THE PARTNERSHIP’S PLAN 2015 – 2020

1 SUMMARY

1.1 This report is to update you on progress on the production of the new Partnership’s Plan – the Management Plan for the Lake District as a National Park and prospective World Heritage Site for the period 2015-2020 - and to seek your ‘in principle’ agreement on the emerging strategic approaches.

Recommendation that the Partnership:

- Agree, in principle, the draft approaches to achieving the Vision outcomes and managing the Lake District’s Special Qualities – presented in Annex 1 – subject to accommodating recommendations made during the facilitated workshop at this meeting
- Approves that the LDNPA takes the work forward to incorporate the recommendations, working with the established thematic sub groups as required.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 At the March 2014 Partnership meeting, you gave your support to the outline approach, scope and timeline for the production of the 2015-20 Partnership’s Plan. This included the proposal to produce a single integrated Plan to meet the Management Plan requirements for the Lake District as both a National Park and World Heritage Site.

2.2 At the March meeting you identified the starting point was to integrate the attributes of the Lake District World Heritage Site’s Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) with the Special Qualities of the Lake District National Park, to create a single definitive list of Special Qualities that accurately and comprehensively capture the importance of the Lake District. This review has been completed and the revised Special Qualities also provide a clear and specific outcome for the Lake District, that the Partnership’s Plan is seeking to achieve. These are provided in Annex 2 for information.

2.3 The strategic approaches outlined in Annex 1 have been shaped significantly by the work of the four Partnership subgroups – each of which have been focused on individual Vision themes. These approaches have also been informed by a wealth of evidence, information and other awareness, for example, the Trees, Woodlands and Forestry Strategy 2013, Cumbria Destination Management Plan, Agriculture in the Lake District 2013 Intention Statement and the Cumbria Housing Strategy 2011 – 2015.

2.4 The work that has been completed to date is set out in Annex 1. This very much reflects the views of all those Partners who have attended the sub-group meetings in addition to the Authority’s own input and influence, and there has also been subsequent feedback from the Farming and Forestry Taskforce, Business Taskforce and the Authority’s Park Strategy and Vision Committee, which will be used in the further refinement of these approaches.

2.5 The approaches are deliberately and necessarily aspirational – looking to realising the 2030 Vision and the effective management of the Special Qualities holistically. What may realistically be achievable during the plan period will be identified through action planning, which will commence in September 2014.
3 PROPOSALS

3.1 You are being asked to give your ‘in principle’ support to these strategic approaches after a workshop session which is designed to enable you to indicate which areas you particularly support or have concerns over, and to identify any possible omissions. During this workshop we will work together to make recommendations on how to best address these concerns and omissions, which will be used to further refine these approaches - the aim being to reach a consensus over these, for agreement at the September meeting prior to consultation.

4 NEXT STEPS

4.1 Between now and the end of August we will be focused on document production. The approaches in Annex 1 will need to be illustrated spatially where appropriate, at a whole Park and Distinctive Area scale. This will make local interpretation easier, assisting with Valley Plan production. A significant component of the document will also be a narrative to explain the issues and opportunities and why the Partnership has chosen these particular approaches to managing the Lake District – as well as how this will deliver the Vision and manage the Special Qualities. There are also some more detailed specific requirements of the Plan, particularly from a World Heritage Site perspective, which need to be included.

4.2 A detailed plan for public consultation and external communications is currently being developed. The intention is to integrate consultation on the Partnership’s Plan with the need to raise awareness and excitement around the World Heritage Site opportunity including the benefits of and proposals for rolling out Valley Planning across the Lake District. Public consultation is scheduled for October and November 2014.

5 FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 There are no financial considerations for the Partnership arising specifically from the recommendation within this paper.

Background Papers: Annex 1 is of particular importance
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Date Written: 11 June 2014
ANNEX 1: DRAFT APPROACHES TO DELIVERING THE VISION THEME OUTCOMES AND MANAGING THE SPECIAL QUALITIES

Prosperous Economy

Vision for the Lake District
“An inspirational example of sustainable development in action”

It will be a place where a prosperous economy, world class visitor experiences and vibrant communities come together to sustain the spectacular landscape, its wildlife and culture.

Vision outcome for a prosperous economy
Businesses will locate in the National Park because they value the quality of opportunity, environment and lifestyle it offers – many will draw on a strong connection to the landscape. Entrepreneurial spirit will be nurtured across all sectors and traditional industries maintained to ensure a diverse economy.

1. Creating conditions for diverse business growth
   - Provision of infrastructure:
     - digital: broadband and mobile connectivity everywhere
     - easy access by a range of modes to/from Rural Service Centres where significant growth is encouraged and to strategic road and rail networks
   - Using environmental characteristics sensitively to best effect
   - Supporting businesses with advice and easing regulation
   - Availability of suitable land and buildings particularly in Rural Service Centres
   - Availability of a suitably skilled workforce (links to Vibrant Communities)
   - Increasing market awareness and appeal of the Lake District to a wide range of businesses

2. Profitable land and water industries
   - Maximising profitability and resilience of land and water industry
   - Identify the full range of products and services that have market value
   - Ensuring profitability through diversification (where needed)

3. Maximising spend for domestic and international visitor markets
   - A year round visitor industry
   - Providing a consistently high quality experience (links to World Class Visitor Experience)
   - Identified audiences and targeted marketing
   - Encourage longer stays

Strategies for a prosperous economy

1. Creating conditions for diverse business growth

Provision of infrastructure
   - Digital Infrastructure
     Our strategy is to have superfast broadband, mobile telephone and mobile internet coverage in every valley, bringing businesses and customers together to enable businesses to locate wherever they wish, by securing funding and
commitment to deliver improvement projects and supporting community led initiatives.

