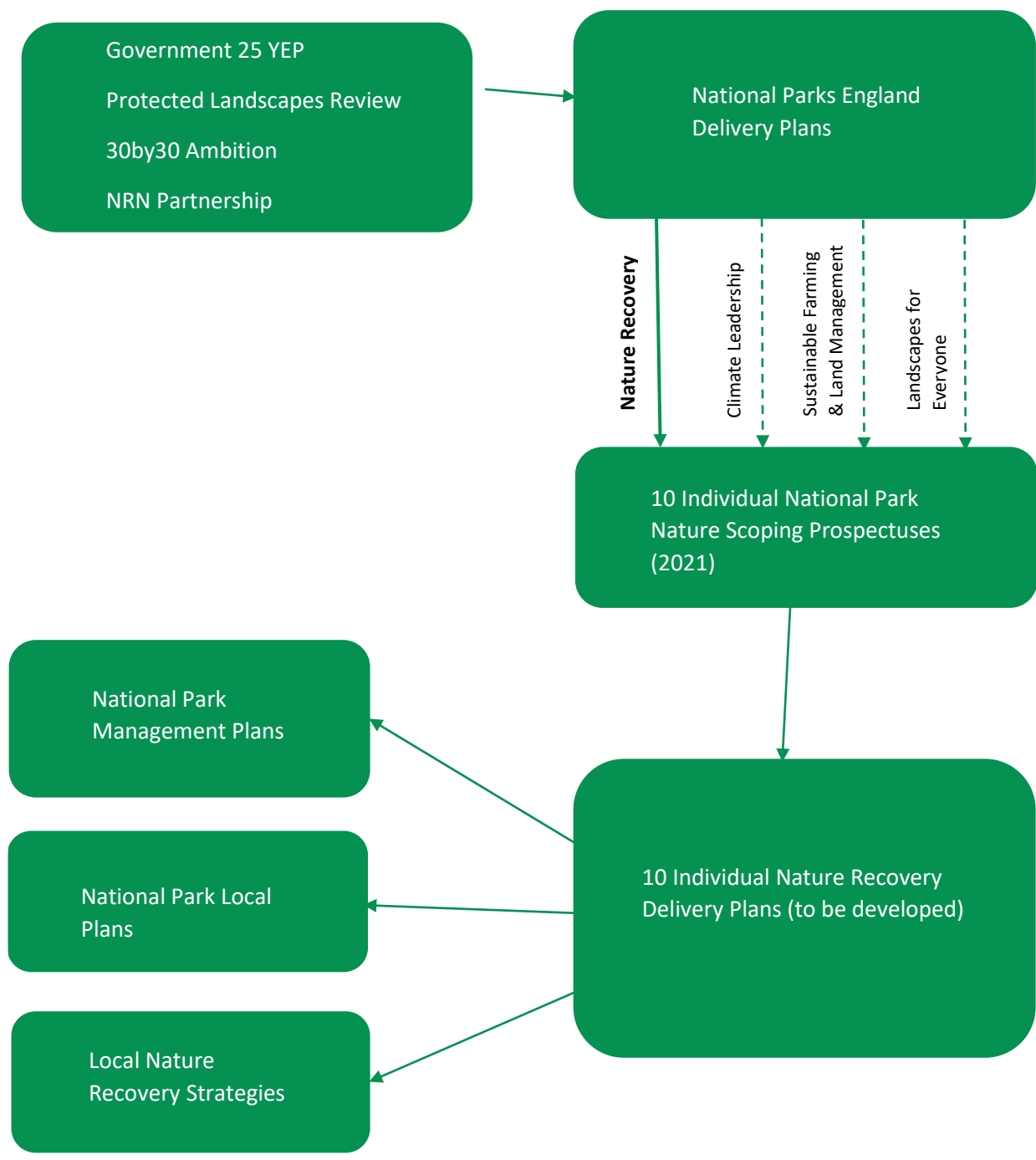
### Integrating with National Delivery Plans and other plans and strategies

Investing in nature recovery and nature based solutions not only increases biodiversity but plays a key role in mitigating climate change, reduce flood risks, improve water and air quality, enhance landscapes and heritage, support local job creation and connect more people to nature and culture rich areas to help boost health and wellbeing. This integrated approach underpins all four of the national delivery plans:

- **Climate Leadership:** taking a nature-based solutions approach across landscapes will restore areas for nature and deliver climate mitigation and adaptation solutions. [Net Zero with Nature](#) is the collective strategy of National Parks across the UK in the fight against climate change and the biodiversity crisis.
- **Sustainable Farming and Land Management:** adopting regenerative farming and nature friendly farming approaches will create more space for nature, reduce emissions and pollutions, and improve the quality and carbon storage in soils.
- **Landscapes for Everyone:** increasing engagement with people, creating safe access for all to nature rich landscapes that improve people's connection with nature (and heritage and culture) and their health and wellbeing.

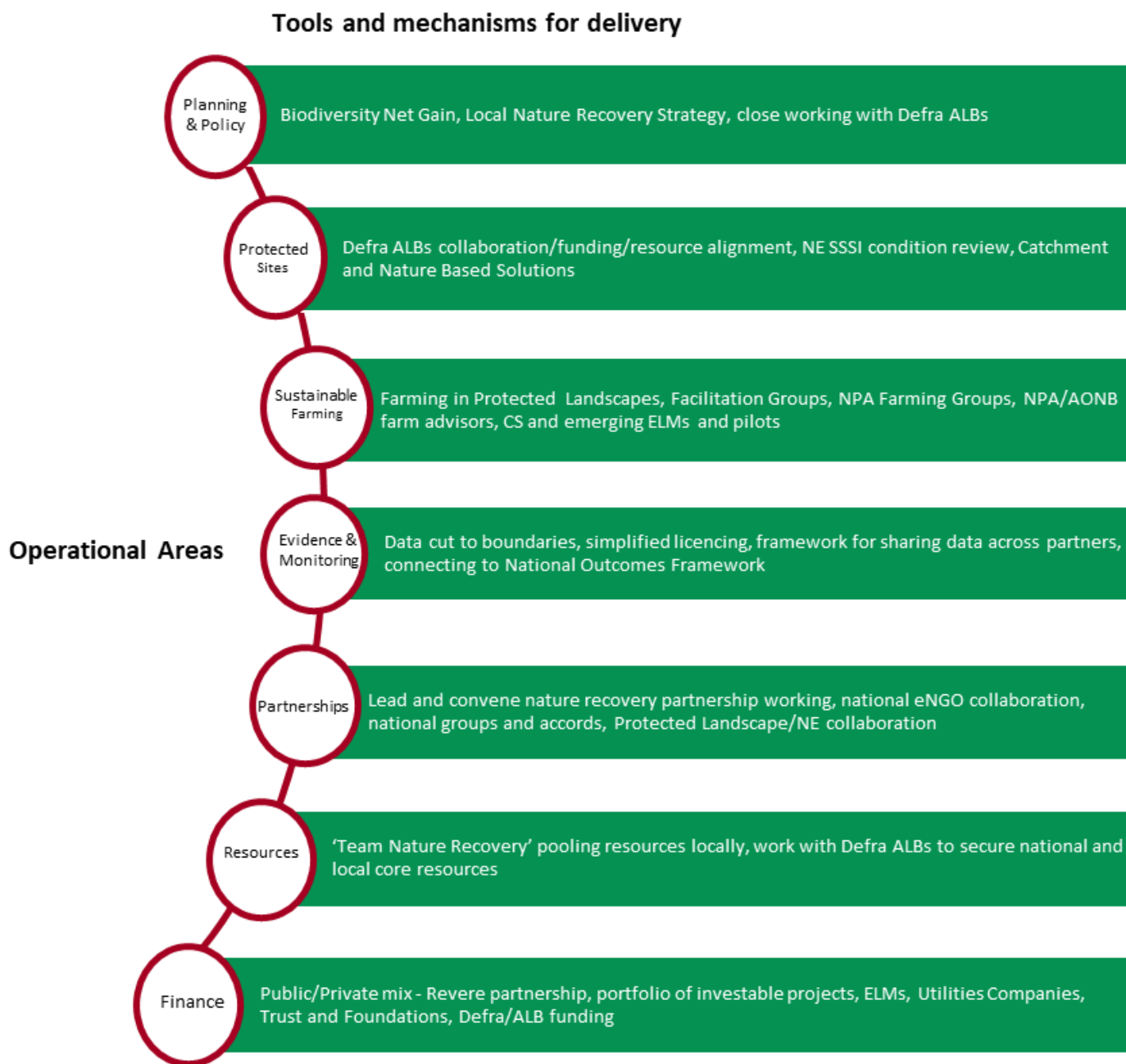
Work in National Parks will also integrate with Local Nature Recovery Strategies across England and work with partners beyond Park boundaries. Nature recovery plans will have greatest impact if they integrate with National Park Management Plan and Local Plan processes.

### Connections between national and local policies, plans, and partnerships



## Tools and mechanisms for delivery

Findings and potential actions are based around a review of NPA key operational areas and suggest areas of work that could be developed internally, and externally. These are summarised in the diagram below, with more detail on each area in the following sections.



## Planning and policy

NPAs, through their planning powers, can require nature recovery actions, through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in new developments, and other planning offset schemes. BNG may only have a small direct part to play in nature recovery in National Parks. Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) will provide a spatial framework for nature recovery opportunities from 2023 onwards. NPAs work closely with Natural England, Environment Agency and Forestry Commission to ensure their policy and powers support resilient landscapes and biodiversity. Defra's response to the Landscapes Review provides an opportunity to strengthen powers to support nature conservation and recovery, climate resilience, access and landscapes for all.

