

Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Guildhall,
Frankwell Quay,
Shrewsbury
SY3 8HQ

Date: Wednesday, 5 November
2025

Committee:
Shropshire Hills National Landscape Partnership.

Date: Thursday, 13 November 2025
Time: 9.30 am
Venue: Shropshire Room, Craven Arms Community Centre, Newington Way,
Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 9PS

You are requested to attend the above meeting.
The Agenda is attached

Tim Collard
Service Director – Legal, Governance and Planning

Members of Shropshire Hills National Landscape Partnership.

Alex Carson-Taylor (Chairman)	Sue Steer
David Vasmer	Vacancy
George Hollyhead	Matthew Lawrence
Heather Kidd	Wayne Barnes
Colin Stanford	Harriet Halliday
Mark Boylan	Robert Harris
Emma Bacon	Jim Bunce
Alison Caffyn	Sue Lee
Rachel Cockett	Nigel Jackson
Adrian Cullis	Carol Griffiths
Sue Manns (Vice Chairman)	Charlie Bell
Gillian Preece	Emma Johnson
Francis Acton	Charles Edwards
Tony Haighway	Jenny Rouquette
Ruth Houghton	Nick Read
John Luck	Albert Benghiat
Steve Pennington	Richard Grindle
Sarah Farquhar	Leo Smith

Your Committee Officer is:

Tim Ward Committee Officer

Tel: 01743 257713

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence

2 Minutes of the last meetings (Pages 1 - 6)

The notes of the meetings held on 18 March 2025 and 31 July 2025 are attached for confirmation

3 Landscape Connections

To receive an update from Charlie Bell – National Trust

Report to Follow

4 Shropshire Council Update (Pages 7 - 16)

This paper presents information on Shropshire Council's recently set out new priorities, to support a verbal update to be given at the meeting.

5 Management Plan Review

To receive a verbal update

6 Team Work Programme (Pages 17 - 24)

This paper provides members with an update on recent activity by the National Landscape team.

7 Sustainable Tourism Strategy Update

Report to Follow

8 Farming in Protected Landscape Update

To receive a verbal update from Alison Jones, Farming in Protected Landscapes Adviser

9 New Partnership Structures - looking back and looking forward (Pages 25 - 32)

This paper provides introduces an item to mark the end of the era of this Partnership, looking both backwards and forwards.



Shropshire Hills
National Landscape
Partnership.

13 November 2025

9.30 am

Item

2

Public

**MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP.
MEETING HELD ON 18 MARCH 2025
9.30 AM - 12.00 PM**

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Local Authorities

Shropshire Council

Cllr Cecilia Motley (Vice Chair)

Borough of Telford & Wrekin

Cllr Mark Boylan

Statutory/Voluntary Agencies & Individual members

Individual Member

Alison Caffyn

Individual Member

Rachel Cockett

Individual Member

Sue Manns

Individual Member

Gillian Preece

Town & Parish Council representative

Francis Acton

Town & Parish Council representative

Ruth Houghton

Town & Parish Council representative

John Luck

Acton Scott Heritage Farm

Rachel Lambert Jones

Country Land & Business Association

Alex Carson-Taylor (Chair)

Longmynd & District Bridleways Association

Sue Lee

/ British Horse Society

Middle Marches Community Land Trust

Nigel Jackson

National Farmers Union

Graham Price

Shropshire Geological Society

Albert Benghiat

South Shropshire Climate Action

Nick Read

Upper Onny Wildlife Group

Leo Smith

Observers/Officers

Shropshire Council

Tim Ward (Committee Officer)

Telford & Wrekin Council

Ben Holloway (Ecology & Green Infrastructure Officer)

Shropshire Hills National
Landscape Team

Rachel Glover (Natural Environment Officer)
Phil Holden (National Landscape Team Manager)
Joy Howells (Funding & Programmes Officer)
Nigel McDonald (Sustainable Tourism Officer)

48 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

48.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

48.2 Apologies for absence had been received from Carol Griffiths (NFU) and Rob Harris (Land, Life and Livelihoods). Apologies had also been received from Pete Banford, (Culture & Communities Manager, Shropshire Council).

49 Minutes of the last meeting

49.1 RESOLVED:-

That the note of the last meeting held on 4th February 2025 be approved.

49.2 The Chair gave the following updates: -

a. Cecilia Motley

The Chair advised that this would be Cecilia Motley's last meeting as she was not standing in the forthcoming elections. He thanked her for all the work she had done over her time as a member of the Partnership.

b. Wind Turbine at Bishop's Castle

The Chair informed the Partnership that he had been assured that there were no overhead cables planned as part of the proposals.

50 Modernising Partnership Working

50.1 Members received the report of the National Landscape Team Manager which provided a brief background to a proposed evolution of the current National Landscape structure, including the Partnership, to support more effective partnership working.

50.2 The National Landscape Team Manager gave a short presentation which set out in more detail the proposed changes and the reasons for the change. He advised the Partnership that further consultation would be carried out prior to a report being brought to the next Partnership meeting. The proposed terms of reference would then need to be approved by the Cabinet of each local authority. He added that this would be tied in with the approval of the new Management Plan.

- 50.3 The National Landscape Team Manager asked Members to feed any further comments regarding the proposals back to him.

51 Draft Management Plan

- 51.1 Members received a verbal update on progress with the Management Plan Review. Members then split into groups for a workshop session.
- 51.2 Members were asked to feed back and further comments to the Landscapes Partnership Team Manager.

52 Brief updates from members

- 52.1 Members received updates from some member organisations regarding their current work.

53 Date of Next Meeting

- 53.1 Members were advised that the next meeting of the Partnership would be held on Thursday 31 July 2025.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

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Shropshire Hills
National Landscape
Partnership

13 November 2025

9.30 am

Item

3

Public

**MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP
MEETING HELD ON 31 JULY 2025
9.30 - 12.00 PM**

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Local Authorities

Shropshire Council

Cllr George Hollyhead

Cllr Heather Kidd

Cllr Colin Stanford

Cllr David Vasmer

Statutory/Voluntary Agencies & Individual members

Individual Member

Alison Caffyn

Individual Member

Adrian Cullis

Individual Member

Sue Manns (Vice Chair)

Town & Parish Council representative

Francis Acton

Shropshire Geological Society

Albert Benghiat

Country Land & Business Association

Alex Carson-Taylor (Chair)

Shropshire Good Food Partnership

Daphne Du Cros

Ramblers Association

Charles Edwards

Land, Life & Livelihoods

Robert Harris

Long Mynd & District Bridleways Association

Sue Lee

Forestry Commission

Alan Reid

Observers/Officers

Shropshire Council

Pete Banford (Culture & Communities Manager)

Shropshire Hills National

Rachel Glover (Natural Environment Officer)

Landscape Team

Phil Holden (Shropshire Hills National Landscape
Team Manager)

Alison Kay (Administrator)

Telford & Wrekin Council

Ben Holloway (Biodiversity Technician)

54 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

54.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, including a number of new members.

