

BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN



BRECON BEACONS
NATIONAL PARK

2000 - 2005

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	Action for Community Tourism	NAWAD	National Assembly for Wales
AHOEC	Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres	NPA	Agriculture Department
AMP	Area Management Plan	NPMP	National Park Authority
ANPA	Association of National Park Authorities	NT	National Trust
ARAG	Access and Recreation Advisory Group	OEC	Outdoor education centre
AT	Archaeological Trust	OSS	Open Spaces Society
BHS	British Horse Society	P&VAs	'Pressure' and 'vulnerable areas'
CCC	Cambrian Caving Council	PCC	Powys County Council
CCW	Countryside Council for Wales	PROW	Public right of way
DC-WW	Dŵr Cymru-Welsh Water	QPA	Quarry Products Association
EA	Environment Agency	RA	Ramblers Association
EU	European Union	RAC	Royal Automobile Club
FC	Forestry Commission	RCAHMMW	Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales
FE	Forest Enterprise	RIGS	Regionally important geological and geomorphological sites
FRCA	Farming and Rural Conservation Agency	RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
GIS	Geographical information system (computer based mapping)	RUPP	Road used as public path
HA	Highway Authority	S3 Map	Section 3 Conservation Map of mountain, moor, heath and woodland
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites	SAC	Special area for conservation
LA21	Local Agenda 21	SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan	SCW	Sports Council for Wales
LEAP	Local Environment Agency Plan	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
LPA	Local Planning Authority	TAG	Tourism Action Group
LTP	Local Transport Plan	UA	Unitary Authority
MM	Meithrin Mynydd	UDP	Unitary Development Plan
MOD	Ministry of Defence	WDA	Welsh Development Agency
MPA	Mineral Planning Authority	WT	Woodland Trust
NAfW	National Assembly for Wales	WTs	Wildlife Trusts
		WTB	Wales Tourist Board

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Foreword

I have great pleasure in introducing the new National Park Management Plan, setting out our vision for the future, and aims and objectives for the next five years. It is based on wide consultation with other organisations, visitors and local people. Everyone living in the Park has had the opportunity to contribute to the preparation of the new Plan.

The emphasis in this Plan is on partnership. Few of the Authority's aims can be achieved alone. The Plan has been set out to show which organisations and individuals we will be working with in the coming years.

There are many challenges in the new Millennium. The crisis in the countryside has focused our thinking on ways to carry out our statutory purposes to the benefit of the local economy, helping to empower the Park's communities. This is itself one aspect of sustainability, towards which we are aiming in all our work.

As we go to press, we are starting to challenge all our actions as part of the Best Value process. Writing this Plan has helped us concentrate on what we do and why, and I think that we will find ourselves well placed to meet that challenge.

Councillor E T Morgan, Chairman, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

March 2000

1 INTRODUCTION

NATIONAL PARKS

- 1.1 The Brecon Beacons National Park is one of a family of National Parks in Wales and England designated by Parliament in 1949. Their purposes, amended in 1995, are to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their areas' special qualities by the public. They also have a duty to foster the well-being of the local community. The Parks have national importance as protected landscapes, and their funding and specialist staff help them serve as test-beds for sustainable and innovative development and management. Their work locally can therefore have global benefits.
- 1.2 The Parks are run by National Park Authorities. The NPAs work together through the Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) to strengthen the voice of the Parks nationally, raising awareness of issues, tackling widespread problems and sharing information. This work is supported by the Society of National Park Staff, and also by the Council for National Parks, an umbrella body for concerned voluntary organisations. The NPAs also belong to the Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe.
- 1.3 The Brecon Beacons NPA is not the only decision maker in the management of the National Park. Nine Unitary Authorities cover the area. Residents, visitors and those seeking recreation, farmers, trades and business people and larger organisations all live their lives and pursue their work or pleasure here and have key roles in its management. Much of the NPA's work therefore involves partnerships. Many public and voluntary bodies and statutory undertakers pursue their own functions within the Park. Under the 1995 Environment Act, public and statutory bodies have a duty to have regard to the statutory purposes of National Park designation, and it is hoped that this will be reflected in their endorsement of this Plan.

SUSTAINABILITY AND LOCAL AGENDA 21

- 1.4 Sustainability is the key principle in the NPA's work. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It includes the quality of life in the social, cultural, environmental and economic spheres, now and for generations to come. The NPA is concerned with all of these aspects, and is committed to sustainability, both in carrying out its statutory purposes and in its role as local planning authority. The objectives and actions in this Plan are being appraised during drafting for their likely environmental effects.

- 1.5 The NPA is also striving for increased sustainability in its own internal practices and its use of resources and energy.
- 1.6 Local Agenda 21 brings sustainability to the local level, encouraging people to set up local action plans for the 21st century and to introduce the principles of sustainability into their everyday lives, as individuals and communities. Much of the NPA's work already contributes directly to LA21 aims, including the process of producing this Park Management Plan and the many new initiatives in it. The NPA will also be encouraging the LA21 process within local communities, as set out in chapter 17.