### What's needed

A strong planning team and system that supports nature recovery in National Parks through the new requirements of the Environment Act and other legislation. Strong relationships locally and nationally with Defra, Natural England, Forestry Commission, and the Environment Agency to ensure funding is deployed effectively, policy is implemented fairly, and powers are used to support positive action and enforce against illegal activities. As teams expand within the Defra family the opportunities to address gaps in delivery is likely to increase.

### What's in place

- BNG and national credit scheme for offsite contributions emerging - 2023.
- Nutrient neutrality for water quality.
- LNRS emerging -2023.
- National Park Management Plans and partnerships.
- 25yr Environment Plan, Environment Act.
- NE/NPE/NAAONB Joint Delivery Agreement.
- Forestry Commission/NPE Accord.

### What's missing

- A national credit scheme is in development to support BNG to deliver nature enhancement off site, but uncertainty around final framework and potential for local schemes. LNRS could provide an opportunity for local schemes.
- Secondary legislation and guidance for Environment Act and LNRS and BNG expected in 2022. Will be 'active' in 2023.
- Core resources to deliver proposed additional powers identified in Defra's response to Landscape Review and requirements in the Environment Act for BNG and LNRS.

### Findings

- NPAs could develop national and local portfolios of projects for offsite contributions from development outside National Parks. The LNRS process could help in validating that approach.
- NPAs could support LAs through the LNRS process to focus BNG outside National Parks to create stepping stones and corridors to core areas in Parks.
- NPAs are well placed to strengthen national working with Defra ALBs via existing networks and agreements and to continue to strengthen local working with Defra ALBs.

### Winning Examples

The South Downs Local Plan requires new development to provide biodiversity net gain, using the existing DEFRA Metric. An offsetting scheme has been set up for developers to purchase credits for an offsetting site. A suite of sites that can buffer and expand existing habitats, are close to development sites or are in places that have been identified as important for nature are being developed to support this.

## SSSIs/Protected Sites

SSSIs and other protected sites, including national and local nature reserves, are the core areas for nature. The condition assessment of SSSIs is out of date, as many SSSIs haven't been reviewed since 2015. There are some big challenges around climate change and SSSI status. Issues with water quality are prevalent in some places where the Environment Agency is not able to carry out full enforcement activities. There is a need to look at core areas in relation to the opportunities for nature in the wider landscape. The current consultation on Environmental Targets identifies the need for 500,000ha of land to be improved for nature outside of protected sites. Nature recovery outside of protected sites in National Parks will contribute towards this.

### What's needed

A connected network of core sites, that are bigger, better and buffered.

Up to date and easily accessible information on habitat condition to help target additional resources to support improvement of areas.

A focus on species as well as habitats.

Priority habitats to be mapped effectively using local information to support national data sets.

### What's in place

- Countryside Stewardship (until 2024).
- Peat Action Plan/Tree Action Plan.
- Trees on Peat Guidance (March 2022).
- Environmental Targets (emerging 2022/23)
- ELM Local Nature Recovery Scheme and Landscape Recovery Scheme (from 2024)

### What's missing

- National SSSI condition review. The status of many SSSIs has not been assessed since 2015. In some places the purpose of SSSIs may need reviewing, i.e., where shoreline realignment is required.
- Integration of local mapping of priority habitats and important sites around core protected sites.
- Integrated management of SSSIs with wider landscape (including an understanding of their state and condition to support connectivity and buffering with good quality habitat).
- Integrated advisory roles to encourage greater action in and around protected sites.

### Findings

- There is a need for NE to review of the status and purpose of SSSIs within National Parks. SSSIs need to be fit for purpose, be managed at a landscape scale and take account of climate change.
- NPAs and partners can use local nature fora and groups and emerging LNRS process to integrate local mapping into national systems.
- Catchment based approaches to delivery with River Partnerships presents a great opportunity for coordinated work at a landscape scale.
- NPAs, NAAONBs and NE are well placed to engage through the Joint Delivery Agreement to create a coordinated national approach to protected site management.
- Nature Recovery plans in each National Park could help to calculate the national contribution they could make towards the draft 500,000ha national target for nature improvement outside of protected sites.

### Winning Examples

The Dartmoor Headwaters Natural Flood Management (NFM) project is a partnership between Dartmoor National Park Authority and the Environment Agency. Working with landowners and commoners, they deliver solutions in the upper catchment, slowing the flow of water and reducing the risk of flooding to downstream communities. The work includes planting trees, improving wetland habitats, blocking gullies using a variety of different leaky dams, reconnecting rivers with their floodplain and restoring river corridor habitats. Dartmoor National Park provide capital grants to landowners and encouraged them to carry out the work themselves where possible. Innovatively, the appointment of a group of commoners as contractors enabled work to be carried out successfully on the inaccessible high moor. Their local knowledge and practical skills were invaluable.



## Sustainable Farming and Land Management

Farmers and land managers are critical to the delivery of nature recovery. In April 2020 52% of land in Parks were in agri environment schemes. Farm support is in transition, with the future payment scheme, Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs) in development. This will support sustainable farming and land management that provides wider public benefits to food, including nature recovery. Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) is a new scheme in National Parks (and AONBs) helping the transition.

### What's needed

Strong relationships with farmers and land managers are needed to understand and provide business and land management advice that integrates payments for nature, climate and other public goods.

Clarity on ELMs. A well developed, well resourced and easy to understand ELM scheme will be critical to delivery, along with training and support for farmer collaboration.

Ability to tailor ELMs at a local level to reflect priorities identified through Management Plans and provide bespoke funding to ensure engagement of farmers, land managers and other stakeholders.

### What's in place

- FiPL until 2024.
- Developing knowledge from Test & Trials, FiPL, ELMs Pilots (Sustainable Farming Incentive and Landscape Recovery).
- Farmer clusters/groups.
- Partnership projects supporting sustainable farming.
- Nature based solutions and Net Zero with Nature approaches.
- Advice, but often from lots of different sources, with slightly different messages.

### What's missing

- Certainty of ELMS funding with strong incentives to secure farmer and land manager buy-in.
- Long term funding support – clarity on how ELMs Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery components will work to give farmers confidence and link with private funding.
- Ability for NPAs to distribute local funding like FiPL to landowners to facilitate local delivery.
- Long term and coordinated advice and support on ELMs, other funding, and opportunities for integrating nature recovery and ecosystem services into farm business plans. Advice is often available from a range of sources across National Parks. There is a big opportunity to coordinate this more effectively across partner advisory programmes, enabling a single point of contact to share and target advice that supports sustainable farm businesses/livelihoods.
- Long-term commitment to locally-based facilitators to help farmers make the most of new schemes.
- Leadership, facilitation and consensus building skills as increasingly projects will involve multiple landowners and managers.

### Findings

- NPAs are well placed to use their experience and successes from the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme to work with Defra to maximise the opportunity for the new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMs) across National Parks. Through this there is the potential to explore the possibility of bespoke funding for landowners and land managers and develop resources for advice and facilitation that supports economically buoyant farm businesses that are delivering public goods.
- NPAs could facilitate, through the 'Team Nature' the coordination of advisory offers across partners, including eNGOs and others farm specialists, ie seed merchants advising farms.
- ELM Landscape Recovery Pilots could help shape large scale nature recovery within and adjacent to National Parks in the long term. Pooled partnership staff and financial resources could support this.
- NPAs could work with farmers to promote a series of demonstration sites across England that that can help to disseminate information and learning about nature friendly farming and ELMs and encourage uptake by farmers/land managers.
- NPE to investigate the potential for a national advisory training programme to provide long term support/advice for farmers/land managers around nature recovery.

### **Winning examples**

#### **Farming in Protected Landscapes and Farm Advisors**

National Parks are demonstrating how they can advise and support farmers and land managers of all sizes to develop sustainable businesses that also support nature. The success of FiPL is paving the way for NPAs to lead on advisory work with farmers and administer grants that deliver local targets, stimulate innovation and builds relationships for sustainable farm futures and nature recovery.

In NPAs where Farm Officers have been established for more than a decade, significant nature, access and cultural heritage results are being seen. Peak District, Yorkshire Dales and Dartmoor National Parks have long standing farm advisor teams, with other Park Authorities following suit. In Northumberland National Park, between 2013-2020, the park-wide engagement that the Farming Officers were able to achieve helped to get over 95% of the farmed area in some form of environmental stewardship scheme.

## Evidence and Monitoring

Protected Landscapes need access on a regular and periodic basis to a range of environmental, social and economic data. There is an opportunity to develop the evidence nationally to support project development and provide a baseline to demonstrate the collective success of nature recovery in National Parks. Better data and information can assist with this. Monitoring should be for habitats and species and be part of an integrated framework for monitoring protected landscapes, including landscape features, carbon, biodiversity and other natural and cultural assets.

### What's needed

Datasets, mapping, and licensing that reflects national and local data and evidence from landowners, developers, farmers/land managers, universities/research institutions that can readily be cut to Protected Landscape boundaries. Emerging NRN Opportunities Mapping, National Outcomes Framework, LNRS framework and ELMS development may all support this.

### What's in place/emerging

- NE/Magic data.
- MEOPL.
- Local Records Centres
- Park and Partner data supporting catchment and nature based solutions, habitat and species recovery.
- Nature Strategy (expected end Feb 22).
- National Outcomes Framework (expected Jan 23).
- National nature recovery opportunities mapping (emerging).

### What's missing

- NE review of state of nature in England and opportunities maps for nature enhancement and creation.
- National nature recovery indicators need to be developed with input from Parks.
- There is a lack of targeted data as well as a lack of coordination and access to data to help inform nature recovery opportunities.
- Licensing for sharing data continues to be a challenge in partnership projects.