54.2 Apologies for absence had been received from Rachel Cockett and Sue Steer.

55 Minutes of the last meeting

55.1 Apologies were received from Tim Ward as the minutes of the last meeting were unavailable but would be issued with the papers for the next meeting.

56 Update on Recent River Project Work

56.1 Matthew Lawrence (Environment Agency) was unfortunately unable to attend to give a verbal update and this item was therefore cancelled.

57 Modernising Partnership Working – Proposed Changes to Partnership Structures and Terms of Reference

57.1 Members received a presentation by Phil Holden on the further development of the structure proposal which had been discussed at the 18th March meeting. This had also been worked on by the Strategy & Performance Committee on 10th June.

57.2 Members were given opportunity to voice comments and considerations.

57.3 The Chair summarised that valuable points had been made that needed to be considered and discussed further. The Strategy & Performance Committee would look further at the proposals in its next meeting in September.

58 Management Plan Review

58.1 Members received a presentation by Phil Holden.

58.2 Members took part in short workshop sessions in topic-based groups to provide feedback on the Plan.

59 Date of Next Meeting

59.1 Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Partnership would be held on Thursday 13th November 2025 at 9.30am.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date:



**Shropshire
Hills
National
Landscape**

Committee and Date

Shropshire Hills National Landscape
Partnership

13th November 2025

Item

5

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL UPDATE

Responsible Officer Phil Holden, National Landscape Team Manager
e-mail: phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 254741

Summary

This paper presents information on Shropshire Council's recently set out new priorities, to support a verbal update to be given at the meeting.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to note the information provided and contribute to discussion.

Background

On 25th September a paper was taken to full Council setting out in detail the priorities of the new administration. This is provided as Appendix 1 below. There are many positive connections within this to the National Landscape and the work of the team.

List of Background Papers

None

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal

The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.

Risk Management Appraisal

Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Shropshire Council paper 25th September 'A New Direction for Shropshire'.

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Appendix A: A New Direction for Shropshire

The new Liberal Democrat administration is committed to building a Council that values its residents and staff, delivers services with pride and respect, and operates with transparency and financial discipline.

Our manifesto set the direction we want to see the Council moving in, and this document outlines, in summary, how we will start to deliver on those commitments over the next four years whilst developing a new Shropshire Plan.

Alongside this, we accept that as a Council we must, and will, continue to meet our statutory duties and powers, in the most efficient way possible within the funding available. We must become a 'Can Do Council' and continue to work in partnership with other bodies including enabling our Town and Parish Councils, voluntary groups, and communities to take ownership of local priorities where Shropshire Council can no longer deliver key services alone. We want to work closely with partners at all and every level to improve services for Shropshire residents. Some service areas may need to stop, some brought in-house, some delivered in partnership and some delivered through contract - our focus will be on what works, not on a fixed idealistic approach.

This may mean shifting our role, in particular in those areas where discretionary spend is historically low. This shift should empower Town and Parish Councils, voluntary groups, and communities to take ownership of local priorities.

We are looking for positive change in all areas - we want to challenge everything we do, not for the sake of it, but to make it better. We want to work with all parties to make this a reality.

We are committed to working in partnerships, in local communities where possible, we recognise the importance of our public places in Shropshire and will continue to focus on prevention and address underlying inequalities in our diverse communities which deliver not only better outcomes but have a clear benefit to our long term financial sustainability. We recognise a digital approach can enable us to deliver more efficient local services.

This report outlines the strategic direction of the new Liberal Democrat administration, and will act as a precursor to the development of a new Shropshire Plan. It reflects on the first 100 days of the administration and sets out key objectives for the next four years.

The administration will focus on three key priorities:

i) Financial Recovery and Stability

- Will work with the LGA recommended Improvement Board to stabilise finances within two years.
- Will review capital and CIL spend and funding to support visible service improvements.
- Cabinet declared a Financial Emergency on 10 September following the LGA review.

ii) Contract Reform and Value for Money.

- Develop a new highways contract with in-house teams and modern technologies.
- Review all major contracts, including leisure and waste, for value for money and social impact.

iii) Community Empowerment and Partnership.

- Launch the Shropshire Partnership to enable local delivery.
- Formalise informal powers via Memoranda of Understanding.
- Support community-led initiatives with officer expertise and capital investment.

We will also work to ensure we deliver:

- Improved customer care across digital and phone channels.
- Inclusive planning and housing policies.
- High quality social care for our vulnerable residents.
- Climate-conscious infrastructure and economic development.
- Transparent governance and staff engagement.

We recognise these are our ambitions and that decisions may need to change based on the prevailing financial climate, legislative demands, changes in risk profile and local conditions. These high level objectives will need to be developed in further detail and subject to consultation and equality impact assessments as required.

New Administration

The new Liberal Democrat administration took office in May 2025 and immediately requested an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge review of Council services with an additional focus on social care, key contracts and finances. The findings recommend the establishment of an Improvement Board and shortly afterwards a deterioration in the Council's financial position led to the declaration of a financial emergency.

The first 100 days of the new administration have focused on laying the groundwork for a four-year transformation, building on financial realism, community empowerment, and a firm commitment to change the culture of Shropshire Council creating a focused, energised and 'Can Do' organisation.

Changes in our first 100 days include:

- Filling 7,970 potholes across Shropshire, reducing the number of outstanding repairs by 55% compared to the same period last year.
- Deploying an additional pothole repair team focused on unclassified country lanes, repairing over 500 potholes since late June.
- Launching a major scheme to repair and future-proof the A488 Hope Valley route following five landslips.
- Rolling out Shropshire Local in-person customer service hubs to more communities, including Bishop's Castle and Whitchurch.
- Reducing average call wait times to under eight minutes over the past 12 weeks
- Engaging with our 153 Town and Parish Councils to reset relationships and explore joint service delivery.
- Signing Memoranda of Understanding with several Town and Parish Councils to strengthen new partnership working.

- Beginning work on a new Shropshire Partnership model to empower local communities, voluntary groups, and councils to co-deliver services.
- Improving accessibility and signage at council buildings, including urgent fixes to entrances and wayfinding.
- Coordinating a communications campaign to highlight visible changes and build public confidence in the new administration's approach.
- Achieving an Ofsted judgement of Outstanding for Children's Services.
- Adopting the Domestic Abuse Accommodation Strategy.
- Launching the Autumn/Winter 2025/26 Vaccination and Immunisation Improvement Programme.