- **Road/rail/water access**
  
  Our strategy is to:
  
  a. Encourage businesses that require good access or transport infrastructure to be located in Rural Service Centres, where these requirements can be most readily met through the multi modal corridors that serve them (see map but include Distinctive Area info).
  
  b. Recognise the importance of trunk roads providing access to and from West Cumbria which pass through the Lake District, and support management initiatives and upgrades which are sensitive to the Special Qualities of the Lake District.

- **Using environmental characteristics sensitively to best effect**
  
  Our strategy is to:
  
  a. Develop and support initiatives and projects that reduce the overall cost of fuel and energy through a combination of energy efficiency and local scale energy generation.
  
  b. Establish the feasibility and assist with the formulation of initiatives at a local scale to support the effective use of land and water resources (including underground) as a source of energy, creating energy neutral valleys.
  
  c. Ensure the Lake District is afforded the highest level of protection by rigorously examining proposals for major development, only permitting those with exceptional circumstances that meet the tests in the adopted planning framework.
  
  d. Support proposals for Geological Disposal Facilities only where they do not prejudice the Lake District or its setting and where they would not adversely impact on its Special Qualities or the visitor economy of Cumbria.

**Supporting businesses with advice and easing regulation**

- Our strategy is to:
  
  a. Work together to identify and implement opportunities to simplify and streamline the regulatory environment for businesses through the establishment of a regulatory task force which can implement changes and provide a voice to lobby.
  
  b. Ensure businesses have access to a wide range of support and advice through appropriate bodies, such as the Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency, and Cumbria Business Growth Hub.

**Availability of land and buildings in Rural Service Centres**

- Our strategy it to maintain the supply of suitable available land and buildings in all Rural Service Centres in our Local Plan and secure their uptake (through market awareness, appeal, and promotion).

**Availability of a suitably skilled workforce**

- Our strategy is to:
  
  a. Foster communities with a balanced demographic of people which thereby provide a pool of people of working age (see Vibrant Communities).
b. Identify and address skills gaps in the local workforce, bringing together training and education providers with prospective and existing employers/industries.

c. Support traditional skills necessary for maintenance of the authenticity of the cultural landscape by providing training opportunities and events, and working with education providers and business to address skills gaps.

**Market awareness, appeal and promotion**

- Our strategy is to promote the Lake District as a desirable place to locate businesses on the basis of a supportive planning framework, digital infrastructure, workforce, quality of life and environment everywhere. We will specifically promote Rural Service Centres as they offer the best access to different areas within and beyond the Lake District.

**2. Profitable land and water industries**

- Our strategy is to:
  
  a. Support land industries to remain/become profitable through adding value to their products, securing opportunities for greater efficiencies, identifying and establishing new markets and/or products including through diversification, thereby reaching a position where revenue subsidy is not relied upon.
  
  b. Maximise the relevant opportunities for Lake District land industries to access funding to transform businesses to remain/become profitable by influencing the design and coordinating the delivery of funding streams.

  c. Actively monitor to identify threats to land and water industries (such as disease with ‘product’ species). Where identified, we will urgently establish the nature and likelihood of the risk to industry and respond as appropriate.

**3. Maximising the benefit from domestic and international visitor markets**

**A Year Round Visitor Industry**

- Our strategy is to work in partnership to deliver the Destination Management Plan and support campaigns within the Tourism Marketing Strategy for the Lake District - promoting the Lake District as a year round destination by identifying the experiences it offers to a range of audiences at different times of year, with a particular focus on four priority visitor markets:
  
  - Landscape and environment
  - Culture and heritage
  - Adventure
  - Hospitality, food and drink

  We will identify who and where the audiences are for each of the four priority visitor sectors and market accordingly.

**Encourage longer Stays**

- Our strategy is to:
  
  Increase the number of overnight stays by rebuilding the Lake District’s cultural tourism brand to showcase its high quality arts and cultural offer and take advantage of the Lake District’s candidate World Heritage Site status to draw longer stays of visitors from both the UK and overseas through implementation of the Cultural Tourism Strategy.
To establish International Cultural Destination Corridors which showcase the best of the cultural tourism offer to make it easier for international visitors to access and experience World Heritage Site assets (see map).
World Class Visitor Experience

The Vision
“An inspirational example of sustainable development in action”

It will be a place where a prosperous economy, world class visitor experiences and vibrant communities come together to sustain the spectacular landscape, its wildlife and culture.

Vision outcome for a world class visitor experience
High quality and unique experiences for visitors within a stunning and globally significant landscape. These will be experiences that compete with the best in the international market.

1. **Quality for Every Visitor**
   - Diversity and availability of high standard accommodation for all budgets
   - Distinctive settlement character and quality public realm
   - Ease of access to and within the Lake District, clear and easy orientation and choice of attractive (i.e. cost, quality, novelty) travel option
   - Available and accessible information for visitors
   - Visitor Giving

2. **Understanding and appreciation of why the Lake District is special and unique**
   - Focus on Special Qualities and attributes of OUV

3. **Opportunity for experiences in a unique landscape**
   - Landscape and environment
   - Culture and heritage
   - Adventure
   - Hospitality, food and drink

Strategies for world class visitor experience

1. **Quality for Every Visitor**
   - Diversity and availability of high standard accommodation for all budgets
   
   Our strategy is to:
   a. Enable all types of accommodation providers to meet continuously changing domestic and international visitor expectations by maintaining an appropriately supportive planning framework. Within this framework particular support will be given to proposals that meet the requirements of international visitors within the three ‘International Cultural Destination Corridors’.
   b. Improve quality through skills and training (See Prosperous Economy strategy ‘Availability of suitably skilled workforce’).
   c. Support accommodation providers to enhance the quality of their offer by providing incentives for quality improvements.