### Findings

- Government departments and agencies need to provide up to date data cut to Park boundaries on habitats, species and related public goods, such as carbon storage, access, flood management.
- There is a need to set up a framework for data sharing and licences within Defra family and key partners.
- NPAs could be well placed to develop co-ordinated data collection and sharing on nature recovery within National Parks.
- There is an opportunity to strengthen the Centre for Protected Landscapes/Higher Education links for evidence gathering.

### Quick Wins

Natural England is leading the development of the National Outcomes Framework to help facilitate the collection and distribution of data common to National Parks and AONBs, going beyond MEOPL (Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in Protected Landscapes) data. This needs to be linked to carbon and climate change data.

## 5. Team Nature – Working in Partnership

**NPAs are best placed to lead and convene the nature recovery agenda in National Parks. They need to continue to collaborate with partners and stakeholders to develop innovative ways to pool knowledge, expertise, organisational resources and funding to deliver more for nature.**

Partnership working is key to the delivery of nature recovery in National Parks. NPAs don't own or manage substantial landholdings and rely on working effectively with and through the large number of individual landowners, land managers and farmers, who are custodians of 70% of land within National Parks. As a result, NPAs have some great connections and relationships with land managers, local communities and their representatives. There is potential for NPAs to expand these networks and programmes to create stronger connections with new and different people with a stake in nature to enable a step change in nature's fortunes.

The need to address nature recovery nationally and locally across National Parks and other protected landscapes and places offers a significant opportunity for action. Recent discussions with key and strategic partners confirmed that they are all keen to develop how they work with NPAs to support greater delivery, locally and nationally. They recognise the following strengths in NPAs:

- governance structures and the long-standing nature of the statutory management plan process and partnerships; these partnership bodies come together locally to produce and then deliver the ambitions in each National Park's Management Plan,
- ability for local Park partnerships to lead, convene and facilitate delivery with multiple owners and partners,
- long-standing influence and track record of working across landscapes with multiple partners on complex issues to achieve common goals,
- growing track record of collaborative programmes and projects that are demonstrating an acceleration in the pace and scale of delivery, and the
- range of complementary landscape and place based skills, competency and expertise that sit in one place.

There is a need to transform how NPAs work with partners and stakeholders, nationally and locally, to work smarter and to find ways to pool resources to secure more funding to deliver more projects. In discussions as part of the research for the case for delivery many of the key partners who work in and around National Parks expressed an interest in finding new ways of working together. This included Country Landowners Association, Foundation for Common Land, National Trust, National Farmers Union, Rivers Trust, RSPB, Wildfowl and Wetland Trust and the Woodland Trust. Delivering coordinated nature recovery at scale across National Parks, AONBs, eNGOs and public land holdings could be the step change needed. NPAs could build on existing relationships and networks to help make this happen. Additional resources would move the agenda on significantly.

National Parks have always been a test bed for collaborative programmes and projects and are demonstrating what is needed to achieve an acceleration in the pace and scale of delivery. These often include innovative ways of sharing resources and funding, for example between eNGOs and utility companies. NPAs can learn from these, working with partners locally to look to create a 'Team Nature' combining skills, staff and resources from NPAs, partners and stakeholders, including local authorities and communities, to put a joint nature recovery plan into action.

A review of NPA approaches to partnership working, nationally and locally, analysis of recent discussions with key and strategic partners, and the identification of gaps and findings for future partnership working are set out below.

## Partnership and Collaboration: National and Regional

Nationally NPAs are working closely with NE and NAAONBs to develop a Nature Recovery Network of protected sites and landscapes. There is a strong appetite from key partners to add more core sites to this and do more together to deliver landscape scale change. For greatest impact could build on existing joint accords, national groups and grant programmes. Some strategic partners have identified areas that they are focusing nature recovery activities in which align well with National Parks across England.

### What's needed

NPAs work locally with many landowners and partners who are part of national bodies. A stronger strategic relationship could help pool resources more effectively nationally and locally for nature recovery (including data and evidence). It could support the development of nationwide species and habitats programmes, and secure resources at a landscape scale.

### What's in place

- National projects with NPE and NPP (including Revere)
- Good relationships with public bodies and eNGOs.
- Joint accords to support delivery. consistency across the country.
- NE/NPE/NAAONB Joint Delivery Agreement.
- Protected sites Story Map to communicate joint messages with NE/NAAONBs.
- Regional nature recovery partnerships, e.g. Great North Bog, Big Chalk.
- National Nature Recovery Partnership.
- Inter Park knowledge sharing.

### What's missing

- Sharing resources nationally and locally, within Parks and beyond NP boundaries, in places where best results can be gained.
- Consistent strategic working with national partners to develop opportunities and target efforts.

### Findings

- Existing or new models/mechanisms could be used to support a national nature recovery coordination role via NPE.
- Ensure NPAs have long term involvement as key partners in national/regional projects e.g., Nature North, Great North Bog, Big Chalk, Community Forest. Core resource is needed to meaningfully engage and develop further.
- NPAs to develop connections with key partners nationally via existing collaborative groups/joint accords:
  - IUCN committee for protected landscapes.
  - The Nature Based Solutions Compact.

### Winning examples

[The Nature Based Solutions Compact](#), launched by National Trust in 2021, could help to engage more people in delivery. It sets out six guiding principles for land managers that aim to ensure that nature based solutions delivery for nature, climate and people. Many environmental landowners and managers have signed up to this already [Nature North](#) works all Protected Landscapes and other strategic partners across the North of England. It is promoting a range of propositions linked to nature recovery that deliver multiple benefits to others. It is identifying project opportunities, building relationships with investors, and carrying out wider engagement.

## Partnership and Collaboration: Local ‘Team Nature’

NPAs lead park partnerships and are well placed to lead and convene the nature recovery agenda locally. Within each Park there is an opportunity to take a long term view with a ‘Team Nature’ approach. This would bring together staff from NPAs and partner organisations to collectively providing commitments and resources to enable new and current nature recovery partnerships to strengthen and grow core resilience, develop more projects and secure more funding for delivery.

### What’s needed

Local nature recovery delivery plans developed in partnership that build on the ambition in each NPAs nature recovery scoping work. Delivering nature recovery at a landscape scale involves large projects, partnership working, multiple landowners and a long term commitment to delivery. Strong relationships are needed with landowners, farmers, land managers, charities, communities, visitors and developers working within and outside of National Parks as NPAs rely on them to achieve the ambition.

### What’s missing

- Partner/community designed nature recovery delivery plans for each National Park. Many are in development, using nature forums and working groups to guide development, but advice on what to develop and how they can integrate with Local Nature Recovery Strategies is needed.
- Strong engagement beyond boundaries of NPAs and with the wider community. In some places Local Nature Partnerships or Forum may support this role and could be built on.
- Staff to manage core nature areas.

### Findings

- The development of nature recovery plans for each National Park could enable partner skills audits, identify the potential for shared resources, develop delivery plans and investible project portfolios and the development of ‘Team Nature’ delivering nature recovery across the National Park partnership pooling NPA and partner resources. For example coordinating advisory offers across partners, including eNGOs and others farm specialists, ie seed merchants advising farms.
- Sharing different models of nature recovery planning/delivery could build capacity in organisations. Models could include good examples of Local Nature Partnerships or Local Nature Fora.
- NPAs are well placed to play a key role in preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies integrating local ambition, data and plans.

### What’s in place

- Strong governance, local partnerships, nature focussed working groups and forums.
- Some core resource but shrinking.
- Good relationships with public bodies, eNGOs, landowners and local communities.
- Inter Park knowledge sharing.
- FiPL widening engagement with farmers and land managers.
- Landscapes for Everyone inspires more people to care more for nature.
- Catchment Based Approach/Partnerships.
- Local Nature Partnerships/Joint Forum in some places.

### Winning example

Develop approaches like [#ReNature](#), South Downs National Parks’ nature recovery campaign working with local partners to pool resources and bring information together in a digital advice hub, with community fundraising and a call for nature recovery sites.

## People

In all areas of nature conservation there is currently more demand for skilled and experienced staff and contractors than is available. Current entry level schemes won't plug this gap and capacity could seriously restrict the ability to deliver nature recovery ambitions over the next 2-5 years. National Parks, as leaders in nature recovery could become a powerhouse for skills and expertise and for connecting a wider range of people with nature spaces to help improve health and wellbeing.

### What's needed

- Skilled and experience staff and contractors.
- Shared learning across conservation partners and organisations.
- Organisations working more closely to develop, pool and share skills and expertise to secure a skilled and resilient workforce now and into the future.

### What's in place

- National Park apprenticeships – general
- Some core skilled staff, often with integrated landscape/nature/heritage/access remit.
- Shared learning within Park family via thematic groups and the National Conference.
- Willingness for organisations to work more closely.

### What's missing

- Investment in training and expertise is needed nationally both within Protected Landscapes and the wider conservation, climate and land management sectors.
- Networking and peer learning to support shared learning across and within partnerships and organisations.
- Long term green/nature apprenticeships.
- Skills and capacity of experienced peatland and woodland contractors to meet scale of current funding opportunity.
- Closer working with research/higher education institutes to drive innovation/learning
- Sufficient staff time to work at the scale and pace required.

### Findings

- There is a need to ensure key skills and resource needed across National Parks to deliver NR at scale are in place.
- NPE and NPAs could consider securing funding for a national leadership and partnership training programme to upskill staff.
- NPAs and partners could work together to identify key skills and resource needed within each NP to deliver nature recovery and pool resources to secure the funding required.
- NPAs/NE/NAAONBs are well placed to consider the role for a regional/national project that trains more staff and contractors to deliver nature recovery.
- NPAs and partners consider developing a national green training and apprenticeship programme building on the success of Green Generation.
- More NPAs could consider closer working with research/higher education institutes to drive innovation/learning.