THE NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 1.7 The NPA is required by the 1995 Environment Act to review and publish a National Park Management Plan (NPMP) every five years. This Plan fulfils three main roles.
 - i) It sets out a **vision** and a plan for the **management** of the **Park as a whole**, prepared in consultation with the public and with the co-operation and endorsement of many organisations whose work overlaps that of the NPA, and whose objectives and projects are included.
 - ii) It sets out the **NPA's aims and objectives** for all aspects of its work for the next five years and beyond, on which to build more detailed strategies, financial bids and work programmes.
 - iii) It also shows how the NPA is taking part in **Local Agenda 21** and working towards **sustainable development**. Much of the NPA's work already contributes directly to these.
- 1.8 The NPMP is in two sections.
 - i) This first section includes **aims, objectives and actions** for each topic relevant to the NPA's work, to be undertaken by the NPA itself, by one or more other organisations or, most often, by several organisations in partnership.
 - ii) The second section will contain **Area Management Plans** (AMPs) for each of 11 different parts of the Park. In the AMPs, the aims and objectives for the separate topics will be viewed together in the light of the special identity of each area, so that its life and management needs can be seen as a whole. This is a major undertaking which will be carried forward through this Plan period and beyond, with wide public involvement.

THE NPA'S FAMILY OF PLANS

- 1.9 The National Park Management Plan heads a series of documents produced by the NPA.
 - i) Following directly from it are financial bids contained in the **Corporate Financial Plan** and annual work programmes in the **Corporate Business Work Plan**.
 - ii) Supporting these are **strategies** for biodiversity (the **Local Biodiversity Action Plan**), communication, education, tourism, transport, cycling and the maintenance of public rights of way. These are being developed to set out aspects of the NPA's work in more detail.
 - iii) The most significant of the other documents in this series is the **Development Plan** for the Park, consisting of the **Local Plan**, adopted in 1999, and the **Unitary Development Plan** (UDP), which the NPA produces in its role as local planning authority. This covers land use planning policies, but derives its vision from the NPMP, and will be adopted in 2001. Common to both the NPMP and the Local Plan/UDP are the Section 3 Conservation Map, road hierarchy and "pressure" and "vulnerable areas", which are refined each time either document is reviewed.
- 1.10 During this Park Management Plan period, 2000-2005, the NPA will be publishing its first round of annual **Best Value Performance Plans**, incorporating relevant performance measures for reviewing all its functions. These will show what level of service is being provided at what cost, and lead to a series of action plans for improving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of each service. These will feed into future reviews of the NPMP.

Diagram 1 The NPA's family of plans



1.11 The NPMP and Area Management Plans will provide a basis for the identification of indicators for the development of a **State of the Park report**.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS' PLANS

1.12 The NPMP and UDP are not prepared in isolation. Regional strategic liaison groups link authorities preparing UDPs in Wales, and neighbouring authorities consult to ensure cross-border consistency. The UAs' countryside strategies exclude the Park, but there is consultation in both directions. The plans of other organisations such as the Environment Agency cover land in the Park. The NPA has involved these bodies in the preparation of the NPMP, and is in turn consulted, for example on the Local Environment Agency Plans.

FINANCING THE NATIONAL PARK

1.13 The NPA receives 75% of approved revenue expenditure annually in National Park Grant from the National Assembly for Wales. It levies the other 25% from seven constituent UAs, in proportion to their areas within the Park. The capital budget is decided annually by the Assembly, which gives a 100% grant. The NPA's revenue settlement for 1999/2000 was £2,296,361, with a capital allowance of £220,000.

1.14 The NPA also draws into the area grants from bodies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and of course the EU. Objective 1 and 2 funding will be important throughout the Plan period, with the west and south of the Park eligible for the higher rate of aid. The Sustainable Parks grant will also bring an extra £0.25m for three years from 2000, to support existing and new projects.

2 A VISION FOR THE BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK

The Brecon Beacons National Park has a beautiful and varied landscape with many different facets making up a whole. **The vision** is that the character of this landscape is conserved and enhanced.

There is a skyline of bare sweeping ridges and flat topped summits. It has steep north-facing sandstone and limestone scarps, with long ridges or wide moors dipping southwards, dotted with prehistoric monuments. **The vision** is that these mountain commons and moorlands remain open, extensive and tranquil in character, managed to increase the diversity of vegetation and wildlife habitats and protect their archaeology while maintaining grazing and public access.

There are hillside oak and ash woods, deep wooded dingles and forested valleys and plateaux. **The vision** is that native broadleaved woodlands are extended, and all woods diversified and well managed for their landscape and ecological value and as the basis of a developing wood products industry.