Below, we set out our aims and ambitions by portfolio, clarifying our outcomes, approaches and where appropriate any short term actions we intend to take.

Finance

Outcome:

Our priority is to deliver financial recovery and stability into the long term. Our financial position must be strengthened over the short term and the Council remade on a long term sustainable footing. Following the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge review in July 2025, and following a deterioration in the Council's financial position, Cabinet declared a Financial Emergency on 10 September 2025. We are now working to establish an Independently Chaired Improvement and Assurance Board to stabilise our finances and ensure long-term sustainability.

Our approach is to:

- Develop a revised and balanced Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) alongside a new Shropshire Plan.
- Target capital investment to improve income generation, reduce revenue spend, and benefit communities.
- To take the difficult decisions that have not been made previously including possible short-term reductions to services and levels of service provision, whilst meeting our statutory requirements, and increasing fees and charges

Our Short Term Actions are to:

- Work with the independently led Improvement and Assurance Board to stabilise finances within the next two years.
- Review the Capital Programme and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) spend to deliver visible service improvements.

Planning

Outcome:

Planning must become a delivery tool for economic growth, housing, and sustainability. We are committed to making the system more transparent and community-led, with more engagement in policy setting.

Our approach is to:

- Ensure the local plan is made as soon as possible.
- Set 40% affordable homes target over the next four years.
- Provide additional extra-care and supported living sites for older residents

- Improve social sustainability through policies on surface water flooding and drainage.
- Develop planning policy around quality design, alternative technologies and energy-efficient housing.
- Appropriately and more transparently involve local councillors and Parish Councils in planning decisions (minutes more detailed and ensure Local member asked)
- Strengthen enforcement and communication to increase trust in the planning enforcement process

Our Actions are to:

- Review the outdated CIL charging schedule structure to better shape new development and their infrastructure needs

Adult Social Care

Outcome:

We are committed to supporting vulnerable residents through improved care models, local provision and inclusive services enabling older and vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes and close to their informal support networks for as long as possible.

Our approach is to:

- Work with Cornovii, STaR Housing, and other providers to expand supported living accommodation.
- Use existing community facilities through the Shropshire Partnership to support vulnerable people.
- Review and reduce out-of-county care placements where appropriate.
- Improve access to support via Let's Talk Local, aligning with our neighbourhood hubs programme providing direct contact with council staff.
- Promote inclusive employment, transport, and public spaces for disabled and older people.
- Develop services to help people remain safely in their own homes.
- A focus on prevention, early intervention and reducing demand

Children's Services

Outcome:

We are focused on improving outcomes for children and young people through better access, support, early interventions, preventative services and collaboration.

We Note there are several bills going through Parliament currently which will inform or have the ability to change key areas or priorities in this area.

Our policy is to:

- Improve communication with parents and carers through the Education Access Service to continue to improve school attendance.
- Promote uptake of free school meals with support from Shropshire Local
- Lead a national pilot to rebuild inclusive, youth-led services (funded until March 2026) in the form of the Youth Transformation Strategy.
- Expand out-of-hours use of school facilities and promote joint-use schemes where appropriate.
- Use CIL and other funding streams to continue with support for nursery and classroom expansion to meet demand
- Encourage Academy Trusts to collaborate with the Local Authority.

- Accelerate the work to improve timeliness of EHC Needs Assessment and Annual Reviews through permanent sufficient EHCP and Educational Psychology teams.
- Explore new SEND hubs to meet growing demand.
- Embed our placement stability strategy to enable children to remain living within their families, or if this isn't possible, as close to home as possible or within our in-house residential care provision.
- Implement the national Children's Social Care reforms through all aspects of the Families First Partnership programme

Highways and Flooding

Outcome:

We are reforming our highways and flood response services to be more responsive, locally engaged, and focussed on preventative actions.

Our approach is to:

- Develop a new highways service focused on the most efficient and effective delivery model contract focused on in-house delivery and cost control.
- Partner with Town and Parish Councils to maintain highways and Street Scene.
- Improve major engineering schemes and maintenance of A, B, and C roads
- Ensure all road defects are repaired in one visit.
- Enhance drainage infrastructure to reduce flooding and road damage.
- Expand the in-house Flood Risk Management department for design and live response.
- Establish community flood response groups with local contacts and safe gathering points.
- Support the River Severn Valley Water Management Scheme as a national case study.
- Advance an up-river preventative strategy with farmers, landowners, and flood groups.
- Collaborate with the Environment Agency on urban flood resilience projects.
- Deploy sensors on at-risk gullies and support volunteer flood response teams
Set up emergency hubs and improve land drainage team capacity.

Our Short Term Actions are to:

- Improve communications with residents about closures and issues.
- Invest in streetlight repairs and complete the LED conversion as soon as possible.

Waste and Climate

Outcome:

We are committed to improving waste services and addressing climate change through practical, community-focused measures.

Our approach is to:

- Introduce food waste collection, pending government funding.
- Improve recycling rates.
- Support retrofitting of existing homes.
- Promote energy-efficient housing through planning and housing policy.

Our Short Term Actions are to:

- Improve compliance with building regulations, exceed where possible, building regulations and housing quality to support climate resilience.
- Introduce curb side tetra pack recycling from April 2026.

Housing**Outcome:**

We are working to ensure housing provision meets the needs of all residents, with a focus on affordability, warmth, sustainability and security.

Our approach is to:

- Deliver more social rented and affordable homes to high energy efficiency standards.
- Plan for extra care, supported housing, temporary accommodation, and key worker housing.
- Reduce sales of social housing (not impacting on Right to Buy) and upgrade existing stock to EPC rating C where possible
- Review the approach to temporary homes and increase in-house emergency housing.
- Review failed tenancies and what support required to make people tenancy ready / increase tenancy sustainability across all tenures
- Looking at a housing first model to ensure support remains in place for those who most need
- Review adaptations and supporting people to remain longer at home.
- Establish a housing delivery officer

Our Short Term Actions are to:

- Review and reform the housing allocation policy
- Improve partnership working with Registered Social Landlords, STaR Housing and Cornovii.
- Ensure housing need is fed into the local plan

Leisure and Libraries**Outcome:**

We are protecting and enhancing leisure and cultural services to support wellbeing, community life, and local identity.

Our approach is to:

- Review leisure facility management ahead of the new countywide leisure contract (August 2027).
- Work with voluntary groups, trusts, and Town and Parish Councils to support leisure centres
- Use the capital strategy to support leisure infrastructure and reduce revenue burden.
- Explore how libraries can deliver more services and host community initiatives linked to neighbourhood hubs.
- Enhance Shropshire's cultural offering through partnerships with museums and theatres.
- Maintain and improve the Rights of Way network.
- Protect and enhance Shropshire's natural landscapes for residents and tourism.