### Findings and Quick Wins

NPAs to share learning from national and local apprenticeship schemes, including Green Recovery apprenticeships.

Share knowledge, good practice, expertise and learning with NPA and AONB staff, organisations working in National Parks and AONBs, and with neighbours. Using existing networks and finding new networks could help do this.

## 6. Resourcing the Ambition

**Significant additional core resources are needed to support nature recovery in National Parks.**

**Over the next 3 years an estimated £4.5m of funding is essential to expand NPAs' core resources to accelerate the scale and pace of delivery needed and unlock the estimated £800m required to realise the nature recovery ambition. A detailed case needs to be developed to demonstrate the level of core funding needed and what it could deliver over the next 3 years.**

Existing resourcing and ways of working are already presenting challenges to support the status quo. NPAs and national partners consider that additional publicly funded core resources are needed for the transformative change required to accelerate the scale and pace of delivery and to unlock wider finance for nature recovery.

Currently there is no precise figure on the core resource gap for NPAs to have a lead role in delivering their nature recovery ambition. The value of operational grants to NPAs has decreased significantly over the last 10 years whilst the ambition for nature recovery and other core requirements has increased significantly. Real term reductions on operational budgets are expected to continue over the next 3 years. Funding for project development, project maintenance, monitoring and evaluation is less readily available and all NPAs feel that they are at capacity to develop and deliver even more projects.

NPAs and several national partners consider that additional publicly funded core resources are needed for the transformative change required to accelerate the scale and pace of delivery and to unlock wider finance for nature recovery. It is estimated that around £4.5m additional core resource is needed by NPAs over the next 3 years. NPAs need investment in both national and local resources to enable delivery at scale.

**Further work is needed to develop a detailed case to demonstrate the level of core funding needed and what it could deliver over the next 3 years to support discussions with Defra and its family of arm's length bodies to see how additional core funding can be secured.** Initial considerations indicate a need for:

**National** (through NPE and NPP) – a National Nature Recovery Scaling staff resource to support nature recovery policy, advocacy, skills sharing and training, stronger collaboration with key national partners and coordination of collective nature opportunities and funding. Initial calculations suggest that this could involve 2-3 FTE staff. Detailed work is needed to determine this and to support discussions as part of the emerging plans for a national landscapes partnership.

**Local** (each National Park) – a Local Nature Recovery Scaling Team of 3 staff including a dedicated nature recovery officer. Together the team could significantly increase nature outcomes through pooling skills, expertise and resources from staff in the NPA and partner organisations; producing and promoting nature recovery delivery plans and investment portfolios to scale funding; support and advise farmers and land managers and engage with communities to grow the pipeline of nature recovery projects and facilitate partnership working and coordinate data, plans and funding bids for nature recovery projects.

- Upskilling staff/recruiting new roles that are dedicated to engaging with private finance and/or a broader range of at-scale funders. Dedicated funding officer resource for National Parks at national (NPP) and regional level. The NPAs with funding officers are working at capacity. Raising funds and reporting on outcomes requires significant time input and expertise but can reap its rewards many fold.
- Greater farmer/land manager support. Given the significant proportion of small landowners within National Parks there is likely to be a large reliance on ELMS to deliver nature recovery across National Parks, but this will only work if it is an attractive package to land managers and they understand the best options available for nature recovery and other public benefits.
- Greater funding expertise to realise the potential of income generation linked to nature recovery and nature-based solutions.



An attempt to illustrate the return on investment is set out below. This is very draft and for illustrative purposes. Additional work is needed to develop this as part of demonstrating the case for additional core resource.

£4.5m core investment for 1 National Nature Recovery Scaling Team and 10 NPA Nature Recovery Scaling Teams could potentially deliver the following return on investment over a 3 year period:

<b>Each NPA</b>	<b>Nationally</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A portfolio of 10 major projects (in partnership with key partners/neighbouring AONBs)</li> </ul>	A portfolio of 100 major projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collectively restoring 3-5,000ha (starting in Yr 3 and continuing to be restored over a 5 year period)</li> </ul>	Collectively restoring 30-50,000ha
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Levering in £10-30m of finance/funding (both public and private, wherever opportunity best).</li> </ul>	Levering in £100-300m of mixed finance/funding

### **Quick wins**

Support in the following areas could unlock additional funding and investment for nature recovery:

- Continuation of the Revere collaboration and aim to get as many as possible of the National Parks engaged (9 of 15 are taking part to date, including 6 of the English NPAs) Revere has already secured £1.7m of funding for pilot projects in 2021, and has a working target of £200m+ to generate by 2030.
- NPAs could become a conduit for funding streams and grant distribution building on success of FiPL and local grant programmes. They could test private investment brokering through a Green Finance Accelerator Fund.
- Stakeholder engagement on the ground to link nature recovery opportunities with funds, building on the learning from South Downs National Park's #ReNature campaign.
- Packaging of collective species recovery programmes to target philanthropic donations.

## 7. Financing the Ambition

**Significant additional financial resources are needed to transform delivery.**

**It is estimated that in the region of £800m is needed to deliver the above nature recovery ambition by 2030. This will need to be secured from a broad range of funders. NPAs are well placed to continue to work with partners to find new ways to finance nature recovery at scale building on their knowledge of private finance through the Revere Initiative.**

The UK Finance Gap for Nature report identifies significant funding gaps (£bns) in what's needed over the next 10 years, and what's currently available to deliver nature recovery. The funding scene is complex and uncertain – nature recovery currently relies heavily on public funding but to bridge this significant finance gap the Government is calling for a blend of public and private financing. The Green Finance Strategy kick started research into sustainable market options, the valuation of natural capital, and the development of natural capital markets.

The funding gap exists across all National Parks. Scoping work in 2021 began to identify the costs that are likely to be associated with the nature recovery ambition for National Parks over the next 10 years. The cost for on the ground delivery of the collective 10 year ambition is estimated to be around £605million for establishment and management of restored/created habitats, see table below.

Habitats	Overall cost	Establishment	Management (10yrs)
<b>Woodland</b>	c. £247m	£128m	£119m
<b>Rivers &amp; waterbodies</b>	c. £5m	£3.6m	£1.7m
<b>Grassland &amp; heathland</b>	c. £166m	£24m	£142m
<b>Peatland</b>	c. £186m	£148m	£38m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>c. £605m</b>	<b>£304m</b>	<b>£301m</b>

Costs are based on a blend of known project delivery costs and Countryside Stewardship payment rates (2021), plus an estimated uplift to reflect proposed Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) payments.

Accounting for the gap in freshwater restoration and any species-specific project figures, and with additional costs associated with project development and readiness, farmer/land manager advice, fundraising and other core costs, the true amount needed is estimated to be around £800million. A breakdown of projected costs by NP is set out in appendix F.

To put this in perspective, this would be, on average each year £20m more funding than the total current annual budget from Defra available for all English NPAs (£60m/yr).

In 2020, NPP identified 20 landscape scale nature restoration projects across the UK National Parks that could be delivered by 2030, with an estimated £240 million cost to deliver. In 2021, the South Downs National Park identified a need for £100 million of funding within the National Park alone, to increase land managed for nature by 8% by 2030.

If the scale of ambition for nature recovery were to increase as Nature Recovery Plans develop, the funding required will also need to scale up in line with this. Stable long-term incentives and skills programmes will be needed for land managers to make the changes required to deliver nature recovery at scale.

**Further work is needed alongside the development of nature recovery delivery plans to confirm these figures, the existing level of funding in place and the actual gap that needs to be bridged.**

### **What's in place – existing funding**

Delivery of nature recovery projects across National Parks comes from a blend of sources, set out below. These funds are delivering a range of really strong nature recovery projects within and outside of National Parks, particularly for peatland, woodland and the water environment. The existing funding streams are not to the order of magnitude required to deliver the national scale of ambition.

- National Park core funding
- Partner contributions as match funding on projects
- Defra funding to 2024: Nature For Climate (incl. Green Recovery Challenge Fund) Countryside Stewardship, Farming in Protected Landscapes, NE Seed Corn
- Water industry funds – Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP)
- Environment Agency funding – Natural Environment Infrastructure Readiness Fund (NEIRF), Catchment Based Approach (CABA), Water Environment Grant (WEG), Water Environment Improvement Fund (WEIF)
- Section 106 funds and voluntary BNG
- Charitable funding i.e. National Lottery Heritage Fund, Esmée Fairbairn, National Park/other Trusts and Foundations.
- One-off philanthropic donations/community fundraising.

### **Private investment – an opportunity**

Nature recovery funding is now a blend of public and private finance. National Parks need to be in a strong position to be able to access both sources of funding for nature recovery. The [Revere initiative](#) is driving action in the space of private finance across National Parks. Many NPAs and their partners have funding officers to help positions themselves, but others don't. NPAs need more resource to help ensure National Parks are ready and able to access at-scale funding from a range of sources.

There is a lot of interest in private investment and growing markets for funders wanting to offset and develop more sustainable business models, for example in the food supply chain, carbon storage, BNG, and business for nature. But it is important for a balance to be struck. Across National Parks, NPAs and partners are currently testing a variety of private natural capital investment models via the Revere programme and the NEIRF.

Revere is a collaboration between the UK National Parks and Palladium that designs nature restoration projects, raises private capital to fund them, and generates revenue through sale of ecosystem services. This approach creates new income streams for farmers and landowners seeking to improve the quality of landscapes and support biodiversity. Launched in 2021, to date it has established eight pilot projects with three more in development, across nine different National Parks. It has identified £150 million of potential investment in its first year. There is clearly more work to be done here.