There are broad valleys and hillsides, a historic farmed landscape patterned with hedges and walls and crossed by public rights of way. **The vision** is that the varied wildlife habitats and historic and traditional features are conserved and enhanced and public rights of way maintained, in harmony with a thriving agricultural economy in which traditional skills are kept alive.

There are rivers and streams, a canal, lakes and reservoirs. **The vision** is of high water quality and conserved bank-side habitats, all supporting rich and diverse wildlife while allowing for quiet public enjoyment.

The Park's towns, villages and scattered farmsteads are successors to a long history. **The vision** is of old settlement patterns and buildings conserved and new ones well designed.

The Park is home to 32,000 people, and has a strong Welsh heritage and rich economic, social and cultural life. **The vision** is that these continue to thrive, supporting the community and providing a welcome for visitors.

Finally, as many consultations show, **the vision** is one shared by all those who live in, visit or care for this special area. In short this vision for the future of the Brecon Beacons National Park can be expressed as:

A partnership of all those who live and work in, enjoy or care for the Brecon Beacons National Park to conserve its beauty, character and tranquillity, its natural and cultural heritage and its way of life, both for their own sakes and in order that the Park may continue to be a source of inspiration and enjoyment for all.

During the next Park Management Plan period, the NPA will be aiming to realise this vision by working towards the following:

- Common land and moorland to remain open and extensive in character, managed to maintain grazing, increase the diversity of vegetation and wildlife habitats and provide access.
- Native broadleaved woodlands to be well managed, diversified and extended as the basis of a developing wood products industry.
- The traditional pattern of farmed land and its characteristic, historic features and varied habitats to remain, as the basis of a thriving agricultural economy.
- Opportunities to be extended for people of all abilities and social backgrounds to enjoy activities in and learn about the Park sustainably, without harming its special qualities.
- A sustainable tourist industry to be fostered, contributing to public enjoyment and the local economy.
- A reduced need to rely on private cars for journeys to and within the Park.
- Healthy, socially inclusive local communities with access to sustainable employment and modern amenities, where culture and the Welsh language thrive.
- An area and a National Park Authority which are models of sustainability.

3 LANDSCAPE AND SPECIAL QUALITIES

- 3.1 The Park's natural beauty is comprised in the variety of its different landscapes. For the purposes of this Management Plan, the Park has been divided into 11 landscape character areas, which have similar visual, natural and managed environmental characteristics. These are described in more detail in chapter 19 and the Area Management Plans.
- 3.2 Landscape character is made up of many layers - rocks, vegetation, field and settlement patterns, buildings and historic and cultural associations. Laid upon the underlying landforms, agriculture is the key to the landscape: its past and present state, and the ways it could change. Other influences include forestry, woodland management, recreation and tourism, reservoir, canal and road building, quarrying and other development. The landscape and its constituent layers are constantly changing, naturally or under human influence. This change will continue, and in many cases it is right that it should do so - the National Park is not a museum. However, the government regards National Park designation as conferring the highest status of protection as far as landscape and scenic beauty are concerned (*Planning guidance (Wales) Planning policy First revision* para 5.3.6).
- 3.3 Although landscape as such was not referred to in the 1992 Rio Declaration or in Agenda 21, the targets set for climate, biodiversity, forests and freshwater, and the issue of sustainability, all have a landscape impact. The quality of the Park's landscape contributes to the quality of life of both residents and visitors, thus contributing to LA21. It is also a factor in attracting and retaining industry in South Wales, contributing to the economy of the whole region.
- 3.4 CCW has developed a landscape assessment and decision making methodology called LANDMAP, for use as a management tool and in preparing unitary development plans. It involves evaluating and mapping history, cultural associations and visual and sensory aspects, as well as geology and landforms, vegetation and habitats. The NPA will consider implementing LANDMAP in the Park in this Plan period.
- 3.5 The NPA has a duty to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Park's special qualities, and to do so these qualities must be conserved. For the purpose of this Plan, the NPA has adopted as special qualities those mentioned most often during consultations with Park residents and visitors. These were: the landscape and natural beauty, peace and tranquillity, opportunities for walking and access to open country, open spaces and qualities of remoteness, traditionally managed farmland, and wildlife. Many more detailed comments were made about particular parts of the Park and their qualities; these are incorporated into the AMPs.
- 3.6 It is part of the NPA's vision that mountains and moorlands remain open, extensive and tranquil, woods retain their beauty, and the traditional pattern of the farmed landscape and its component features are conserved.