   - **Distinctive settlement character, quality public realm and amenities**
   
   Our strategy is to enhance public realm and amenities, prioritising enhancements in Rural Service Centres and Conservation Areas, through
developing, supporting and encouraging schemes and initiatives to enable funding or commitment to be secured for their implementation in a coordinated and consistent way, in order to achieve the highest quality built environment (See Spectacular Landscape strategy).

- **Ease of access to and within the Lake District, clear and easy orientation and choice of attractive travel options**
  Our strategy is to transform visitor movement to, from and around the Lake District (see map), focussing on changing visitor travel behaviour by:
  a. Influencing operators of train, coach and bus services to provide frequent and direct services between Britain’s major conurbations, international airports and the Lake District Gateways (see map).
  b. Enhancing access and orientation at Gateways by developing programmes and projects and secure funding for their delivery.
  c. Offering a range of attractive cohesive travel options in every Distinctive Area by developing programmes, projects and securing funding to enhance visitor travel and movement. This will be guided by the visitor movement maps for each Distinctive Area building upon the legacy of the GoLakes Travel Programme with priority given to delivery within the International Cultural Destination Corridors.
  d. Supporting the integration of travel and attractions through tailored packages and offers by working with operators and businesses to develop and pilot proposals.

- **Available and accessible information for visitors**
  Our strategy is to:
  a. Ensure visitors are able to easily access information relevant to them through a range of means and languages, with particular focus on provision of information centres, mobile applications and web-based information, supported by a single high-profile official visitor web page and application.
  b. Ensure visitors have access to superfast broadband, mobile telephone and mobile internet coverage in every valley through identification, implementation and support for appropriate proposals, such as open WiFi networks and mast sharing (See Prosperous Economy strategy).

- **Visitor Giving**
  Our strategy is to:
  a. Enable a step change in selective visitor contributions through the identification and implementation of appropriate mechanisms of collection.
  b. We will bring together interested bodies, including third sector and charities, to develop and implement appropriate mechanisms for distribution of monies generated from visitor giving.

2. **Understanding and appreciation of why the Lake District is special and unique with a focus on Special Qualities**
   Our strategy is to ensure a range of formal and informal education opportunities are provided and tailored to the needs of different audiences to embed understanding and appreciation of the Special Qualities within visitor information sources and events. This will be achieved through identifying and communicating how and where these Special Qualities can be seen, appreciated
and experienced. We will work in partnership with a full range of providers to maintain and implement an up-to-date learning strategy.

3. **Opportunity for experiences in a unique landscape**

Our strategy is to offer experiences for visitors that enhance understanding and appreciation of the Special Qualities, using the inspiration of the past to realise opportunities in the future, all within a unique landscape, by focussing on our key visitor markets as follows:

- **Landscape and environment**
  - Re-establish existing and exploring the potential for new viewing stations from where the spectacular landscape can be fully appreciated.
  - Implement the Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy to develop an integrated network of access, recreation and transport facilities on both land and water within the spectacular landscape.

- **Culture and heritage**
  Showcase the Lake District as a World Heritage Site, capitalising upon the cultural landscape and unique world class visitor offer, by using the Cultural Tourism Strategy to establish and identify clear brand identity to enable relevant destinations and attractions to provide a comprehensive cultural tourism offer, with a particular emphasis on the International Cultural Destination Corridors.

- **Adventure**
  - Promote and create new and existing opportunities for outdoor adventure on foot, water, bicycles, ropes, and events derived from and complementing the unique landscape such as through delivery of the AdCap Strategy and Action Plan, and Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy.
  - Promote responsible tourism by encouraging organisers ensure their events are sensitively managed by undertaking community engagement and consultation to develop event management plans, and supporting organisers with guidance and information.

- **Hospitality, food and drink**
  - Establish and promote a programme of events aimed at industry and visitors, such as markets selling local produce, to raise the profile, inform, and celebrate the provenance and quality of Cumbria’s food and drink offer.
  - Achieve a consistently high standard of hospitality through providing appropriate incentives and support to the visitor industry.
Vibrant Communities

Vision for the Lake District
“An inspirational example of sustainable development in action”

It will be a place where a prosperous economy, world class visitor experiences and vibrant communities come together to sustain the spectacular landscape, its wildlife and culture.

Vision outcome for vibrant communities
People successfully living, working and relaxing within upland, valley and lakeside places where distinctive local character is maintained and celebrated

How will the outcome be achieved?
1. Affordable Quality of Life
   - Access to services
   - Access to a range of year-round employment opportunities
   - Reasonable living costs
2. Sufficient population and demographically balanced communities
   - Availability and supply of a full range of housing types, sizes and tenures
   - A high proportion of housing in permanent occupation
3. Health and wellbeing
   - Access to high quality amenity and recreation open spaces and facilities
   - Pride in and a sense of ownership of the local environment and distinctive character
   - Safe communities and low crime

Strategies for vibrant communities

1. Affordable Quality of Life
   - Access to services.
   
   Our strategy is to:
   a. Seek to sustain and increase local service provision, particularly in Rural Service Centres and Villages by achieving sufficient and demographically balanced population.
   b. Support initiatives throughout the Lake District which provide access to a wider range of services including mobile services and the multi-use of community buildings and businesses, as well as improved access to superfast broadband.
   c. Enhance access to services provided in Rural Service Centres and Villages, and outside the Lake District in Key Service Centres, through visitor-orientated improvements to travel options in all corridors (link to World Class Visitor Experience) that also benefit resident communities.
   d. Support self-help initiatives within communities to enhance access to services, housing and transport.