### **Limitations linked to private investment in relation to nature recovery**

Private investment is likely to bring longer term funding than public finance but it is currently biased towards water quality improvement, woodland planting and peatland restoration. In the short term it is unlikely to deliver the entirety of the nature recovery desired outcomes for the following reasons:

- It is currently driven primarily by water and carbon outcomes and not by nature recovery outcomes.
- New biodiversity and other ecosystem services markets will take several years to be viable and trusted.
- Small landowners will struggle to engage as private finance backed investment requires large-scale projects.
- Lots of emerging players in the natural capital marketplace but it is hard for landowners to navigate and understand, it needs trusted advisers and agents to facilitate.
- Investors are keen but the scale of projects and confidence in outcomes is not there yet.
- Landowners need clarity on how to stack private and public funding for nature based solutions on their land.

## 8. Working beyond boundaries

**NPAs, with appropriate resources can support more work beyond their boundaries as key partners in the NRN. They are well placed to build on their work with Natural England, National Association for AONBs and organisations in the Nature Recovery Network Partnership to help build a nature recovery network across England.**

There are several ways NPAs could work with others to push nature recovery significantly onto the next level or to enable working beyond National Park physical boundaries.

### **Delivering more with farmers and landowners**

NPAs are well placed to build on long standing relationships with landowners, farmers and farmer organisations, and develop more relationships with other landowners.

- Defra funded Farming in Protected Landscapes programme is enabling some to work beyond boundaries with farmers and landowners already.
- The Nature Recovery Pilots of the Great North Bog and Big Chalk are supporting cross boundary collaboration and securing shared resources.
- In the future ELM Landscape Recovery and Local Nature Recovery schemes could support cross boundary working too.

### **Strengthening work with partners**

- NE is already working via the Nature Recovery Network Partnership to support and engage with business and finance sectors. There is the potential here to match NPAs and AONBs with specific partners in these sectors to develop opportunities nationally.
- NPAs could use tools and groups, including the Nature-based Solutions compact, Wildlife and Countryside Link, Rethink Nature Group to develop a collective effort on things like natural capital markets and policy influencing.
- NE could work with NPAs to develop shared learning networks with national partners and other Protected Landscapes through the Nature Recovery Network Partnership.
- NPAs could consider developing a nationwide training programme to develop expertise beyond NP boundaries to help secure future resilience of workforce.
- Partnership ways of working MOU/development programme.
- NPAs could develop stronger Local Enterprise Partnership links, locally, where appropriate.
- Universities, such as The University of Cumbria's Centre for National Parks and Protected Areas, and other research institutes work beyond boundaries and can help develop evidence and data and take research into policy and practice

North Yorkshire Moors National Park and Howardian Hills AONB have teamed up through the FiPL programme – not only supporting and sharing officer resource but also having a joint assessment panel for distribution of the funding. This has not only made best use of resources but has also enabled a common approach across both landscapes ensuring nature recovery has been considered in a wider context and has helped strengthen an existing relationship between the two protected landscapes.

### **Findings**

NPAs could link nationally with species focused eNGOs (BugLife, PlantLife, Butterfly Conservation, Curlew Recovery Partnership) to support species programmes that link up protected areas.

NPAs could link with LNRS teams to support LNRS delivery, which may go beyond National Park boundaries and connect with AONBs and land in between in many cases.

NPE with NPAs, could secure a National Park representative on the IUCN Protected Areas Group to help support Other Effective Conservation Measures in sites outside Protected Landscapes.

The Curlew Recovery Partnership works across a number of National Parks and AONBs at a national scale, including the Peak District, Yorkshire Dales, New Forest and South Downs. Curlew as a species moves at a landscape scale. The Partnership links areas across the country that would not otherwise see an obvious link and offers the opportunity to share learning and management approaches as well as having a common story to talk to the public about. Curlews are an iconic species that people can relate to and can be a hook to tell a number of nature recovery and conservation stories from – they are linked to farming practice, landscapes and climate change. Having a common story across landscapes may help the public engage more thoughtfully and consistently when they visit these areas.

## 9. Sharing the story and engaging people with nature

There is an inspiring story to share and engage people with nature and its recovery. National Parks are places where people can visit, experience and be inspired by nature. NPAs are well placed to use landscape scale nature recovery to share stories, improve access and inspire more people to be connected to and act to care for the nature within National Parks. They have a wealth of knowledge and skills they could share more to inspire action in others.

Sustainable delivery of nature recovery is not just about practical implementation, it is also about community and stakeholder engagement. NPAs work with a wide range of stakeholders who all have a stake in the future resilience of National Parks, their landscapes, economy, culture, nature and accessibility. These include:

- Farmers and land managers who are ultimately delivering nature recovery projects on their land.
- Local communities and visitors who live and work in, and explore and enjoy, the landscapes.
- Other businesses, including those in the visitor economy from nature tourism.
- Government bodies and policy makers – Defra, NE, EA and FC, local authorities who all support National Parks to deliver their duties.
- Other partners who have an ambition to deliver nature recovery at scale.
- Academics, research institutions, universities who provide research and learning.

Exmoor National Park Authority adopted its Nature Recovery Vision in 2021. It used existing and new groups to develop the vision, to include eNGO's, farmers and communities.

The Management Plan process engages with the above stakeholders. They can all add value to the nature recovery process. NPAs will need sufficient resource to engage effectively with these stakeholders on an ongoing basis. In some places partner projects or the Local Nature Recovery Strategy process might provide the right tool to do this.

Whichever tool or approach is taken, time is needed to build trust and relationships to support land managers and communities to deliver the nature recovery ambition for their National Parks. Inspired communities can lead work and may benefit from support from NPA teams.

Support to unlock knowledge from farmers and land managers and support skills development with them and others in the community will help with delivery. In some places partners are already looking at how natural assets in National Parks can act as a growth hub for green jobs, such as Green Investment Plan Cumbria.

The Lake District National Park Authority is engaging with a county CIC, Investing in Net Zero, Cumbria to help develop the [Green Investment Plan Cumbria](#). The CIC is leading the plan development, with input from a wide cross section of stakeholders to identify a pipeline of investable projects incorporating nature based solutions for Cumbria that could support a range of green jobs.

Positive engagement with visitors to National Park about nature recovery is also key to developing understanding and care for the land they come to visit. Tackling perceptions of 'Natural Beauty' in these special landscapes and the in character that could arise from landscape scale nature recovery is likely to be something all NPAs have to address.

### Findings

- There is an opportunity to develop stronger national coordination with national partners to develop shared messages on nature recovery nationally and locally with land managers and communities to enable strengthening of understanding and purpose about nature recovery in National Parks. National Parks are well placed for promotion as places rich in natural investable assets that support livelihoods, communities and people.
- The LNRS process can help engage with wider stakeholders.
- Species based projects can be an inspirational way to connect with communities and visitors, and partners beyond National Park boundaries.
- NPAs are well placed to share the great examples and developing portfolio of partner projects, knowledge, expertise and learning with others using existing and new networks.

## 10. Summary of Key Findings

The key findings are:

### **National Parks have significant potential to deliver more for nature**

- With sufficient resources, a nature recovery delivery plan and a portfolio of nature recovery projects should be produced for each English National Park. These could collectively deliver 145,000ha of nature rich areas by 2030.

### **NPAs are sector leaders committed to working in partnership**

- With sufficient resources, NPAs lead and convene the nature recovery agenda in National Parks, finding new ways to collaborate with partners and stakeholders, and using management plan and local plan processes to support.

### **Significant additional core and project resources are needed to transform delivery**

- NPAs seek to secure additional core resources to support nature recovery in National Parks. This could be in the region of £4.5m over the next 3 years.
- NPAs work with others to find new ways to finance nature recovery in partnership. It is estimated that it could cost £800m to fund the above ambition.

### **NPAs work beyond their boundaries as key partners in the NRN**

- NPAs, with appropriate resources, are well placed to work beyond boundaries, to connect with AONBs, National Nature Reserves and other nature sites (both designated and non-designated, including those owned and managed by eNGO's, public and private bodies and local communities) to help to build a national nature recovery network across England.

### **There is an inspiring story to share and engage people with nature and its recovery**

- NPAs are well placed to use landscape scale nature recovery to share stories, improve access and encourage more people to be inspired by the nature of National Parks. They have a wealth of knowledge and skills they could share more to inspire action in others.

A summary of key findings and potential actions that could be delivered is set out below.

## Develop Nature Recovery Plan and Portfolio of Projects

- Build on nature recovery prospectuses, working with partners to develop local NR delivery plan with a portfolio of projects.
- Bring partners together through NR delivery plan process to audit skills and resources and negotiate ways to pool resources, sharing skills, learning and expertise and targeting funding to priority partner projects.
- Use NR delivery plan and project portfolio to showcase 'investable assets' and underpin funding bids to public and private sources.

## Working in Partnership

- Lead and convene nature recovery partnership working locally building on NPA strengths of good governance and varied skills to work with multiple organisations on complex projects.
- Build stronger supportive partnership working with national eNGOs and land management bodies committed to Nature Recovery.
- Use land owned by eNGOs and ALBs to highlight and share good practice and act as nuclei for connectivity across the NPs and beyond.

## Secure and develop core resources

- Develop a local 'Team Nature' bringing NPA and partner staff together to pool and share resources, working across Parks on nature recovery.
- Work with Defra to secure additional core funding for NPAs (and protected areas) to expand core team.
- Work with partners to develop baseline evidence and data for planning and monitoring.

## Secure public and private funding

- Develop Revere partnership to involve more projects and partners at a landscape scale.
- Support farmers/land managers to integrate nature recovery into their farm businesses through advice, good practice and peer networks.
- Use portfolio of nature recovery projects to work nationally to register a portfolio of sites on the national Biodiversity Net Gain Register and to be ready for future funding bids/investment opportunities.