ISSUES

- I. **LANDMAP.** CCW considers that this will make a significant contribution to landscape conservation and management work and to UDPs in Wales, and intends 50% of UAs to have embraced it by 2000. The NPA is unlikely to have the resources to develop LANDMAP during this Plan period, but will work in partnership with Carmarthenshire to gauge its usefulness compared to existing GIS based systems.
- II. **What the NPA should try to conserve** and enhance. Links between landscape, biodiversity, history and culture are important, but the landscape is more than the sum of its parts, so its elements must be conserved in a holistic way. What is important may vary between the different areas of the Park, so ways of achieving this will be developed in the AMPs. Some significant features such as stone walls have little legal protection. Many landscape elements are covered in other chapters.
- III. **Managing landscape change** to maintain character and diversity. Landscape changes are linked to changes in other areas, particularly agriculture and woodland management. Change should be managed to conserve the landscape and special qualities of the Park without

- making it into a museum. Opportunities for influence include Tir Gofal, land ownership by NPA or publicly accountable bodies: CCW, FC, DC-WW, NT.
- IV. **S3 Map.** Under the Wildlife and Countryside Acts, the NPA prepared a Section 3 Conservation Map of mountain, moor, heath and woodland that it considered particularly important to conserve. In this Plan period the NPA is working to ensure that common land and moorland remain open and extensive in character. The Map and its value in conserving the landscape will be reviewed in the AMPs.
- V. **Landscape improvements.** The landscape may be degraded by derelict land, litter and fly-tipping, the erosion of upland paths (see Access chapter), and sometimes by road works (see Transport chapter) and development (see Planning chapter). However, enhancement work should not be at the expense of wildlife or industrial archaeological interests.
- VI. **Special qualities of the Park.** The qualities identified in para 3.5 need to be conserved so that the public can enjoy them. They must therefore be taken into account throughout this Plan. The special qualities may be refined during consultations on this Plan and the AMPs.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim A: Conserve and enhance the characteristic beauty of the Park's landscapes		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Produce and implement a standard method of describing and assessing landscapes.	i) Develop LANDMAP for use in management and decision making if appropriate, when resources allow	CCW, Wales Landscape Partnership Group, UAs, NPA, EA, ATs, WDA
2. Conserve and enhance the character of the landscape character areas	i) Define the character of AMP areas and develop detailed landscape strategies for them	NPA, CCW, EA, FRCA, FC, DC-WW, NT, farming unions, landowners, commoners
	ii) Review S3 Map during AMP preparation	NPA, CCW, partners
	iii) Use Tir Gofal to best landscape effect	CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, Cadw, NPA, landowners and managers
	iv) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	v) Advise the public	NPA, CCW
	vi) Consider acquiring available property if this would be the most effective way to conserve its natural beauty, wildlife or heritage	NPA, NT, WT, WTs
	<i>vii) See also Transport and Planning chapters</i>	
3. Enhance the landscape, nature conservation, historic and agricultural value of common land by sustainable management, while maintaining public access	i) Pursue Meithrin Mynydd proposals	NPA, commoners, CCW, MM groups
	ii) Apply lessons of Meithrin Mynydd to other NPA owned commons during Plan period	NPA, commoners, farming unions, CCW, user groups
	<i>iii) See also Access chapter</i>	
4. Conserve, enhance and re-instate traditional field boundaries and other features of high landscape value	i) Use law to protect hedgerows	NPA, landowners
	ii) Apply for EU funds to secure walls and hedge-banks of high landscape and agricultural value	NPA, landowners
	iii) Lobby for legislative protection of traditional field boundaries	CCW, ANPA
	iv) Use AMPs to identify and protect traditional orchards	NPA, partners
	v) Use AMPs to identify losses of features and potential for restoration	NPA, CCW, FE, DC-WW, NT, farming unions, landowners, commoners
	<i>vi) See also Biodiversity, Archaeology and Culture and tradition chapters</i>	
5. Enhance derelict land	i) Use AMPs to identify derelict land and set targets.	WDA, UAs, NPA, FC, EA, landowners
6. Prevent Park being disfigured by litter, fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles	i) Publicise law and facilities, enforce against offenders	UAs, NPA, EA, Keep Wales Tidy, police
	ii) Clear litter / dumps; targets in AMPs	UAs, NPA, groups

7. Identify need for other landscape improvements	i) Identify these during preparation of AMPs	NPA, CCW, FC, landowners, public
8. Develop understanding and awareness of landscape	i) <i>See Information and interpretation and Education chapters</i>	
9. Monitor landscape change	i) Set up monitoring system in AMPs	NPA
	ii) Purchase aerial photographs of the whole Park in the Plan period	NPA