Our Short Term Actions are to:

- Invest, where possible, capital funds in local services

Transport and Economic Growth**Outcome:**

We are investing in transport and economic development to support connectivity, growth, and opportunity across Shropshire.

Our approach is to:

- Work with communities to introduce safer speed limits.
- Improve Park and Ride services and explore Sunday operations
- Increase capital investment in walking and cycling infrastructure.
- Use limited available funding to protect bus services.
- Advance the Shrewsbury Movement & Public Space Strategy as a cornerstone of the Big Town Plan.
- Develop Movement Plans where there is local support
- Explore increased car parking capacity at Frankwell and Abbey Foregate.
- Lobby for improvements to rail connectivity such as reopening Baschurch Station, a new direct link to London and a Parkway Station to the east of Shrewsbury
- Work with partners to improve rural mobile 'not spots'.
- Support the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan and Future Oswestry Group.
- Develop a new Economic Growth Strategy and Get Shropshire Working Plan.
- From our market towns to the Shropshire Hills National Landscape, and everywhere in between, make better use of the "In Shropshire" brand to promote Shropshire as a place to visit as well as live, work and invest.
- Increase bed capacity to improve the ratio of day to staying visitors from 86:14 to 80:20 by 2029.
- Engage with the Shropshire business community to provide the best possible environment for success.
- Support local farmers and businesses with a policy of buy & spend local, where possible.
- Follow guidelines of Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE).

Our Short Term Actions are to:

- Restart work on the stalled Local Transport Plan.
- Scrap the proposed Multi-Agency Hub at Smithfield Riverside.
- Publish a mobile connectivity map under the River Severn Partnership.

Health and Public Protection

Outcome:

We are committed to improving health and wellbeing outcomes through targeted programmes to reduce inequalities, shift to prevention, neighbourhood-based service delivery, and stronger multi-agency collaboration while ensuring we meet our statutory duties.

Our approach is to:

- Champion a systemwide programme to increase update Vaccinations & Immunisations Improvements Programme (V&IP) with an initial focus on Autumn/Winter 2025/26
- Commit Health in All Policies (HiAP) collaborative approach to improving the health of all people by incorporating health considerations into all Council decision-making
- Establish Neighbourhood Hubs and mini-hubs working with partners and communities to deliver health and wellbeing outcomes, services and support, including co-location with partners and with GP practices where feasible. This includes building on outreach provision into rural areas including sustainable use of mobile buses within the resources available
- Continue to Target improvements where resources allow to areas of highest deprivation including areas experiencing rural deprivation.
- Develop metrics to identify and monitor rural deprivation.
- Work with partners to seek assurance and prioritise the following activity;
 - To ensure the response to NHS reforms doesn't impact negatively on our residents including that adequate local patient safety systems are in place and communicate with local provider plus regional and national patient safety systems.
 - Expand access to community-based and specialist mental health services.
 - Establish a Healthcare Dashboard to monitor urgent and emergency care KPIs.
 - Implement medium-priority improvements in 2026/27, including commissioning reform, ICB funding transfer, increased community bed capacity, expanded therapy provision, and improved dental, mental health, women's health, and sexual health services.
 - Integrate statutory Medical Examiner Reports into the Healthcare Dashboard.
- Ensure private water supply regulation is funded through appropriate charges.
- Ensure delivery of food standards and hygiene inspections are prioritised in accordance with the regulations



**Shropshire
Hills
National
Landscape**

Committee and Date

Shropshire Hills National Landscape
Partnership

13th November 2025

Item

7

SHROPSHIRE HILLS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE TEAM WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Responsible Officer Phil Holden, National Landscape Team Manager
e-mail: phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 254741

Summary

This paper provides members with an update on recent activity by the National Landscape team.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to note the information provided.

Background

TAKING ACTION - on the ground and in our communities - to conserve and enhance natural beauty and to promote enjoyment and understanding.

Farming in Protected Landscapes

2025 – 26 is the fifth year of the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme. We have received 196 grant applications to the programme to date and have funded 184 of them.

We have 43 projects 'in progress' to date in 2025/26 (10 of which are continuing from last year) and have allocated 68% of our delivery budget for the current financial year (£680,871). The Local Assessment Panel continues to meet at six week intervals, and we have a healthy pipeline of projects which we anticipate will enable us to fully spend this year's grant allocation of £1,005,614.

Members of the FiPL team attended Burwarton Show during August to promote the programme and have also held a series of events on Defra Capital Grants during the last month or so in different parts of the National Landscape. FiPL advisers are also running and supporting a range of events for farmers including on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

You can read about how FiPL is supporting farmers in the Shropshire Hills in our case studies [Read about the work of local farming families](#) and [read project summaries](#) for the FiPL projects funded in years 1-4 of the programme.

Defra capital funding

The Team has Defra capital funding of £234,181 in 2025-26 for spend on either of two criteria: 'Innovation, invest-to-save and income generating activities' or '30by30 delivery'. We have been focusing on working with partners to develop projects that meet the 30 by 30 delivery aspect of this, therefore centred on habitat restoration and creation projects of different scales in the area.

To date, we have awarded funding to the following partners and projects

- Middle Marches Community Land Trust – Norbury Hill – habitat restoration of upland acid grassland, wet flush and stream; creation of ffridd habitat.
- Severn Rivers Trust - palaeo-channel reconnection and floodplain restoration on the River Kemp at Walcot, in the Clun catchment.

Other projects that are in development and that we would like to support with this funding include:

- Ancient woodland restoration works – practical works on sites as part of our Ancient Woodland Restoration project with the Woodland Trust (improving access for timber extraction & management operations; fencing to protect from livestock grazing; thinning and crown lifting to increase light levels and woodland structure diversity),
- Wetland creation and riparian corridor enhancements on a headwater site,
- Habitat restoration works of niche habitats on ex-mining sites in Snailbeach, The Bog and other nearby sites.

Ancient Woodland Restoration project

The project is supported by the Woodland Trust until March 2027. Since April work has focused on following up on planting and vegetation management for sites worked on between 2023 and March 2025. We have also sought to continue engagement and the gathering of data to inform possible future works at sites. We have a couple of exciting pipeline projects in the offing but are waiting for confirmation as to their viability and owner engagement.

Upper Clun Headwaters (peatlands) project

A new funding Memorandum of Agreement with Natural England was confirmed in July. Under this we are aiming to take forward the recommendations from the extensive ecohydrology study and peatland mapping that was carried out in 2023-25. The project includes:

- a) Delivery of a public-facing summary report and supporting resources on the ecohydrology of the Clun uplands,
- b) Working with landowners to facilitate the implementation of practical measures to restore the natural hydrology and protect peaty soils in the Clun uplands/ headwaters.