## Working beyond boundaries

- Develop stronger working with Natural England and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty through the Tripartite Agreement.
- Build on existing relationships with Local Authorities, as neighbouring planning authorities with a duty to cooperate, through the Local Nature Recovery Strategy process.
- Develop place based working through Nature Based Solutions and Catchment Based Approaches.

## Sharing our story

- Develop stronger national coordination with national partners to develop shared messages on nature recovery nationally and locally to inspire people to invest in National Parks and their natural assets that support nature, livelihoods, communities and people.
- Share knowledge, good practice, expertise and learning with protected landscapes and partner organisations using existing and new networks.

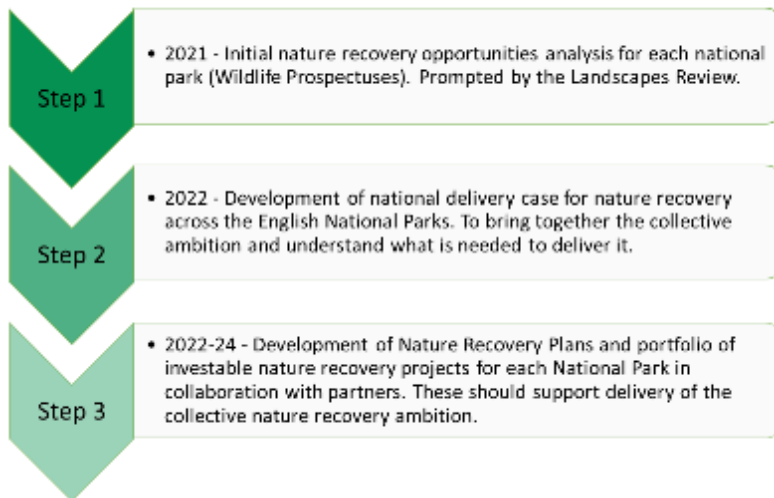


## 11.Appendices

## A. Methodology

This delivery case forms step 2 in the process outlined here:

### Steps to Nature Recovery in National Parks



The national case for delivering National Park England’s (NPE) Delivery Plan for Wildlife and the nature recovery scoping work (prospectuses) produced by England’s 10 National Parks (NP) was carried out by Motmot Consulting Ltd and Wren EConsulting during November 2021 – April 2022. It was developed with the following approach:

- Desktop review of the 10 nature recovery scoping prospectuses and key reference documents.
- Review of existing NP nature recovery resources, projects and inter park groups and networks.
- Initial and detailed structured discussions with NP staff to understand key activities now and in the future.
- Structured discussions with 37 individuals over 21 key and strategic partner organisations. See list below.
- Analysis of discussions and desktop review and production of Key Findings paper.
- Development of the case for delivering nature recovery and action plan of findings.
- Suite of Case Studies to support advocacy and comms.

The key and strategic partner organisations were:

<b>Key Partners</b>	<b>Strategic Partners</b>	
1. National Parks England	8. Buglife	15. National Trust
2. National Parks Partnerships	9. Butterfly Conservation	16. Nature North
3. Defra	10. Country Landowners Association	17. Rivers Trust
4. Natural England	11. Curlew Recovery Partnership	18. RSPB
5. Environment Agency	12. Foundation for Common Land	19. Water UK
6. Forestry Commission	13. Local Government Association	20. Wildfowl and Wetland Trust
7. National Association of AONBs	14. Plantlife	21. Woodland Trust

Wildlife Trust and National Farmers Union (NFU) were invited to engage but were unable to in the time frame available.

#### Key to acronyms

AONB – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	NE - Natural England
Defra – Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	NP – National Park
EA - Environment Agency	NPA – National Park Authority
FC - Forestry Commission	NPE - National Parks England
NAAONBs - National Association of AONBs	NPP - National Parks Partnerships

## B. Land in positive management for nature conservation

<b>Area of National Parks currently under positive management for nature conservation</b>			
<b>National Park</b>	<b>Total in +ve mngt Ha</b>	<b>% of NP total area</b>	<b>NP total area Ha</b>
Broads	16,700	55	30500
Dartmoor	21,500	23	95300
Exmoor	26,800	38	69400
Lake District	129,877	56	229200
New Forest	42,126	74	57000
Northumberland	53,020	50	104800
North York Moors	98,946	69	143400
Peak District	62,086	43	143700
South Downs	39,682	25	162400
Yorkshire Dales	39,100	18	217900
<b>Totals</b>	<b>529,467</b>	<b>44.1</b>	<b>1,253,600</b>

## C. Case studies

### Water Resources East – Broads Authority



Water Resources East (WRE) is a Broads wide approach to water resources management. It is working on the front line of climate change mitigation, taking a multi sector approach to water resource management, growing an understanding between sectors which can be developed and shared.

Eastern England faces a number of significant risks to its future water supply, which could have a catastrophic impact on the area's communities, economy, and environment if left unchecked. Eastern England is uniquely vulnerable to water shortage and severe weather events. Nearly 30% of the land mass is below sea level, a huge proportion of the area is used for agricultural production, it's the driest region in the UK and the East has one of the longest coastlines of any region.

WRE was formed in 2014 by Anglian Water with aim to learn from international best practice on how to develop a pioneering collaborative approach to water resource planning and management alongside population growth, economic ambition need for enhanced environment protection and climate change pressure.



WRE is working in partnership to safeguard a sustainable supply of water for the Eastern England, resilient to future challenges and enabling the area's communities, environment and economy to reach their full potential.

The partnership brings together regulators, companies, and individuals in water, agriculture and the environmental sectors. Together they are looking at the needs and trade-offs across all organisations and seeks to balance considerations of customers, agriculture, economy and the environment.

In a region with rapid economic development and strong environmental ambition at a time of climate emergency, WRE will work with water users across Eastern England to:

- Identify and develop multi-sector collaborative solutions which meet the needs of all water users.
- Promote holistic landscape scale water management, working from individual landowner scale, on a catchment-based approach and across wider political and hydrological boundaries.
- Develop new water management solutions which are highly innovative, both technically and in the business models and regulatory frameworks that they use, helping to shape and influence future policy on water management.
- Link land and water management more effectively, increasing resilience and restoring and enhancing natural systems. Healthy environment underpins water quality and quantity – environmental benefits are a priority.
- Use catchment scale planning.
- Share best practice between sectors.
- Nurture a collective ownership of issues and how to manage.

Water Resources East is teaming up with [Biodiversify](#) and [WWF – UK](#) with the financial support of [The Coca-Cola Foundation](#) to develop a natural capital plan for Eastern England. This plan will be stakeholder led and will seek to identify where natural capital action should be prioritised across the landscape in order to deliver outcomes for nature, water and society. This important project will also feed into the water resource management plans that WRE will be developing over the next 18 months and will help make sure

that the changes in water management directly support the recovery of nature. The plan will be developed using Systematic Conservation Planning (SCP) which is the international best practice approach for landscape level management of biodiversity, the environment and natural capital.

The Water Resources East is an company limited by guarantee, with a Board of Directors. This is formed of representatives from The Broads Authority, the five water companies in the area, Local Authorities, Environmental NGOs and the Association of Drainage Boards. WRE operates as an inclusive, collaborative membership organisation, bringing together partners from around 200 businesses, organisations and industries including: water, energy, retail, the environment, land management and agriculture.

For more information visit: [Water Resources East wre.org.uk](https://www.waterresourceseast.org.uk)



Back on Our Map (BOOM) aims to engage communities in South Cumbria with their natural environment, by restoring the landscape and reintroducing and reinforcing locally threatened or extinct native species.

BOOM is a multispecies, landscape scale project, helping to restore the health and resilience of ecosystems to reverse the decline in biodiversity through the involvement of local communities.

About 10% of the area of the Lake District National Park is currently managed for nature's recovery and a mix of other public goods by a range of partners and land managers predominantly through sustainable farming practices.

BOOM focusses on the Morecambe Bay area in South Cumbria and includes southern parts of the Lake District National Park. It is a landscape which is incredibly biodiverse and includes many nationally and internationally important sites as well as an extensive network of connected priority habitats. Between them, this network supports a wide range of species, and the area is a recognised biodiversity hotspot for a range of taxa, including vascular plants, birds and butterflies and small mammals.



Over 195 species (20% of all the listed species) on the S41 national list of species of principal importance have been recorded in the project area, spread across 32 different priority habitats.



Following many successful habitat management projects over the last 10 years, the habitats are in good condition and therefore perfectly placed to support the next step of species reintroduction which will help to restore ecosystem function.

BOOM is helping to build healthy, resilient, empowered communities by providing an exciting range of regular reintroduction-based social activities and training events, to enable them fully engage with each species, developing community species ambassadors for the future. It outreaches to communities in under-represented areas

such as Millom and Barrow in Furness, and specialist groups such as MIND and HMP Haverigg. As a unique project for the University of Cumbria, it supports students to develop their academic knowledge alongside practical applied experience for a skilled future nature-based work force.

The project covers an area of 600km<sup>2</sup>, extending along the lowlands of Morecambe Bay from Barrow-in-Furness in the west to Arnside and Silverdale in the east and Grizedale Forest in the north.

Habitat restoration and species reintroductions take place within a network of protected areas including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Lake District National Park and Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Species include:

- Aspen
- Corncrake
- Maidenhair Fern
- Pine Marten

- Duke of Burgundy
- Goldilocks Aster
- Hazel Dormouse
- Green Winged Orchid
- Small Blue
- Spiked Speedwell
- Great Sundew
- Oblong – leaved Sundew

BOOM’s feasibility study into the potential reintroduction of the pine marten, demonstrates the possibility of restoring populations of lost species back into the National Park. It is a great example of working beyond protected area boundaries and building on long standing partnerships working at a landscape scale. BOOM is working alongside a range of landowners and land managers with the aim to inspire and demonstrate what a Lake District flourishing with nature could possibly look like in the future.