Aim B: Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Park

OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Conserve and enhance the Park's landscape and natural beauty	i) <i>See Aim A above</i>	
2. Conserve and enhance the Park's peace and tranquillity	i) Use AMPs to identify need for action	NPA, partners
	ii) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	iii) <i>See Recreation and Military use chapters</i>	
3. Conserve and enhance the Park's opportunities for walking and access to open country	i) Use AMPs to identify problems and opportunities	NPA, partners
	ii) <i>See Access chapter</i>	
4. Conserve and enhance the Park's open spaces and qualities of remoteness	i) Use review of S3 Map and P&VAs in AMPs to identify and protect these	NPA, partners
	ii) <i>See Access and Recreation chapters</i>	
5. Conserve and enhance the Park's traditionally managed farmland	i) Identify and protect this in AMPs	NPA, partners
	ii) <i>See Aim A above and Biodiversity and Farming and forestry chapters</i>	
6. Conserve and enhance the Park's wildlife	i) Use AMPs to identify problems and opportunities	NPA, partners
	ii) <i>See Biodiversity chapter</i>	
7. Promote awareness of the Park's special qualities	i) <i>See Information and interpretation and Education chapters</i>	
8. Monitor the Park's special qualities	i) Set up monitoring systems in AMPs	NPA
	ii) <i>See other chapters</i>	

MONITORING

- 3.7 Landscape monitoring will be built into the AMPs. A number of views typifying each area will be identified, and photographs taken of them at the same times each year. Non-visual qualities such as sounds and smells can also be noted. Changes in the landscape can thus be assessed as a whole, and a "snapshot" obtained of the condition of landscape features such as walls and hedges and data provided for a future "state of the Park" report.
- 3.8 Field boundaries were monitored in Silsoe College's report *Monitoring landscape change in National Parks*, which compared 1975 and 1985 aerial photographs. The NPA carried out a GIS based stone wall survey in 1998. Monitoring of these and other identified landscape features will be built into the AMPs, subject to the availability of resources. A repeat of the very costly Silsoe exercise, chiefly to monitor land use and habitat types, would require a new set of aerial photographs of the Park.
- 3.9 Of the Park's identified special qualities, the landscape and natural beauty is covered above. Wildlife monitoring is dealt with in the Biodiversity chapter, and opportunities for walking and access to open country in the Access chapter. Monitoring of traditionally managed farmland will be covered as part of the landscape (above), and in the Farming and forestry chapter.
- 3.10 Peace and tranquillity and qualities of remoteness are more difficult to monitor. The AMPs will be used to identify the levels of these qualities in each area, and indicators to help future monitoring.

4 EARTH HERITAGE

- 4.1 Earth heritage refers to geology, geomorphology and soils. The bulk of the Park is made up of Old Red Sandstone rocks, mostly of Devonian age, which extend across its whole width and comprise its north-eastern and south-eastern tips. They form the north and north-east facing escarpments of Mynydd Du, the Great Forest, Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains, which give the Park its highest peaks, and also the plateaux north and south of the scarps.
- 4.2 Along the north-western boundary, the older Ordovician and Silurian rocks of Mid Wales cross into the Park. These give a landscape of south west - north east trending ridges and valleys, and are rich in fossils in places. Overlying the Old Red Sandstone to the south, at a lower altitude due to the dip of the strata, lie the Carboniferous rocks of the northern rim of the South Wales coalfield. Most prominent is a band of limestone, which in places forms a conspicuous escarpment. South of this are Millstone Grit scarps and plateaux, while Coal Measures crop out in places along the Park's southern boundary. The drainage pattern is generally north-south or *vice versa*, reflecting the dip of the strata, with exceptions relating to the major faults, and to the superimposed west - south east course of the Usk.
- 4.3 Other important geomorphological features include escarpments, waterfalls and gorges, often closely related to the underlying geology. Evidence of glaciation is widespread, including sheets of till, bare striated rock, erratic boulders and the moraines of small glaciers that developed in the lee of dip-slope plateaux. Post-glacial features include plateaux and dip-slopes blanketed with peat, river floodplains and small alluvial fans. The Park's limestones exhibit karst features of European significance, including limestone pavements and some of the longest cave systems in Britain. Some caves are of archaeological or historical significance, and some, along with other geological and geomorphological features, are protected as SSSIs for their Earth heritage and/or biological importance.
- 4.4 Soils are an important agricultural resource, and the basis of most habitats. They also act as a carbon sink, and are thus an important factor in controlling climate change. Peat is being damaged by acidification and burning and much of the Park's blanket peat is very degraded.
- 4.5 While some of the Park's Earth heritage is very robust, other parts are more vulnerable, for example to erosion or recreation pressure, mineral working or other forms of development. The AMPs will enable all the Park's features and activities to be managed in a holistic way, using the precautionary principle where knowledge is incomplete. Although Earth heritage was not referred to in the 1992 Rio Declaration or in Agenda 21, it is a factor in the Park's biodiversity, and in the Park's landscape and agriculture, which themselves contribute to the quality of life of both residents and visitors. Earth heritage thus contributes to LA21.