   - Access to a range of year-round employment opportunities
   
   Our strategy is to:
a. Reinforce the role of Rural Service Centres for employment provision and their key linkages to other areas and their employment opportunities via multi-modal corridors.
b. Assist communities to self-help themselves by supporting their initiatives that enhance access to and between Rural Service Centres, multi-modal corridors and their hinterlands – in order to maximise easy access to employment and services.

- **Reasonable fuel and energy costs**
  Our strategy is to develop and support initiatives and projects that reduce the overall cost of fuel/energy through a combination of energy efficiency and community-scale energy generation/schemes.

2. **Sufficient population and demographically balanced communities**

- **Availability and supply of a full range of housing types, sizes and tenures**
  Our strategy is to:
  a. Establish and maintain a robust and up-to-date knowledge of housing needs, supply and shortfalls throughout the Lake District to inform development decisions.
  b. Maintain a supply of sustainable, available land for housing to meet local needs (including ‘affordable’) focussed particularly within Rural Service Centres and villages to enable the market to deliver.
  c. Enable small scale housing to meet local community needs in locations such as cluster communities and in the wider countryside, through the continuation of the adopted Local Plan strategy, recognising the need of the sustainability of and distinctive characteristics of individual valleys.

- **A high proportion of housing in permanent occupation**
  Our strategy is to:
  a. Ensure all new housing contributes to community vibrancy by always requiring permanent occupation.
  b. Develop and secure appropriate mechanisms to tackle excessive numbers of empty and/or holiday houses where this occurs, in order to ensure a sufficiently high proportion of houses are permanently occupied.

3. **Health and wellbeing**

- **Access to high quality amenity and recreation open spaces and facilities**
  Our strategy is to safeguard amenity and recreation open spaces and facilities from other forms of development pressure using the Local Plan and give support to local projects to improve their quality.

- **Pride in place and a sense of ownership of the local environment and distinctive character**
  Our strategy is to secure local understanding and responsibility for valley-scale Special Qualities and distinctiveness of place through supporting the production of Valley Plans which will provide the locally-driven means of their management.

- **Safe communities and low crime**
  Our strategy is to maintain and increase the perception of safety everywhere and to minimise crime by ensuring Secure by Design principles are incorporated in all public realm schemes and development proposals.
- **Access to emergency services assistance**
  Our strategy is to influence national and local decision-makers on emergency service provision, to ensure that all Lake District communities benefit from emergency services and response times that achieve nationally set targets.
**Spectacular landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage**

**The Vision**

“An inspirational example of sustainable development in action”

It will be a place where a prosperous economy, world class visitor experiences and vibrant communities come together to sustain the spectacular landscape, its wildlife and culture.

**Vision outcome for a spectacular landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage**

A landscape which provides an irreplaceable source of inspiration, whose benefits to people and wildlife are valued and improved. A landscape whose natural and cultural resources are assets to be managed and used wisely for future generations.

**Spectacular landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage**

Well managed natural and cultural resources reflected in the Lake District’s Special Qualities, to achieve:

- Improved water resources in lakes, tarns, rivers, ground waters, and sea
- Well considered woodland establishment and improvement
- Resilient and well-functioning ecosystems
- Sustained distinctive and well maintained historic environment
- A world-class cultural living landscape
- Wise use of geology contributing to local and national needs and demands.
- The continuation of the Lake District as a source of artistic and cultural inspiration

**Strategies for spectacular landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage**

**Improved water resources in lakes, tarns, rivers, ground waters, and sea**

Our strategy is to:

a. Achieve ‘good’ or better than ‘good’ water quality as defined by the Water Framework Directive in all lakes, rivers, tarns, and ground waters by implementing local and collaborative best practice catchment management through:
   i. Developing locally distinctive initiatives to tackle key pollution sources, such as run-off, mineral waste and waste water management.
   ii. Achieve the optimum quality, diversity and extent of habitats through proactive management of the impacts of recreational use, invasive species and land use.

b. Sustain all lakes, rivers, tarns and ground waters by:
   i. Managing the extremes of high and low water levels and flows, to achieve optimum ecological habitats and populations, with a focus on water use, land management practices and water supply.
   ii. Contributing to meeting water supply needs locally and nationally by giving ‘in principle’ support to the use of water bodies and provision of associated infrastructure where the environment, landscape, and public rights of use, including navigation, are not compromised
iii. Raising consumer awareness of the importance of the efficient use of water by focussing on influencing changes in consumer behaviour.

c. Achieve the highest attainable sea water quality, including meeting targets for Protected Sites, by influencing all authorities and land users whose decisions affect the sea water quality to ensure their decision making recognises the Special Qualities of the Lake District.

Well considered woodland establishment and improvement

Our strategy is to:

a. Maximise the number of actively managed woodlands, with priority given to semi-natural woodland and other identified woodland where there is a significant opportunity to enhance their resilience and contribution to the landscape, biodiversity and their wider value such as recreation, carbon storage and productivity (links to Prosperous Economy) by engaging with and offering advice to woodland owners.

b. Support and establish new tree cover including semi natural woodland at a locally determined scale throughout the Lake District with particular focus on upland areas and valley heads to achieve the optimum balance between the benefits of flood prevention, carbon storage, water quality, soil stability and biodiversity – and the impacts to loss of grazing land and landscape change.

c. Have a coordinated managed approach to stop the spread of disease in tree species, increase resilience to pests, and take a planned approach to landscape restoration as appropriate.