The public-facing summary report is aiming to highlight to a broad and diverse audience the importance of healthy, naturally functioning headwater environments in the Clun catchment. We are in ongoing contact with several landowners about the possible implementation of practical measures, helping to enhance the ecosystem services these areas provide.

Access for All

Defra is also providing capital funding to Protected Landscapes to support improvements in both physical and digital infrastructure, enhancing access for people of all ages, abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds. Our allocation for this financial year is £114,054. Recently approved projects include:

- Changing Places – investment in the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre to improve toilet facilities for people with disabilities;
- Open Horizons – digital and physical infrastructure improvements, including signage, to promote the 'Top 10' accessible viewpoints in the Shropshire Hills.

Young Rangers

The Young Rangers programme continues to engage a broad audience, especially home-educating families and young people aged 12–16. Several participants have remained involved since the project began in 2021, and those now aged 17+ are taking on mentoring roles to guide and support younger participants. For example, one former Young Ranger is currently co-leading woodland craft training sessions alongside the Engagement Ranger, gaining valuable teaching and coaching experience aligned with his chosen career path.

Recent Young Rangers activities have included:

- Coppice restoration at Snailbeach
- Grassland management at Castle Pulverbatch motte and bailey
- A visit to the Curlew Country project in Pennerley
- Accessibility improvements on the Shropshire Way, at Darnford Brook, Ratlinghope.

Outreach and engagement

As part of his role, the Engagement Ranger is actively working with underserved communities across the Shropshire Hills, helping to make nature, heritage, and outdoor experiences more inclusive and accessible. This work is varied, with a focus on delivering walks, talks, and events through established networks such as Social Prescribing, and funded initiatives like the Social Value Fund and Nature Calling.

Recent engagement activities have included:

- Heritage-themed visits for members of the Ukrainian community, delivered in partnership with Shropshire Supports Refugees;
- A guided visit to Snailbeach Mine for a community group supporting individuals living with Parkinson's disease, offering both educational and sensory experiences;
- A presentation on the special qualities of the Shropshire Hills tailored for people living with dementia, designed to spark connection and memory through landscape and storytelling.

Shropshire Hills Shuttle Buses

Since 10th May the bus has carried 1,345 passengers with an income of £4,378. Income and use has already exceeded last year's excellent season and it is estimated that the service had broken even for this year by the end of July.

Stepping Stones project (led by National Trust, supported by team members)

The Upper Onny Farmers Group (UOFG) are now a legal entity (CIC) and have secured some funding for ongoing support. Eight new farmers have joined the group.

Natural Flood Management continues to be a prominent theme of work with farmers. With FiPL funding, Severn Rivers Trust have completed 12 Farm Water Audits and continue to implement recommendations on several Upper Onny farms.

For public engagement, a guided walk was provided for Bishop's Castle Walking Festival in May from The Bog which included meeting two UOFG members on their farms. A successful 'Meet the Farmer' event for the general public was held on May 31st at Coppice Farm. The event was fully booked, excellent feedback and there is a clear appetite from non-farmers for more of these events. Chris Evans from Myndtown Farm gave a talk to a packed Bishop's Castle Town Hall about his farm and the UOFG for the 'Going Wild in BC' project. Duncan Bennett led a farm walk for Clunbury parishioners to showcase what farmers can do towards local nature recovery. Aimed at other farmers, Will Jones led a farm walk to highlight the changes he has made at Brow Farm and the things he has done with FiPL funding. Ben Cooke and Duncan Bennett hosted a visit by the National Landscapes Association Board in September.

Teme Headwaters project development

Discussions are ongoing with partners about the potential for a collaborative Landscape Recovery Scheme or similar bid, focusing on the headwaters of the Teme catchment. The group has drawn on experience from colleagues in the Environment Agency, Natural England, and other farmer cluster groups, sharing knowledge and lessons learnt on the previous two rounds of Landscape Recovery. Further updates on the scheme are being awaited from Defra, including what the scheme's priorities will be for the next round and when it will open for applications..

With funding secured by Severn Rivers Trust, the work with Chris Clarke from Nethergill Associates to carry out advice visits using his [Maximum Sustainable Output \(MSO\)](#) approach on eight farms (5 from UOFG & 3 from the Upper Teme/Clun Forest Groups) has been completed and an evening event was held on June 11th to present this approach and the results to a wider audience. 45 farmers attended, along with several Councillors. Farming to [MSO is a farming approach based on recent studies](#) showing how farm business profitability can be improved, while delivering a positive environmental impact.

Landscape Connections project development (led by National Trust)

The Expression of Interest to National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) submitted in July was successful, with permission given to continue to the full Stage 1 bid for two years of development funding. The target timescale for this bid was initially November but has been put back to the end of February 2026 which is more realistic.

To progress the bid development, working groups have been formed on the following topics with representatives from partner organisations:

- Water
- Centre of Excellence / advice hub
- Pathway of opportunities (engagement, volunteering, training)
- Finance/match funding

- Data, evidence and monitoring
- Farmer engagement

The National Landscape team is providing input to all of these groups.

'Nature Calling' arts project (National Landscapes Association led project)

In the Shropshire Hills, 'Whispers of the Hills' is our community art project bringing together people from diverse backgrounds who face challenges related to neurodiversity, mental health, and social isolation. The project invites people from the Telford and Wrekin area to discover a deeper connection with the National Landscape. Through exploring, observing and listening, participants have immersed themselves into the landscape in ways that activate reflection and presence. Our commissioned artist Roz Donati (Pneuma-affinity) has set up and run nine creative workshops for our project partners who support marginalised members of the Telford community. With support from Joe Penfold, Nigel McDonald and our Student Placement, Knight Sedhain, we have led three field trips and six follow up workshops, to create a finished ceramic installation made of glazed 'ceramic flags.' The participants are from various groups with various special needs who would normally struggle to experience the Shropshire Hills landscape. A celebration event was recently held where the finished pieces are displayed in Telford Town Park. The project webpage and gallery is at [inviting you to enjoy and connect in new ways of experiencing our natural world](#).

INFLUENCING OTHERS - lead and champion the delivery of public benefits from the National Landscape, working strategically and collaboratively from policy to grassroots level.

Management Plan

Feedback was gathered at the Summer Forum in June on the draft Shropshire Hills 5 year plan 'Thriving in balance with Nature', as part of public consultation phase and to raise awareness of the new plan.

Presentations about the draft Plan were also given to the Clun Catchment Partnership in May; High Leasowes group at their AGM in June; CPRE Shropshire's AGM meeting in July, along with a series of online presentations. Across these events and others, we estimate that around 300 people heard the 20 minute presentation during the consultation period. The presentation is also available to view on our website along with a 2-minute audio - [shropshirehills-nl.org.uk/Documents/Thriving in Balance with Nature 2 mins.mp3](https://shropshirehills-nl.org.uk/Documents/Thriving%20in%20Balance%20with%20Nature%202mins.mp3).