ISSUES

- I. **Identification of second tier sites.** There are some geological/geomorphological SSSIs, but second tier sites, including RIGS sites, have only been identified for Powys.
- II. **Limestone features.** These are valuable for both Earth heritage and biodiversity reasons, and are probably the most vulnerable of the Park's Earth heritage features. For example limestone pavements and caves can be damaged by plunder, quarrying, pollution and recreation pressures, and shake-holes are used for dumping. See also Biodiversity and Recreation chapters.
- III. **Mineral working.** This inevitably damages the Park's Earth heritage, although it may sometimes reveal features of interest which might be threatened by quarry infilling. See Planning chapter.
- IV. **Fossil and mineral collecting** can damage formations and cause the loss of scientific resources. It is sometimes done for commercial gain. However, it can have scientific and educational value, and codes of practice exist. The AMPs will be used to assess any problems and the strategies required to reduce them.
- V. **Soils.** Soil erosion is of serious concern in the Park, affected by the weather, grazing pressures and some farm and forestry practices (see Farming and forestry chapter). Soil and peat erosion can be reduced by improved vegetation cover, which will be an aim of the

Local Biodiversity Action Plan (see Biodiversity chapter). The vegetation cover is easily removed from thin mountain soils and peat on popular paths, causing erosion (see Access chapter). Soils can be damaged by the removal of turf, which includes the top layer of the soil; the Local Plan includes a policy to control this.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Conserve and enhance the Park's Earth heritage as a contribution to local, national and global diversity		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Protect designated Earth heritage sites	i) Draw up SSSI management plans	CCW
	ii) Include policies in UDP	NPA
	iii) Operate Tir Gofal to protect earth heritage sites	CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, Cadw, NPA, landowners and managers
	iv) Include measures in AMPs	NPA, FRCA, CCW, WT, EA, FC, NT, WT, DC-WW, RSPB, farming unions
2. Identify and protect second tier Earth heritage sites	i) Carry out surveys	NPA, CCW, WT, RSPB, RIGS groups, Geologists Assoc.
	ii) Operate Tir Gofal to protect earth heritage sites	CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, Cadw, NPA, landowners and managers
	iii) Include in LEAPS	EA
	iv) Include policies in UDP	NPA
	v) Area Management Plans.	NPA, FRCA, CCW, WT, EA, FC, NT, WT, DC-WW, RSPB, farming unions
3. Protect caves	i) Prepare and maintain register of caves, and advise of their presence	CCW, CCC, Cambrian Cave Registry, NPA
	ii) Support appropriate cave research and exploration	NPA, CCW, CCC, caving clubs
	iii) Refer to caves in UDP as relevant	NPA
	iv) Develop management plans and advisory groups for caves	CCW, NPA (AMPs), landowners, Cadw, CCC, bat groups, caving clubs
4. Protect and enhance nature conservation value of limestone pavements	i) Identify vulnerable limestone pavements; make Orders if required	CCW, NPA
	ii) Use Tir Gofal	CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, Cadw, NPA, landowners and managers
	iii) Advise farmers	CCW, FRCA, NPA, EA, farming unions, land owners and managers
5. Protect fossils and minerals	i) Agree policies on fossil and mineral collecting in AMPs	NPA, CCW, WT, RIGS groups, Geologists Assoc., colleges
6. Protect the Park's soils	i) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	ii) See <i>Biodiversity, Access and Farming and Forestry</i> chapters	
7. Increase awareness about Earth heritage	i) See <i>Information and interpretation and Education</i> chapters	
8. Monitor the Park's Earth heritage	i) Develop monitoring schemes during the Plan period	CCW, FRCA, NPA

MONITORING

- 4.6 The Park's Earth heritage has not been subject to systematic monitoring to date. Developing a system and applying it is an objective for this Plan period. Base data and indicators will be required for a State of the Park report, while features such as limestone pavements will require specific monitoring. Partners in monitoring will include CCW, the Brecknock Wildlife Sites Partnership, and RIGS groups.

5 BIODIVERSITY

- 5.1 The Biodiversity Convention, one of the products of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, requires governments to act at a national and international level to halt the continued loss of global biodiversity as part of Agenda 21. The British government, as a signatory to the Convention, has produced a strategy, the *UK Action Plan for Biodiversity*, covering issues such as public awareness, information availability and habitat and species conservation. To meet national targets, Local Biodiversity Action Plans are being produced to guide action at a local level. The NPA has a key role in producing LBAPs for the Park area, which will be part of the LA21 process and will inform UDP preparation.
- 5.2 The Park includes a wide variety of habitats. These habitats and the species they support are threatened by a variety of factors as summarised below.