Resilient and well-functioning ecosystems

Our strategy is to:

a. Establish good quality biodiversity data that is both available and accessible to improve our understanding on population, condition and distribution of species and habitats by working collaboratively with Local Nature Partnerships.

b. Establish effective and integrated approaches by developing and delivering programmes to safeguard biodiversity including Protected Sites, and support resilient ecosystems which encourage bigger, better and more habitats – in line with national targets, working with Local Nature Partnerships.

c. Develop projects and programmes to benefit those Priority Species and native species most in need of special management measures, by working with Local Nature Partnerships and others to improve habitats and control and eradicate invasive non-native species.

Sustained distinctive and well maintained built and historic environment

Our strategy is to:

a. Develop and maintain an adequate awareness and understanding of the nature, extent, significance and condition of the historic environment through undertaking and facilitating surveys, appraisals, and monitoring to inform the Historic Environment Record, and local and national registers of heritage at risk.

b. Develop projects and programmes for the coordinated management of historic environment assets – delivered through mechanisms such as land management schemes, development management and local community volunteers – prioritised according to significance and condition.
c. Encourage and support development that is inspired by and complements the Special Qualities of the Lake District’s cultural landscape, guided by the principles within the Local Plan.

A world-class living cultural landscape
Our strategy is to:
- a. Use and promote the Landscape Character Assessment to inform land management and development management in order to achieve a consistent, evidence-based approach to decision-making and change.
- b. Increase understanding and appreciation of landscape distinctiveness at a valley scale, to develop local approaches to landscape management, including monitoring of landscape change.
- c. Achieve the highest attainable environmental benefits from incentives available to land industries by influencing funding providers to recognise the importance of the cultural landscape in their criteria alongside wildlife enhancements and business needs.
- d. Reduce dependency on agri-environment schemes and other ongoing revenue subsidy by ensuring land industries are viable within the cultural landscape and profit from its effective management (links to Prosperous Economy strategy).

Wise use of geology contributing to local and national needs and demands.
Our strategy is to:
- a. Support the extraction of building stone and slate where this is needed to maintain the Special Quality of ‘distinctive buildings and settlement character’, working within the locally adopted planning framework.
- b. Ensure all geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Geological Sites offer study and research opportunities, achieved through positive conservation management.

The continuation of the Lake District as a source of artistic and cultural inspiration
Our strategy is to:
- a. Further understand and celebrate the breadth and depth of artistic and cultural inspiration as part of the preparation of the World Heritage Site bid, to realise and support opportunities for continued inspiration from the landscape.
- b. Maintain, manage and make use of cultural heritage assets through supporting and promoting cultural tourism in the Lake District, particularly committing to – and influencing – the investment into these assets.
- c. Sustain and promote the relationship between people and nature by creating opportunities for inspiration through further developing the four key visitor markets (links to World Class Visitor Experience strategy) and locally-led initiatives and events.
- d. Celebrate and support the continuation of local cultural traditions and activities, pro-actively assisting where needed.
ANNEX 2: SUMMARY OF THE LAKE DISTRICT’S SPECIAL QUALITIES

1. A world class cultural landscape
2. Complex geology and geomorphology
3. Rich archaeology and historic landscape
4. Unique farming heritage and concentration of common land
5. The High Fells
6. Wealth of habitats and wildlife
7. Mosaic of lakes, tarns, rivers and coast
8. Extensive semi-natural woodlands
9. Distinctive buildings and settlement character
10. A source of artistic inspiration
11. A model for protecting cultural landscapes
12. A long tradition of tourism and outdoor activities
13. Opportunities for quiet enjoyment

SPECIAL QUALITIES
Full descriptions integrating World Heritage attributes of Outstanding Universal Value

The World Heritage attributes of Outstanding Universal Value are highlighted in bold in the Special Qualities text below.

1 A world class cultural landscape

The English Lake District is a self-contained mountain area whose narrow, radiating glaciated valleys, steep fells and slender lakes exhibit an extraordinary beauty and harmony. This landscape reflects an outstanding fusion between a distinctive communal farming system that has persisted for at least a millennium with improvements of villas, picturesque planting and gardens during the 18th and 19th centuries. This combination has attracted and inspired writers and artists of global stature. The landscape also manifests the success of the conservation movement that it stimulated, a movement based on the idea of landscape as a human response to our environment. This cultural force has had world-wide ramifications. The diversity of the landscape is key to its beauty and significance and includes coast, lakes, distinctive farmland, fell, woodland, industrial activity and settlement. Each of the thirteen valleys of the Lake District has an individual distinctiveness based on landform, biodiversity and cultural heritage. The character of the Lake District cultural landscape has evolved slowly over many centuries and will continue to evolve in the future under the influence of the knowledge and skills of the local community.

2 Complex geology and geomorphology

The geology of the national park is complex and varied. Its rocks provide a dramatic record of nearly 500 million years of the Earth’s history with evidence of colliding continents, violent volcanic activity, deep oceans, tropical seas and the scouring effects of thick ice-sheets which produced the familiar characteristics of the Lake District’s glacial topography. The
highest mountains and deepest lakes in England are found here. Creation of stone stripes on mountain plateaus due to freeze/thaw action, sediment transport in rivers, and mobile sand dunes demonstrate some of the active geomorphological processes that continue to shape the landscape. The geology of the National Park has been investigated and studied since the 18th century. Work in the Lake District helped the first geologists (such as Adam Sedgwick) to establish some of the foundations on which modern geology and geomorphology is based. Some Lake District geological sites provide international “reference types” and many exposures continue to provide important sites for study and research. The diversity of rock and minerals has given rise to a rich mining and quarrying history. Stone axe production dates back to the Neolithic period, while industrial scale mining for ores of iron, copper, lead and for graphite began during the mediaeval period. Contemporary slate quarrying continues this long established activity. These local natural resources have strongly influenced the built environment and the wider landscape, with local slate, limestone and granite featuring in buildings, bridges, and walls.