A press release was issued along with articles about the draft Plan and public consultation into parish newsletters, CLA magazine and The Farmer. Emails were sent to Councillors, our MP Stuart Anderson, parish and town councils, partnership members, our farmer mailing list and other key stakeholders, encouraging feedback on the new Plan.

A new web-page was developed for the draft Plan's vision - [Shropshire Hills National Landscape Plan, 2025 – 2030](#).

A workshop on Doughnut Economics and regenerative approaches was advertised publicly and held as part of the plan consultation period, with 25 people attending.

The Management Plan public consultation period came to a close in mid-August. We are now working through the consultation responses to make changes to the Plan. The revised draft will then go to Natural England for formal observations before Plan approval.

Planning

We have had no input into planning casework recently. Through the Management Plan consultation we have had some contact with Shropshire Council's planning policy team over plan content and policy.

Strategic tourism work

The team have continued to support the 'In Shropshire' Great Days Out web development work, Shropshire Branding and work to coordinate tourism activity in Telford and Shropshire through the new Local Visitor Economy Partnership. We continue to support the Visit Shropshire Hills committee and Church Stretton Visitor Economy Working Group.

Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust, Conservation Fund and Friends of the Shropshire Hills

Support is ongoing for the 9 projects that have received a Conservation Fund grant this year. Final claims have been processed for the 20 projects to receive a grant in 2024-25, and their project reports are on the website at [read project summaries](#). The next round of funding will be promoted this autumn. Planning is under way for next year's 10th anniversary of the Trust, with a push on encouraging members to Friends and the Business Scheme.

Input into Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

The draft strategy and map was launched for public consultation on 6th August and will remain open until 15th October 2025. Rachel has continued to be part of the LNRS steering group. The group have identified and shaped the habitat priorities and actions for the strategy and work has taken place with species experts to include species specific information in the plan.

Steph has produced 12 case studies for the LNRS, highlighting examples of nature recovery work across a number of different habitats in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

For the remainder of the consultation period, further engagement events, drop-ins, talks at farmer and community meetings are planned, alongside press releases and social media activity to promote the strategy.

Other local partnership work has included:

- Support for Bishop's Castle Walking Festival.
- Support to Edgton and Clunbury Parishes with the farmer engagement in relation to their Local Nature Recovery plans.
- Support to Historic England, partners and the local community for planning the future of Clun Castle grounds.

- Guided walks on the Long Mynd for a youth group, part of the Hill Stories Project, and the Craven Arms Ladies Muslim group.
- Support for the 'Celebrating Shropshire Festival' organising four farm visits/workshops during Aug-Oct for children and families to explore farming and the environment using digital media.
- Attendance at the Shropshire Peat Partnership.
- Support for work through Clun Protected Site Strategy.
- Support for the Stiperstones Landscape NNR

[Stiperstones National Nature Reserve: change to name and site area - GOV.UK](#)

Other Communications and public awareness

The Shropshire Hills Summer Forum and Field Visits were held in June. 80+ people attended for the talks, networking and afternoon field trips.

Members of the team attended the Burwarton Show in August.

Regular posts are made on Facebook and Instagram and regular updates are made to the website, and new webpages. Regular news items are added to the website and a newsletter was sent out in September.

MANAGING OUR BUSINESS - develop a robust, effective and financially sustainable National Landscape team and Partnership.

Shropshire Hills National Landscape Partnership

The Partnership met on July 31st and discussed the Management plan review and proposals for modernising partnership working.

National Landscapes Association

The National Association Board visited Shropshire in September for an in person meeting and also undertook two farm visits with members of the team.

National Landscape Team and office

There have been no significant changes regarding the team or office.

Knight Sedhain who is with us for a year as a student placement from the University of Birmingham tourism course won an award from the Tourism Management Institute.

List of Background Papers

None

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.
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Environmental Appraisal

The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.

Risk Management Appraisal

Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.

Appendices

None



**Shropshire
Hills
National
Landscape**

Committee and Date

Shropshire Hills National Landscape
Partnership

13th November 2025

Item

10

NEW PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURES - LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

Responsible Officer Phil Holden, National Landscape Team Manager
e-mail: phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 254741

Summary

This paper provides introduces an item to mark the end of the era of this Partnership, looking both backwards and forwards.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to contribute to discussion on the successes of the Partnership and how the new structures can deliver even more.

Background

The revisions to structures for the Shropshire Hills National Landscape have been refined over a number of meetings this year of both the Partnership and the Strategy & Performance Committee. Approval together of the Management Plan and the new Advisory Committee Terms of Reference is now scheduled for meetings of the two Council Cabinets this winter. The new structure will include:

- A new **Advisory Committee** of 12 people will oversee work of the Team and advise regarding the National Landscape as necessary. This will have appointees from both Councils plus 7 open seats recruited through an application process. This will be a formal 'joint advisory committee' to the two Councils. The recruitment process for the new Committee will start soon.
- Closer working arrangements with **key delivery partners**. Many of these organisations are public bodies with a legal duty for the National Landscape, but other organisations working at scale are also included. Arrangements will be flexible and may include online and in person meetings, email briefings and topic working groups.
- A broad new **Forum** will be formed and will meet twice a year in a relatively informal event format, similar to the summer Forum we have run in recent years. This will be open to anyone who wishes to participate and to support the National Landscape. Key delivery partners and members of the Advisory Committee will automatically be part of this and encouraged to attend, but it will also enable wider engagement for the National Landscape than currently. The Team are starting to plan 2026 events.

This agenda item will include discussion on how members can contribute to work of the National Landscape in future, and appreciation of members past and present, and work of the Partnership over the years.

The recent National Landscapes Association briefing paper on the future of National Landscapes to 2050 is included as Appendix 1 for information and as a basis for discussion.

List of Background Papers None
Human Rights Act Appraisal The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.
Environmental Appraisal The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.
Risk Management Appraisal Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.
Community / Consultations Appraisal The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.
Appendices Appendix 1 National Landscapes Association Briefing paper October 2025 'The Future of National Landscapes'

The future of National Landscapes

For people, for nature, for good

Hannah Wilcox Brooke



Briefing October 2025

Summary

National Landscapes are places where people and nature thrive together, benefitting one another in a range of diverse and often compounding ways. These legally protected areas combine landscape-scale thinking, local connections and proven delivery of national priorities, while supporting biodiversity, climate resilience, community wellbeing and helping to create sustainable local economies. This Briefing highlights our latest thinking on these benefits, outlining how targeted investment can create a vision of prosperity for the future for National Landscapes, with positive impacts for the rest of the UK:

1. **Setting the scene for the future** – what could National Landscapes be and do in 2050?
2. **The value provided by National Landscapes today** – their environmental, economic, and social contributions.
3. **A vision for 2050** – where thriving, connected, resilient landscapes can continue delivering for nature, people, and prosperity in the UK.
4. **Why 2050 needs investment now** – the funding gap, the urgency of action, and the significant opportunity.
5. **Investment pathways 2025 to 2050** – how targeted investment in nature, climate, community prosperity, and inclusion will yield measurable return.
6. **Joining forces for good with partnership working** – why partners should act now to make this vision a reality.