Credits: Mic Mayhew

The BOOM partnership project is led by the University of Cumbria, and Morecambe Bay Partnership, and lead delivery partners Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Forestry England. Other partners and landowners include National Trust, Arnside & Silverdale AONB, Lake District National Park, Local Authority, County Council and other private landowners.

National Lottery players support the £2m project, working with several other public, private, and charitable sector organisations including Rusland Horizons Trust, Art Gene, Peoples Trust for Endangered Species, Vincent Wildlife Trust, Kew Gardens, Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland, Butterfly Conservation and Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre.

Partners are working locally across a large landscape area, but within the national context to support resilient populations of species.



Credit: Bob Eade

For more information visit: Facebook: /BackOnOurMap/Twitter: @BoomCumbria/

Draft content with officers for feedback.



## Northumberland Peat Partnership – Cheviot Peatland Restoration

There has been a long history of successful peatland restoration in Northumberland going back around 50 years, notably on the Border Mires, that are considered to be some of the most important peatlands in the United Kingdom.

In 2018 Northumberland National Park Authority partnered with The North of England Peat Partnership to take advantage of £10million of early Government investment in peatland restoration. This was largely being distributed to active peatland partnerships with a track record of delivering large scale projects on the ground. Restoration work on the Cheviot summit had been identified but at the time there was no local peatland partnership covering sites across north Northumberland. Recognising that there was a need to coordinate resources to unlock future funding to restore the extensive peatlands found across mid and north Northumberland, key stakeholders came together to form the Northumberland Peat Partnership (NPP) in the summer of 2020, hosted by the Northumberland Wildlife Trust.

The NPP aims to bring stakeholders together to collectively facilitate positive management and restoration of peatland habitats focussing on the Partnership Area; the area of Northumberland north of the A69, outside the North Pennines AONB. NPP is part of the Great North Bog Initiative, the successor to the North of England Peat Partnership, which brings together six peatland partnerships (including four National Parks and three AONBs) across the north of England.

The Cheviot peatland restoration project covers an area of 151 hectares (roughly the size of 241 football pitches) on the summit of the Cheviot, the highest peak in Northumberland National Park. Due to the remoteness of the area and sensitivity of the site, there was considerable planning and preparation needed, and work took place over three years. It was completed in November 2021.

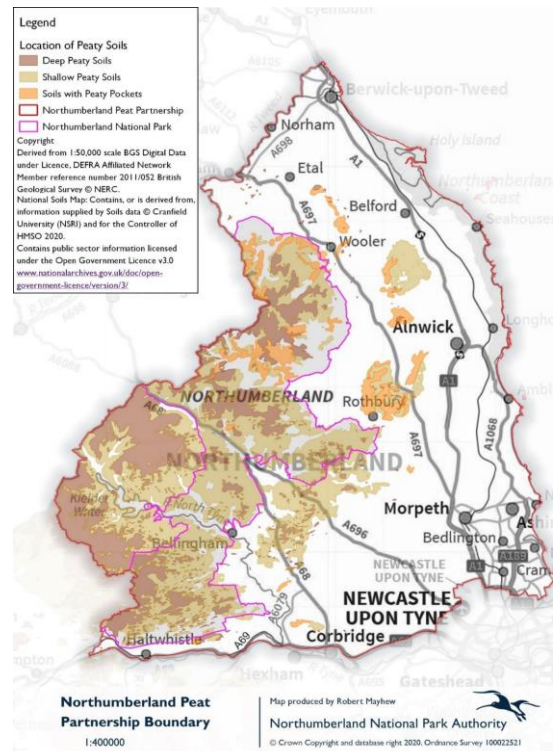


The summit plateau, usually home to a few hardy walkers, species of birds and insects, saw specialist diggers working to reshape the peat hags to enable plants to grow and prevent further erosion. Native plants, including heathers, cotton-grass and sphagnum mosses have been harvested from the valley below and flown up by helicopter to be planted and help protect the bare peat. A hardy volunteer team helped with the planting on areas of bare peat.

The project is helping in the fight against climate change, preventing an estimated 585 tonnes of carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere each year, once restored.

In addition to helping to make a difference to the UK's target to reduce carbon emissions, the benefits of peatland restoration include less peat erosion into the Till and Tweed rivers below, improving water quality for migratory fish such as salmon, sea trout and lampreys. It also helps to reduce flooding downstream and protects the habitat for important plant and animal species, including golden plover, dunlin and mountain bumblebees on the Cheviot itself. It is one example of how the work of Northumberland National Park Authority is helping to leave the environment in a better state for future generations.

The formation of the Northumberland Peat Partnership was supported by funding from Defra and The Environment Agency. Founding members are: Natural England, Northumberland National Park Authority,



Northumberland Wildlife Trust, The Environment Agency and The Tweed Forum, with additional partners now including Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Forestry England, Northumberland County Council, Northumbrian Water and the National Trust.

In April 2022, with funding support from Defra Nature for Climate Peatland Discovery Grant and Esmée Fairbairn Trust, NPP now has a dedicated team of seven peatland officers. They are gathering data, surveying sites, developing funding bids and engaging landowners and the wider community in order to take forward peatland restoration work across mid and north Northumberland.

For more information visit:

[Northumberland Peat Partnership \(nwt.org.uk\)](https://nwt.org.uk)

[Cheviot Peat Project \(northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk\)](https://northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk)

## Ryevitalise– North York Moors National Park

Ryevitalise is an ambitious Landscape Partnership Scheme working with farmers, land managers and local communities to restore and conserve the habitats of the River Rye and its tributaries, as well as the threatened species it supports. The £3.4m project will run for four years from June 2019 until October 2023.

Covering 160 square miles and 532 miles of waterways, the Ryevitalise project area follows the River Rye through the North York Moors National Park, the Howardian Hills AONB, and the farmlands of the Vale of Pickering. Working across boundaries at catchment scale.

Nearly two-thirds (63%) is within the North York Moors National Park area and nearly one-quarter (23%) is in the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The remaining 15% is land outside of these Protected Landscapes.

Much of the Rye’s natural and cultural heritage is in decline. There is a need to address this and to reconnect people to the river environment.



Iconic species have been lost and the water environment is failing. There are 17 waterbodies in the upper Rye catchment. At least 4 of these are poor for water quality and 9 of these are only ‘moderate’.

The ambition for the Partnership is to establish the Rye as a basis for common action. We see the river and the flow of water as an element which joins communities, heritage and wildlife together.

By re-establishing a more natural river, increasing biodiversity and educating the next generation of river guardians, we are driving forward a progressive programme of conservation projects.

The heart of our project is community and partnership working. Together we are working on an exciting range of projects. These will help restore, enhance and conserve the Rye's natural and cultural heritage.

The four year scheme will focus on three themes:

- Water Quality and Environment - working with

land managers to improve the aquatic habitat of the Rye, and the rare and threatened species that the river and wider landscape supports;

- Water Level Management - harnessing natural flood processes to create a more naturally functioning river; and
- Reconnecting People - improving understanding of the river landscape by telling the story of its evolution and encouraging people to protect their heritage, promoting volunteering opportunities.

On the ground this includes improving the river environment by, for example,

- native tree planting around river banks to stabilise the soils,
- fencing these areas off in a “riparian strip” to help with habitat connectivity,

- working with land managers to manage grasslands for nature,
- installing “natural flood management” and other “slow the flow” features in the upper catchment,
- removing invasive species such as Himalayan balsam means that less bare ground is left on river banks which are then vulnerable to winter erosion,
- working with local people / volunteers to survey ancient and veteran trees and survey for the rare alcatloe bat,
- there is also a peat restoration project, peat being an incredible store of carbon,
- we are also capturing people’s memories and their perceptions of landscape and wildlife change over time, inspiring the next generation.

The whole project is working in partnership with land managers, volunteers, local people and visitors to the area. Farmers are at the heart of nature recovery.

The initiative is led by the North York Moors National Park Authority, and supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, this is an excellent example of individuals, local communities, organisations and academics collaborating to deliver large scale nature recovery.

Delivery and other partners include: Community First Yorkshire, Disability Action Group/Local Access Forum, East Yorkshire Rivers Trust, English Heritage, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (HH AONB), National Trust, Natural England, North Yorkshire County Council, North York Moors National Park Authority, Ryedale District Council, Yorkshire Derwent Partnership, Yorkshire Water, Woodland Trust, Butterfly Conservation

For more information visit: [Ryevitalise \(northyorkmoors.org.uk\)](http://ryevitalise(northyorkmoors.org.uk))

## Conservation Data Portal – Peak District National Park

At present different bodies hold large amounts of data relevant to nature conservation projects. This includes the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA), Natural England (NE), Wildlife Trusts, RSPB and other organisations. However, that data is stored in separate locations and not easily accessible to all other bodies to whom it may be of interest, despite often sharing the same conservation goals. At present it can be difficult, time consuming and confusing to collate all relevant data from these different sources.

This means that organisations are often making decisions and operating without all the relevant data available. Conservation work may take place with unnecessary knowledge gaps, it may prevent work/decisions from taking place at all or may lead to the duplication of effort due to a lack of information sharing.

To avoid these issues PDNPA and partners are in the process of setting up a shared online platform between multiple organisations which will allow access to a wide range of regularly updated data sets.



This can contribute effectively to not only local nature recovery plans but has the potential to provide useful information to a wide range of projects by increasing the knowledge base available to conservation bodies and ensuring that they all have the same up-to-date information.