3 Rich archaeology and historic landscape

There have been people in the Lake District since the end of the last ice age, 10,000 years ago, and the landscape reflects a long history of settlement, agriculture and industry. The opportunities for farming have varied over time and there are extensive traces of prehistoric settlements and field systems in the valleys and on the lower fells as a result of warmer climatic conditions several thousand years ago. Important prehistoric sites include Neolithic stone circles, rock art, and stone axe quarries; Bronze Age settlements, field systems and burial monuments; and numerous enclosed settlements of the Iron Age. The Romans constructed an impressive network of roads and forts including Hardknott and Ravenglass, which forms part of the Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site. Important early medieval sites include small, heavily defended hillforts, the remains of an Anglian monastery at Dacre and fine early stone crosses including the example at Irton. In the 10th century an immigration of Norse settlers resulted in additions to the repertoire of ecclesiastical sculpture including the Gosforth cross and numerous decorated hog-back tombstones. The place-names which also resulted from this episode of Norse settlement are one of the most enduring historical legacies and now form part of the distinctive character of the Lake District’s cultural landscape.

By the time of the Norman conquest at the end of the 11th century the fertile land in the Lake District valleys was separated from the open fell by a stone wall known as a ‘ring garth’ which enclosed a large common field that was cultivated in strips. Over the following 500 years stone walled ‘intakes’ were added to the outside of the ring garth for additional cultivation and grazing of stock. This pattern of land use is key to the character of the Lake District landscape and many walls of medieval origin are still in use today.

The gifting of land in the Lake District to monasteries including Furness and Fountains Abbeys from the 12th century led to the development of sheep farming for the production of wool for export and also to increased iron smelting using the abundant local raw materials. Two monasteries were founded within the Lake District, at Shap and in the Calder valley, and the larger monastic institutions located outside the area established sheep farms or ‘granges’ in order to manage their extensive flocks.

The absence of a resident aristocracy in the central Lake District valleys coupled with the legal securing of customary tenure in the early 17th century ensured the survival of a traditional society of yeoman farmers known in the Lake District as ‘Statesmen’. Many of the ‘Statesmen’ families remained on their farms for generations and from the 17th century their prosperity resulted in a confidence to invest in new farm houses and other agricultural buildings built of stone.
Various factors have encouraged the development of local industries in the Lake District including the availability of metal ores and raw materials from the extensive native woodland. The high rainfall in the Lake District has also assisted the production of water power as a prime source of energy crucial for mining and a variety of milling processes. The exploitation of these natural resources together with industrial processing and the accommodation of workers have had a significant impact on the shaping of the Lake District landscape.

Significant mining of metal ores in the Lake District took place from at least as early as 1000 AD and was developed on a truly industrial scale from the Elizabethan period following the establishment of the Mines Royal. Mining continued to develop from the 18th century and reached a peak in the later 19th and early 20th centuries followed by a decline which saw the last mineral mine close in 1990. Slate quarrying also took place on a small scale from the medieval period and developed as a major local industry from the 18th century. Although it too has declined, several slate quarries are still active in the Lake District. Other important industrial archaeological monuments include blast furnaces of the 18th to 20th centuries and bobbin mills and gunpowder works of similar date.

4 Unique farming heritage and concentration of common land

The pastoral system that has evolved in the Lake District for over a thousand years and its continuation by today’s farmers maintains a unique farming legacy. A clear pattern of land use and enclosure has developed which is dictated by the topography and characterised by in-bye, in-take, out-gang and open fell. The Lake District has the largest concentration of common land in Britain, and possibly Western Europe, with a continuing tradition of hefted grazing and collective management. This is characterised by landlords’ flocks, hefted livestock, communal gathers, and the use of traditional breeds, including Herdwick sheep and fell ponies. Many farming families can trace their ties to the landscape over hundreds of years and the social and cultural elements of the pastoral system are still evident today in the pattern of farm tenure with collective communal grazing, shepherds’ meets, local dialect and language and traditions such as agricultural shows and distinctive local sports.

The stone farm houses, barns and walls of the Lake District have been hand-built by generations of farming families and continue to be maintained as a result of knowledge and skills inherent in the local community. These skills also extend to management of the wider local environment, including traditional practices such as hedge laying, pollarding and coppicing of woodland and quarrying of local building materials.

5 The High Fells

The Lake District includes the highest land in England. These mountains, known as “fells” are rich in wildlife, full of archaeological sites and are predominantly open, common land and an integral part of the hill farming system. For centuries people have come to walk and climb on them and still do to “get away from it all” and experience a feeling of wildness. Alfred Wainwright popularised walking on them in his iconic guides in the 1960s. The fells have inspired numerous writers and painters including Wordsworth, Coleridge, Turner and Constable and continue provide a focus for contemporary artists including painters, photographers and creative writers. The fells peaks, crags and passes define the valleys, shed the waters and shape the communities in the valleys below. The fells’ characters vary across the Lake District based mainly on geology from the smooth, rounded Silurian slates to the craggy Borrowdale Volcanics.
6 Wealth of habitats and wildlife

The Lake District supports a unique assemblage of wildlife and habitats. The habitats which we see today have been developing since the retreat of the glaciers 10,000 years ago and are a response to a complex underlying geology, geomorphological processes, altitude, climate and the history of human land management. The earliest human influences to vegetation began in Neolithic times. Small areas of clearance are reflected in the pollen record. As cultivation and grazing increased, woodland gave way to more grassland communities. Much later, woodland industry modified the species composition of many of our woodlands.