1. Setting the scene for the future

Imagine the UK in 2050: wetlands teeming with life, woodlands flourishing, rivers running clear and grasslands vibrant and strong. Farming and nature are deeply integrated, and the soil is healthy and resilient. Towns and villages are supported by strong local services, accessible housing, sustainable food systems and diverse opportunities for everyone. Communities are healthier, more prosperous and more equal. Public places within National Landscapes are truly accessible to people from both urban and rural locations and everyone feels safe and welcome. Sustainable landscape tourism and heritage also attract visitors locally and globally, supporting small businesses and boosting economies. Children grow up connected to nature and heritage and have access to sustainable, locally grown food.

Contrary to what we often see in the media this future is still possible, but only if we invest both time and resources now. Expert and dedicated teams from across 46 National Landscapes (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are already working to make this future a reality. Covering 15% of the land area, these national designations, protected for the nation's benefit, are positioned to further benefit people, nature and society at scale.

Central question: *What kind of landscapes do we want to pass on in 2050 and how do we get there?*

2. The value provided by National Landscapes today

Environmental benefits

- **Tackling climate change through carbon capture:** It is estimated that National Landscapes store at least 17.5% of England's total soil carbon (448 million tonnes)¹. They encompass 20% of England's total woodland cover and 30% of its ancient woodland². England's peatlands alone store 580 million tonnes of carbon³, yet degraded ones emit 3.7m tonnes annually⁴. 27% of England's blanket bog can be found in the North Pennines National Landscape⁵.
- **Regulating air quality for a healthy world and population:** keeping National Landscapes healthy improves air quality by protecting and restoring habitats such as woodlands, wetlands and grasslands, all of which naturally filter pollutants. According to the Office for National Statistics⁶, in 2023 UK ecosystems removed nearly 1.37m tonnes of harmful air pollutants, reducing respiratory illness and saving an estimated £15m⁷ in healthcare costs.
- **Providing space for nature hotspots to meet global targets:** due to their reach and geographical spread, National Landscapes serve as biodiversity reservoirs that radiate out across the country, safeguarding some of the UK's richest and most threatened ecosystems, overlapping priority habitats and protected sites, and providing vital refuges for nationally important species, many of which are in decline.

Economic benefits

- **At the core of tourism and leisure:** in 2024, over £300m of UK tourism spend was attributable to natural capital⁸. National Landscapes host 166,000,000 visits per year⁹. In areas such as the Cotswolds, nature-based tourism alone provides thousands of jobs which are vital to local people and economies.
- **Delivering for local economies¹⁰:** National Landscapes contribute an estimated £49 billion to the UK economy. 800,285 people work in National Landscapes with 122,000 business, of which 91% constitute 'microbusinesses' of nine or fewer employees. National Landscapes are at the core of supporting farming, small businesses and rural supply chains in these areas.
- **Volunteer contributions:** in 2023, National Landscapes teams brought people together for 37,000 volunteer days, worth £3.7 million¹¹. These efforts strengthened communities, offered hands-on experience and helped tackle loneliness through shared purpose and connection.
- **Natural capital asset value:** according to the Office for National Statistics, the UK's ecosystems have an estimated natural capital asset value of £1.8 trillion (2022)¹². National Landscapes hold a disproportionate share due to their richness in priority habitats and cultural services.

¹ Soil carbon audit conducted by Cranfield University on behalf of National Landscapes, 2022

² <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/>

³ <https://naturalengland.blog.gov.uk/2019/08/12/peat-pilots-set-to-revive-english-peatlands/>

⁴ <https://iucn.org/fr/node/16144>

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

⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/uknaturalcapitalaccounts/2024/relateddata>

⁷ https://www.protectedlandscapespartnership.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Socio-economic-research-Technical-Report_FINAL_clean.pdf

⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/uknaturalcapitalaccounts/2024>

⁹ https://www.protectedlandscapespartnership.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Socio-economic-research-Technical-Report_FINAL_clean.pdf

¹⁰ https://www.protectedlandscapespartnership.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Socio-economic-research-Technical-Report_FINAL_clean.pdf

¹¹ https://www.protectedlandscapespartnership.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Socio-economic-research-Technical-Report_FINAL_clean.pdf

¹² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/uknaturalcapitalaccounts/2024>

Social and cultural benefits

- **Supporting the NHS through health and wellbeing:** according to a report from the Office for National Statistics, health benefits from recreation made the largest contribution to the total asset value of UK ecosystem services, at £489 billion in 2022¹³. National Landscapes provide accessible green and blue spaces that improve physical and mental health, reduce stress, and enhance quality of life.
- **Championing education and heritage:** these landscapes act as living classrooms and cultural anchors, offering environmental education, skills development and the preservation of local heritage and identity. As part of Generation Green 2, National Landscapes teams delivered 2,700 outdoor experiences for young people in just ten months, including 600 farm visits, 900 residential experiences and 1,200 day experiences¹⁴.
- **Accessibility and connection:** two-thirds of the population of England lives within 30 minutes of a National Landscape¹⁵, making them highly inclusive, providing people from all backgrounds with the opportunity to visit.

3. The vision for 2050

With forward-thinking and targeted investment, these benefits could be scaled up to better serve the whole of the UK. National Landscapes teams have strong networks and relationships with landowners and multiple stakeholders across their areas, and existing convening power and knowledge to inject investment where it can have the greatest impact. With strong foundations, established partnerships, and proven experience already in place, increasing investment in National Landscapes (and other protected areas) offers greater value and impact than attempting to build similar capacity elsewhere from the ground up.