At present this is taking the form of an ARC GIS Online portal, providing a user friendly interface with some basic tools for analysis. The platform can incorporate open access data, such as data from Magic Map, whilst crucially allowing users to load in and share their own datasets.

The use of an online portal such as this provides the added benefit of ensuring that data holders remain in control of any data which they choose to share. This has been and continues to be a key consideration for the project as there are issues around data sensitivity and some record centres rely on data provision services in order to be viable. We have therefore opted to create a portal where data holders can choose which data they are willing to share and who they may share it with, whilst retaining the option to prevent the data from being downloaded and to retract any data at any point, should it be necessary.

As this platform is currently more for the sharing and viewing of data there are no powerful tools available for analysis. However, there will be the option to download datasets to allow for users to load data into other GIS software. This is something that would require restricting to certain users/datasets, rather than allowing any data to be downloaded by any user.

It is hoped that there will be several 'tiers' for users/organisations which will offer differing levels of access, allowing some data to be shared with only some users whilst other datasets will be shared with all, potentially also available for the public to view.

It remains in the early stages and in the coming weeks we hope to see it start to be populated with data, initially from PDNPA and NE, before hopefully data from others such as the Wildlife and National Trusts.

The project is being funded by Natural England with Sara Barrett as project lead. Core members of the team are Anne Goodenough (NE), Andrew Miller (NE), Mark Hamilton (PDNPA), Adam Murphy (PDNPA) and Rhodri Thomas (PDNPA)

At present there is a wide range of organisations that have been contacted for participation in the data sharing project such as the Wildlife Trusts, RSPB and some local government bodies. There is the possibility to expand on the current participants to other organisations with a conservation interest in the Peak District area, as well as potentially to members of the public. Though data sensitivities will remain a key consideration when moving forward.

To learn more please contact Adam Murphy on [Adam.Murphy@peakdistrict.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Murphy@peakdistrict.gov.uk)

(Photos copyright free from Unsplash)

# HELP US TO #RENATURE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

The South Downs National Park Authority is working hard for nature, with 25% of the National Park being managed for nature. The goal is to increase this to 33% by 2030, creating an extra 13,000 hectares of habitat for nature to thrive. They will encourage the rest of the land to be nature friendly too.

The Park staff are working to enhance and expand the most important designated 'core' wildlife sites but also make space for a nature friendly approach everywhere. The initiative is not just about the rare but nature everywhere, for everyone.



SDNPA staff have been dedicated to developing and delivering its ReNature campaign. This has several strands to it, reflecting the complexity of creating more space for nature and the need to get as many people involved as possible.

The NPA is building a portfolio of sites through an open 'Call for Sites' with farmers, landowners, organisations and communities to find the new sites for restoration. Over 75 sites, covering

5068ha, were put forward. These included a wide range of landholdings from whole landed estates through to community spaces, private gardens and parish wide verge management schemes for pollinators. All sites are being screened and reviewed against a spatial analysis of habitat opportunities to identify the strongest sites for improving natural capital condition. These projects may become 'Ventures' to be supported via the ReNature Fund.

The ReNature Fund seeks to develop a new model to finance nature restoration. The model is based on venture philanthropy. Ventures will be identified and prepared for investment following a five stage natural capital venture lifecycle. Venture philanthropy can support concept design, business planning, partnership agreement and piloting stages. A team of staff from the SDNP and Palladium are dedicated to supporting the development of the model.

The South Downs National Park Trust, in parallel to the 'Call for Sites' promoted a fundraising campaign for nature recovery. It secured £350,000 through this and will provide grants to land owners and community groups looking to manage land for biodiversity and nature's recovery that deliver wider benefits to society.



Communication is a key part of the work, with a user friendly online hub of information, including a 1 minute film showing the vision for the future [#Renature film](#), and an online ReNature Resource Hub providing information, resources, support and sign posts to funding for land managers, communities, parishes, schools, businesses and individuals who all have a part to play in restoring nature.

The work is funded by the South Downs National Park Authority, with funding support for project delivery from the South Downs National Park Trust and long term finance being sought through the National Park Partnerships Revere programme.

For more information on the Renature work visit: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/renature/>

For more information on Revere visit: <https://revere.eco/>

## Tees Swale: Naturally Connected - Yorkshire Dales National Park

The Tees-Swale: Naturally Connected partnership is protecting and enhancing the English Uplands. The North Pennines AONB Partnership and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority are leading the £8.5 million programme across the two protected landscapes.



The programme was inspired by the report 'Making Space for Nature' and aims to restore, expand and connect important habitats. The partners are working with hundreds of 'High Nature Value' farmers across an area of 845 km<sup>2</sup> to try to create the most biodiverse landscape in the English uplands. As well as tackling biodiversity loss and sustaining low intensity farming systems, the

programme is providing other significant public benefits, including climate change mitigation and flood-risk management. Over 5 years the programme will:

- restore at least 1,000 hectares of degraded blanket bog
- restore at least 225 hectares of rare species-rich upland hay meadows (approx. 25% of the UK total)
- create over 200ha of new native woodland
- improve the management of over 2,000ha of rush, to benefit wading birds like Curlew.
- improve water quality along 300km of rivers

The project is working with land managers, farmers, communities, businesses and visitors to:

- enable farmers to share knowledge and their land management skills; supporting groups and neighbouring farmers to come together;
- improve and restore habitats for the benefit of wildlife and to allow farms to work as a whole system;
- sustain valuable low-intensity farming systems that benefit wildlife, the environment and people;
- connect visitors from the local area and surrounding towns and cities with the way the landscape is managed and why this is important to them, through volunteering and improved access, new routes and trails, better interpretation, on farm events, landscape art and other events.
- build skills through traineeships and volunteering, and train contractors to carry out specialist habitat restoration work;
- build resilience in the farming communities for a strong future workforce.



People are being encouraged to discover and explore the spectacular landscapes and connect with nature rich areas,



Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The project took six years for partners to develop and secure funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The five-year project commenced in 2021.

Other delivery partners include: the Environment Agency/Coal Authority; RSPB; Tees Rivers Trust; Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust; and the Yorkshire Peat Partnership.

Other funders include: Esmee Fairbairn Foundation; Northumbrian Water; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Environment Agency; Richmondshire District Council; Yorkshire Water; Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust; and, local farmers and landowners.

For more information visit: [Tees Swale Naturally Connected \(northpennines.org.uk\)](https://northpennines.org.uk)

## D. Tables of National Park ambition

Habitat theme	Wildlife Delivery Plan targets	Reviewed scoping targets
Woodland	11,000 ha	36,890
Species rich grassland/heathland	24,000 ha	55,390
Peatland	45,000 ha	53,658
Rivers	2,500 km	170km**
Total new area for wildlife	92,500 ha*	145,938 ha (excludes rivers)

\*this includes other habitat, such as coastal, not covered in the four key habitat themes.

\*\*data around river/water body restoration is limited so this is not indicative of true ambition

Area of potential new habitat by National Park					
National Park	Woodland	Species Rich Grassland & Heathland	Peatland	Rivers	Total area for wildlife
	Ha	Ha	Ha	Km	Ha
Broads	100	3,000	137	70	<b>3,307</b>
Dartmoor	500	1,500	1,750	0	<b>3,750</b>
Exmoor	8,300	13,000	1,000	0	<b>22,300</b>
Lake District	2,110	1,600	11,998	0	<b>15,708</b>
New Forest	5,000	3,200	1,040	0	<b>9,240</b>
Northumberland	3,000	1,500	5,000	0	<b>9,500</b>
North York Moors	2,500	1,800	4,500	0	<b>8,800</b>
Peak District	4,000	20,000	8,233	0	<b>32,233</b>
South Downs	5,380	6,590	0	0	<b>11,970</b>
Yorkshire Dales	6,000	3,200	20,000	100	<b>29,200</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>36,890</b>	<b>55,390</b>	<b>53,658</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>145,938</b>

## E. Cost of delivering nature recovery by National Park

The table below outlines the estimated costs to deliver ambition for nature recovery across National Parks over the next 10 years.

Costs were based on Countryside Stewardship (CS) rates 2021 with multipliers of 1.5x and 2x to try and reflect changes to agri environment payments from 2021. CS rates were used to try and ensure national compliance and consistency and to reflect the important role of farming in current and future nature recovery delivery in National Parks. As costs for peat restoration vary widely according to the local conditions, local rates have been used. Costs for river restoration are a significant gap in the initial scoping work and continue to be. Costings are largely indicative, with detailed costs only available for projects that are already in delivery or are fully funded.

<b>Create, restore and maintain new habitat - Total Costs 2021-2031</b>					
<b>National Park</b>	<b>New native woodland</b>	<b>Hay meadow/ Grassland/ Heath</b>	<b>Peatland</b>	<b>River water quality</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Broads	1.00	19.38	1.65	0.9	22.93
Dartmoor	2.88	5.80	11.83	0	20.51
Exmoor	34.35	21.54	3.29	0	59.18
Lake District	21.10	7.09	41.33	0	69.52
New Forest	7.50	15.75	2.28	0	25.53
Northumberland	23.21	6.64	17.22	0	47.07
North York Moors	25.00	5.91	15.50	3.4	49.81
Peak District	22.80	47.78	28.35	1	99.93
South Downs	49.72	23.21	0.00	0	72.93
Yorkshire Dales	60.00	12.93	65.07	0	138.00
<b>Totals (create and maintain)</b>	<b>247.56</b>	<b>166.03</b>	<b>186.53</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>605.42*</b>

\*The costs above do not include supporting core costs, such as staff resources for project development and planning, associated core support costs, land management advisors/facilitators, finance/project readiness, data and monitoring or project contingency costs. There's also a big gap around costs for river restoration and water quality improvements. A more realistic estimate is expected to be in the region of £800million.