Many of the habitats and species found in the Lake District are recognised in their own right for their biodiversity importance at an international level with almost 20% of the National Park area being designated for its biodiversity value. In addition, some of the species that occur here are of European importance. There is an abundance of freshwater habitats, including lakes, tarns and rivers each of which reflect their distinct valley catchments. Vegetation transitions from mountain top to valley bottom boast moss and lichen heath on the highest plateaus, replaced by dwarf shrub heath, juniper scrub, tall herb ledge and scree vegetation lower down. Blanket bog and wet heath can also be found where conditions allow. Upland oak wood survives in some places to the natural tree line and is extensive in some valleys. On the valley bottoms, upland hay meadows and pastures reflect pastoral management. On the fringes of the park, limestone grasslands and woodland add to the diversity and in low lying and coastal areas lowland raised mires, sand dunes, dune heaths, saltmarsh, mudflats and honey comb reefs occur.

Each of these habitats is represented by a suite of species, some of which are considered to be particularly important. This may be because they are rare or scarce or because they are in decline and vulnerable to threat (or both). Examples include: red squirrel, natterjack toad, freshwater mussel, mountain ringlet, Duke of Burgundy, floating water plantain, high brown fritillary, vendace, schelly, downy willow, and bog orchid.

7 Mosaic of lakes, tarns, rivers and coast

The National Park has a rich variety of becks, rivers, lakes, tarns and coast. They are internationally important because of their water quality, range of habitats, and species, such as vendace, arctic charr, and schelly. The plants and animals they support depend on the differences in water chemistry which in turn are influenced by the variations of the underlying geology. Becks and rivers connect upland catchments and open water to the sea, allowing migrating Atlantic salmon to thrive alongside otters, freshwater mussel and white clawed crayfish. The transition from open water to dryer ground adds diversity with reed beds, tall herb fens and wet woodland. Through analysis of their sediments, the lakes and tarns provide a unique record of the climatic and environmental changes which have occurred over time. Although each river and lake has its own distinct identity, together with their catchment of mountains, woodland and farmland, they collectively contribute to the high quality scenery and natural resource which is so distinctively ‘The Lake District’ and unique in England. The becks and rivers of the Lake District have been harnessed to provide power for a variety of industries and, from the 19th century, the need for fresh water for expanding cities in North West England has resulted in modification of a number of the major lakes.

The Lake District can also celebrate the heritage of 100 years of scientific investigation into lake and stream ecology, and the biological function of freshwater systems, which is recognised throughout the world. The Freshwater Biological Association with its world class library is located on the shores of Windermere.
8 Extensive semi-natural woodlands

The semi-natural woodlands add texture, colour and variety to the landscape and some are internationally important habitats. They provide a home for native animals and plants, and define the character of many valleys in the Lake District. The high rainfall in the core of the National Park favours woodlands rich in Atlantic mosses and liverworts, ferns and lichens. The limestone on the fringes of the National Park also supports distinctive woodland types and wood pasture, pollards and old coppice woodland form part of the rich cultural landscape. The Lake District woods have been used for centuries as a source of raw materials for local industries. Coppiced wood was used for producing charcoal which fuelled iron production from the medieval period until the 20th century. It also provided the raw material for making bobbins for the Lancashire cotton industry. Oak bark was used in tanneries in the Lake District into the late 19th century and oak swill baskets are a traditional product of the area. Some of these traditional industries still survive and the Lake District's woodland is increasingly valued for carbon sequestration and storage and as a source of renewable woodfuel and wood products. Recent woodland regeneration schemes on the fellsides are adding a new generation of woodlands into the landscape.

9 Distinctive buildings and settlement character

The local architecture varies from the traditional vernacular buildings with related characteristics to more formal, “polite” architectural styles associated with Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian periods, including those from the Classical, Gothic and Arts and Crafts movements. Materials and details are a common link between contrasting building types and styles. Local materials include a wide range of building stones such as slate stone, volcanic boulders and cobbles, limestone and sandstone depending on the varied local geology. The extensive use and distinctive character of Cumbrian slate for roofing is a unifying feature, with finishes such as lime wash and details in dressed sandstone, granite and limestone adding variety and interest.

Vernacular buildings have a simple functional character and often rugged appearance using local materials, with some displaying varying degrees of modification to more “polite” styles of more formal appearance. Vernacular buildings come in a variety of distinctive forms, such as traditional yeoman farmhouses, long houses, bank barns, hogg houses, and peat houses. There is also a distinctive range of buildings associated with trade, mining and industry, such as bobbin mills, lime kilns and packhorse bridges. Local vernacular features include “spinning” galleries, massive round chimneys, deep eaves, crow-stepped gables and walling styles and are frequently a response to the harsh character of the local climate and topography. The Lake District contains some fine examples of villa architecture, following industrialisation in northern England and also by the arrival of the railway in the mid-19th century. Villa development, in styles fashionable at the time, was frequently designed to respond to and even modify the landscape, epitomising an era of power and wealth, yet with increasing concern with art, aesthetics and quality of life.