Table 5.1 Habitat types and potential threats

HABITAT TYPE	POTENTIAL THREATS TO NATURE CONSERVATION
Broadleaved woodland, wood pasture, parkland	Grazing, lack of management, lack of replacement trees, fragmentation and small size
Coniferous woodland	Intensive management impacting on sensitive sites and species
Scrub and bracken	Grazing, clearance, coniferous or exotic broadleaf planting
Arable	Change from spring sown to winter sown crops, conversion to permanent pasture: affects nesting birds
Upland and lowland unimproved grassland, hay meadows, pasture	Agricultural intensification, afforestation, conversion to silage production
Unimproved calcareous grassland	Excessive grazing and dunging
Lowland and upland heath	Grazing, poor burning management, afforestation, agricultural intensification, development
Blanket bog and raised bog, flush, mire, swamp and fen communities	Grazing, poor burning management, drainage, lack of management, acidification, recreation
Canal, lakes, ponds and running water	Pollution, recreation, grazing of riparian vegetation, abstraction
Limestone pavements, caves	Grazing, quarrying, disturbance, waste dumping
Cliff habitats	Grazing, recreation
Built environment	Development

- 5.3 The management of these habitats is subject to many constraints, not least the need of the occupiers to make a livelihood from their land. However, the NPA and other agencies can take opportunities, in giving advice or grant aid, to reduce effects which might be harmful to biodiversity, using the precautionary principle where knowledge is incomplete. The AMPs will enable biodiversity and other important resources and features to be managed together in a more holistic way, optimising the benefits to all of the NPA's objectives.
- 5.4 The biodiversity component of the NPA's nature conservation strategy will take the form of a LBAP. This will identify ways to increase public awareness of biodiversity issues, improve access to information, and conserve UK key habitats and priority species as well as locally distinctive habitats and species. Its objectives and targets will be incorporated into the AMPs.
- 5.5 Woodlands will be included within the LBAP, and existing programmes such as the NPA/FC Native Woodland Accord and FC's Native Woodlands in National Parks Challenge will be operated within the LBAP framework. The former has a target of doubling the area of native broadleaved woodland in the Park by 2050 by establishing 100ha of new woodland a year, and by bringing the same amount a year into management each year. The context for this may be set by a Wales Forestry Strategy drawn up by the National Assembly.
- 5.6 The *Action Plan for Nature Conservation in National Parks in England and Wales* highlights key issues and provides a framework for joint initiatives between NPAs and the government's conservation agencies. It sees NPMPs and the LANDMAP process as mechanisms for developing a vision and implementing it. The AMPs should provide a way of integrating biodiversity with the management of other important factors such as the archaeological heritage and recreation activities.
- 5.7 It is part of the NPA's vision that native broadleaved woodlands are extended, the Park's varied habitats and wildlife managed so as to increase their diversity, and that water quality is improved.

ISSUES

- I. **Biodiversity.** The government's aim is to protect key habitats and species and to increase awareness and involvement through the production of LBAPs by local partnerships, facilitated by local authorities. The NPA is co-ordinating the development of a LBAP for the Park area.
- II. **Delivery of biodiversity targets by agri-environment schemes.** It is hoped that Tir Gofal will build on the success of Tir Cymen to provide improved prescriptions for the management and restoration of key habitats and species.
- III. **The identification of second tier Wildlife Sites.** Statutory sites such as SACs and SSSIs are identified and have some protection, but knowledge is limited of the much greater number of other sites that contribute to the Park's biodiversity. Criteria for identifying sites developed by the Brecknock Wildlife Sites Partnership will be applied to the rest of the Park by the end of 2000.
- IV. **Management of common land.** The Meithrin Mynydd project has shown the potential for agreed management, benefiting all interests. This work should continue and the approach be applied elsewhere. Bracken may need controlling in some areas, to protect landscape and habitats.
- V. **Woodland management.** The Section 3 Conservation Map shows woodland that the NPA considered particularly important to conserve, including all the Park's broadleaved woods. Many are suffering from over-grazing or lack of regeneration or management, but their protection and regeneration is of critical importance to the conservation of the Park's landscape and biodiversity. The Map itself will be reviewed in the AMPs in the light of the NPA's present aims and objectives.
- VI. **Woodland cover.** The government's aim of increasing woodland cover is supported where this would be appropriate to the National Park, and there will be locations where substantial planting would be beneficial. However, increased planting in inappropriate places could have a damaging effect on the landscape and biodiversity. The NPA must be involved in decision making.