By 2050, National Landscapes could:

- **Be places where people live in harmony with nature:** nature should be woven throughout the whole of UK, with no empty patches. By 2050, National Landscapes could be vibrant hubs of energy and connection, places where a thriving natural world includes people, and the symbiotic relationship between humans and nature is realising its full potential.
- **Nature is restored and thriving:** by 2050, National Landscapes could teem with life, from pollinators to healthy soils. This abundance would not only restore nature but also secure the natural systems that underpin our food production, making the UK's landscapes both ecologically rich and food secure.
- **Deliver climate resilience:** peatlands, woodlands, grasslands and wetlands should be at the core of efforts to generate land-based carbon reductions and maintain carbon storage. According to the National Soil Map written by Cranfield University (updated in 2016), soils in National Landscapes currently store 448m tonnes of carbon, accounting for 17.5% of England's soil carbon storage. With one third of peatlands in National Landscapes already in recovery, there is great work to build on, and the knowledge and skills to make an even bigger contribution by 2050. The Government's Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework earmarks several of these habitats for targeted improvement, so baselines and monitoring will be in place. These areas should be central to the green economy, acting as hubs of activity for green jobs, sustainable farming and eco-tourism, supporting resilient local economies.

¹³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/uknaturalcapitalaccounts/2024>

¹⁴ https://national-landscapes.files.svdcn.com/production/assets/images/Documents/Reports/NLA_Year-End-2024-to-2025-spreads.pdf

¹⁵ https://mendiphills-nl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/So_much_more_than_the_view1.pdf

- **Provide universal access to all for health and recreation:** every person throughout the UK, regardless of background, could be benefiting from high-quality green spaces. By 2050, National Landscapes could have provided enormous savings for the NHS through preventative medicine and green prescribing, while providing crucial natural infrastructure to improve the UK's ever-increasing mental health crisis, in a way that is both impactful and cost-efficient
- **Be places of education and enriched culture:** National Landscapes have the potential to strengthen national identity and foster a deep sense of place, community and shared heritage. By 2050 these benefits could be woven into the everyday lives of communities and individuals across the UK.

4. Why 2050 needs investment now

Natural England's 2024 *State of Natural Capital*¹⁶ report confirms many UK habitats remain in poor condition, with funding far below what is needed to meet biodiversity and climate targets. But this work cannot happen in isolation; habitats need nature-rich connectivity at a landscape-scale to see significant improvements. In this context, targeting investments towards National Landscapes makes sense.

- **Return on investment:** every £1 spent on natural capital yields multiple economic returns in myriad ways including decreased health costs, reduced flood damage, pollination and increased tourism revenue. Investment in National Landscapes provides tangible and holistic benefits for all of society, public services, and the economy, creating a better environment for people and businesses to thrive.
- **A ready-to-scale network:** National Landscapes already bring together multiple institutional and individual partners, trusted community connections and proven delivery methods. Working with National Landscapes provides access to a network of knowledgeable and experienced teams. Innovative and agile, these teams are used to delivering a lot with only a little – including the deep collaboration needed to secure delivery of their statutory purposes. While excellent partnerships have been developed, expanding and strengthening these collaborations will be vital to meet the increasing and ever-changing challenges we face.
- **Benefitting all and respecting public opinion:** according to a study produced by Wildlife and Countryside Link in March 2022, 74% of the public want the government to give National Landscapes more money to help them restore nature¹⁷. This level of support represents not only the high use that many National Landscapes experience; it also represents the positive emotional and practical connections that people have with these special places.

5. Investment pathways 2025 to 2050

To support this vision, we have identified four key themes for investment in National Landscapes to deliver the most for people and nature in 2025.

1. **Nature recovery** – supporting large-scale habitat restoration and species recovery, using landscapes approaches to ensure that people and nature recover together.
2. **Climate action** – supporting peatland, woodland and floodplain restoration and regenerative farming, preserving the approximate stocks of 448 million tonnes of carbon, while reducing flood damage costs. Sequestering and maintaining storage of more carbon through tree and hedgerow planting and growth and other habitat creation.

¹⁶ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6683489974616064>

¹⁷ <https://www.wcl.org.uk/people-want-englands-national-parks-and-aonbs-to-be-rich-in-nature.asp>

3. **Community prosperity** – supporting rural enterprise, eco-tourism and nature-based jobs. This targeted investment could create thousands of new green jobs whilst strengthening existing communities and businesses, resulting in a measurable uplift in local economies.
4. **Access and inclusion** – creating programmes and opportunities that prioritise equity, diversity and inclusion will ensure that all individuals can experience and benefit from nature and the outdoors. Expanding fair access to green environments will contribute to improved wellbeing and greater social equity.

6. Joining forces for good – with partnership working

Then

In 1949, the Government passed the *National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act*, a landmark piece of legislation that shaped the landscapes we cherish today. It laid the foundations for National Landscapes (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and National Parks, recognising the vital role that access to nature plays in people's lives, health and wellbeing.

In 1956, the Gower peninsula became the first National Landscape, recognised for its sweeping coastal beauty and vibrant natural heritage. It was soon followed by the Llŷn peninsula and the Quantock Hills. Today, 46 areas across England, Wales and Northern Ireland hold this designation with the most recent being the Tamar Valley, straddling the Devon and Cornwall border.

The National Landscapes Association was established to bring this growing family together. As a national charity, we unite and support the UK's National Landscapes and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty by strengthening local teams, sharing knowledge, and building partnerships that turn shared ambition into lasting impact.

Now

Our vision is beautiful landscapes where nature and people thrive together.

Our mission is to lead and champion collective action across the National Landscapes network by protecting and restoring the UK's most outstanding places and ensuring that everyone can access and benefit from them.

We are working at the intersection of nature recovery, climate resilience and social equity. Together with partners, we are driving practical solutions: from restoring peatlands that lock away carbon, to supporting communities facing coastal erosion, to opening up green and blue spaces for public health and wellbeing.

Every collaboration strengthens our impact. Every investment in partnership accelerates progress, unlocking innovation, efficiency and shared success across local and national levels.

For good

We have an opportunity and a responsibility to act together for lasting change.

By joining forces with partners who share our values and vision we can create a future where:

- Coastal communities adapt to rising seas with nature-based resilience.
- Rural communities thrive through sustainable land use and rich nature.
- Urban communities enjoy equitable access to green and blue spaces that enhance health and wellbeing.

National Landscapes are more than beautiful places; they are part of the living infrastructure of our nation's future. They store carbon, prevent flooding, nurture wildlife, sustain livelihoods and provide places where people can experience joy and wonder.

Investing in National Landscapes will help to secure a sustainable future in social, environmental and economic terms.

Because when we work together, across sectors and beyond boundaries, nature recovers, communities thrive and quality of life improves.

Together, we can create landscapes for life. For people, for nature, for good.

About this Briefing

National Landscapes Briefings offer a summary of key findings and recommendations arising from National Landscapes' action and insight.

About the National Landscapes Association

We are a registered charity that supports the mission to conserve and enhance natural beauty in National Landscapes and other protected areas. National Landscape teams across the UK work to achieve a sustainable balance of priorities at the landscape scale. One of our key aims is to support and develop a network of ambitious National Landscape teams and partnerships that have a strong collective voice and a positive impact on the places for which

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