Many towns, villages and hamlets have a range of building types and styles and a distinctive spatial and townscape character depending on their history and development. The network of dry stone walls, hedgerows, lanes, footpaths and the surviving field patterns form a visual and historic link between settlement and countryside. The survival of a dispersed network of vernacular farm building groups, often relatively unaltered by more recent development, is an important component of this special quality. A diverse range of historic settlements types have emerged within a relatively small geographical area. This diversity is strongly related to the historic opportunities and constraints of the varied landscape, topography and
geology. Consequently, the National Park has examples of market towns, with burgage plots arranged around a market place; agricultural villages with historic field patterns, some with village greens; industrial and mining settlements with terraces of workers housing; politely planned Georgian towns and villages guided by a wealthy patron; and Victorian new towns, suburbs, and tourist resorts, especially following the arrival of the railway.

10 A source of artistic inspiration

The unique beauty of the Lake District’s distinctive pastoral landscape has inspired generations of artists and writers. The influence of Picturesque aesthetics led to the physical embellishment of the landscape through construction of villas and gardens, designed landscapes and planting schemes. The Romantic movement transformed this into a new and influential view of the relationship between humans and landscape. This included the possibility of a sustainable relationship between humans and nature, the value of landscape for restoring the human spirit and the intrinsic value of scenic and cultural landscape. This was fundamental to the formation and sharing of globally important ideas of the need to protect such landscapes. Key writers and artists of the 18th and 19th centuries associated with the Lake District include William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Constable, J M W Turner and John Ruskin. This tradition continued into the 20th century with such figures as Kurt Schwitters, Alfred and William Heaton Cooper and Norman Nicholson. It is nurtured today and for the future through the agency of various organisations including the Wordsworth Trust, the Brantwood Trust, Grizedale Arts, the Lake Artists Society and through a number of established festivals including Words by the Water and the Kendal Mountain Festival.

11 A model for protecting cultural landscapes

In parallel with the aesthetic appreciation of the “natural beauty” of the Lake District from the 18th century onwards, there also developed an understanding of its vulnerability to forces of change as a result of emerging industrialisation, tree-felling, and landscape enclosure. This combination of ideas gave rise to the idea that valued landscapes could be nurtured and protected, encapsulated in William Wordsworth’s famous statement of 1835 that the Lake District should be deemed “a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy”. The early conservation battles to protect the Lake District, although sometimes unsuccessful, as in the case of the Thirlmere reservoir, began a chain of events which established the Lake District as the birth-place of an innovative conservation movement committed to the defence of its landscape and communities. One strand of this movement led directly to the creation of the National Trust and protection of the Lake District landscape through the acquisition of key farms, fell land and historic houses. Figures such as Beatrix Potter, G M Trevelyan and Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley played an important role in this regard. This has influenced similar models of heritage conservation, secured through protective ownership, elsewhere in Britain and abroad. Another strand of conservation action to emerge from experience in the Lake District was the formation of campaigning groups such as Friends of the Lake District, which won a significant battle in 1936 to prevent commercial afforestation in the central fells. This strand led to the formal designation of protected landscapes at both national and international levels; the Lake District was at the origin of UK national parks based on the “natural beauty” of these cultural landscapes, and influenced the idea of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Protected Areas Category V, Protected Landscapes/Seascapes. It was also instrumental in bringing about a third strand: the creation by UNESCO of the World Heritage Cultural Landscape category in 1992.
12 A long tradition of tourism and outdoor activities

The diverse Lake District landscape provides opportunities for a wide range of sporting and recreational activities on land and water. Some of these, such as fell running, are part of traditional local culture. The National Park has the highest concentration of outdoor activity centres in the UK. The birth of recreational rock climbing in England is attributed to the Lake District with the ascent of Napes Needle in the 1880’s amongst one of the earliest recorded routes. There is a tradition of unrestricted access to the fells together with an historical network of roads, tracks and footpaths. As a result the Lake District has become a focal point for recreational walking, beginning with the involvement of the Romantic movement with the landscape and the perambulations of Wordsworth and Coleridge. The history of tourism can be traced back to the Picturesque fascination with the Lake District landscape and its potential for aesthetic experiences. This led to the production of early guide books which included the positions of "viewing stations" around the major lakes which were followed by Wordsworth’s celebrated ‘Guide to the Lakes’ of 1810 and in the 20th century by the guides of more recent writers including Wainwright. The coming of the railway to the Lake District in the mid-19th century extended the opportunity to visit the area to a much wider part of society and was the catalyst for a tradition of tourism which continues today.

Traditional tourist attractions include lake cruises on launches and steamers on the larger lakes, a unique resource in inland England and Wales, and current water-based recreational activities include sailing, motor boating, canoeing, and open water swimming which is growing increasingly popular. Three of the larger lakes have been used since the early 20th century for water speed record attempts. In recent years mountain biking has become another major sporting activity utilising the Public Rights of Way network and Grizedale and Whinlatter forests.

13 Opportunities for quiet enjoyment

The tranquillity of the fells, valleys and lakes gives a sense of space and freedom. The relatively open character of the uplands, and the absence of modern development, is especially important. To walk freely across the fells, or climb their crags, is liberating and gives a sense of discovery and achievement. There is a feeling of wildness, offering personal challenges for some and impressive open views for everyone. To many people the Lake District is a safe place to explore: it is possible to feel remote, yet know that the nearest settlement is never far away. These characteristics provide important opportunities for spiritual refreshment: a release from the pressures of modern day life and a contrast to the noise and bustle experienced elsewhere. These are all vital components of the concept of quiet enjoyment and can be found in many places across the whole of the National Park. The value of the Lake District landscape for spiritual nourishment, originating in the Romantic recognition of the capacity of landscape to nurture and stimulate imagination, creativity and spirit, was recognised by the gift of the highest mountain land in England to the National Trust as a memorial to those who perished fighting in World War 1.