- VII. **Water quality and water levels.** Chemicals for sheep dipping, farm slurry and industrial effluent are potential sources of pollution, putting water quality and aquatic life including fish at risk. Reduced water levels due to increased abstraction and changing weather patterns are also a threat to biodiversity.
- VIII. **Air pollution.** Deposition of nitrous and sulphurous oxides is still occurring in Mid Wales, with a deleterious effect on peat and upland vegetation. This could increase if new power stations are built to burn coal, oil, gas or wood. The effects of traffic are covered in chapter 14.
- IX. **Education and awareness.** Raising awareness of biodiversity issues is an integral part of LA21 and of its component LBAP process. The NPA uses LNRs and other suitable areas for community environmental education. This issue is also covered in the Education chapter.
- X. **Data and monitoring.** A comprehensive, accessible, shared database is required, for use in the AMPs and Tir Gofal as well as the LBAP. A new set of aerial photographs of the Park will be obtained to help in monitoring habitat changes.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Conserve and enhance the biodiversity, habitats and species of the Park as a contribution to local, national and global diversity.		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Produce Local Biodiversity Action Plan for the Park	i) Produce LBAP by end 2000 and start implementation, using AMPs	NPA, CCW, WTs, wildlife recorders, EA, FC, NT, Coed Cymru, DC-WW, RSPB, farming unions, residents, UAs
2. Protect designated sites	i) Prepare site management plans	CCW
	ii) Operate Tir Gofal	CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, Cadw, NPA, landowners and managers
	iii) Develop and implement UDP policies	NPA, CCW, NAFW
	iv) Include management proposals in AMPs	NPA, CCW, EA, FRCA, FC, NT, WT, DC-WW, WTs, RSPB, farming unions
3. Identify and protect second tier Wildlife Sites	i) Carry out surveys	NPA, CCW, WTs, RSPB, UAs
	ii) Use Tir Gofal contacts	CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, Cadw, NPA, landowners and managers
	iii) Develop and implement UDP policies	NPA, CCW, NAFW, WTs, UAs
	iv) Include in AMPs	NPA, CCW, WTs, EA, FRCA, FC, NT, WT, DC-WW, RSPB, farming unions
4. Enhance the landscape, nature conservation, historic and agricultural value of common land by sustainable management	i) Continue work of Meithrin Mynydd project	<i>See Landscape chapter</i>
	ii) Identify agreed sites on commons for tree planting, for wildlife and stock	NPA, commoners
	iii) Manage burning to improve heath	Commoners, landowners, NPA
	iv) Pursue grazing agreements	NPA, commoners, farming unions
	v) Investigate need for bracken control	NPA, commoners, CCW
	vi) Restore areas of damaged peat	NPA, CCW, commoners
	vii) <i>See also Landscape, Access and Farming and forestry chapters</i>	
5. Enhance the landscape, nature conservation and agricultural value of farmland	i) Implement LBAP	NPA, farmers, landowners, LBAP partners (see above),
	ii) Advise landowners, including through Tir Gofal	CCW, FRCA, NPA
	iii) <i>See Farming and forestry chapter</i>	
6. Protect existing woodland	i) Bring 100ha broadleaved woodland p.a. into management.	FC, Coed Cymru, WT, Tir Gofal, NPA, farming unions, land owners/managers
	ii) <i>See also Farming and forestry chapter</i>	
7. Increase nature conservation value of non-native woodland	i) Replace non-native with native tree species on ancient woodland sites. Data and targets in AMPs.	FE, FC, WT, Coed Cymru, NPA, CCW
	ii) Remove non-native forest from former important semi-natural habitats. Data and targets in AMPs.	FE, FC, WT, Coed Cymru, NPA, CCW

	<i>iii) See also Farming and forestry chapter</i>	
8. Create new native broadleaved woodland	i) Create 100ha native broadleaved woodland p.a. by locally sourced planting or regeneration on bare land	FC, WT, Tir Gofal, NPA, CCW, farming unions, land owners/managers
	ii) Encourage other broadleaved planting	NPA, FC, WT, Tir Gofal, CCW, farming unions, land owners/managers
9. Identify and protect other threatened habitats	i) Use AMPs to identify habitats	NPA, CCW, WTs, RSPB
	ii) Prepare and implement LEAPS.	EA, consultees
	iii) Advise landowners, using Tir Gofal if appropriate	NPA, CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, Cadw, WTs, DC-WW, RSPB, landowners/managers
10. Protect and improve water quality	i) Prepare and implement LEAPS.	EA, consultees. AMPs.
	ii) Advise landowners, using Tir Gofal if appropriate	NPA, CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, Cadw, WTs, DC-WW, RSPB, landowners/managers
	iii) Develop and implement UDP policies	NPA
11. Protect and improve air quality	i) Develop and implement UDP policies	EA, NPA, CCW
	<i>ii) See Transport chapter</i>	
12. Develop public awareness of and involvement with biodiversity	i) Develop 2 practical management schemes p.a. involving local groups	NPA, WTs, UAs, communities
	ii) Use AMPs to develop community environmental education on LNRs and land with management agreements	NPA, WTs, landowners, communities
	<i>iii) See Information and interpretation and Education chapters</i>	
13. Improve data availability and monitoring	i) Carry out <i>programmed</i> surveys	NPA, CCW, WTs, EA, FRCA, FC, PCC, NT, WT, DC-WW, RSPB, farming unions
	ii) Share data with partners	NPA, CCW, NT, RSPB, WTs, EA, WT, FC, National Biodiversity Network
	iii) Set up monitoring as part of LBAP.	NPA, CCW, WTs, wildlife recorders
	iv) Purchase aerial photographs of the whole Park in the Plan period	NPA

MONITORING

- 5.8 The LBAP will include monitoring systems for the Habitat Action Plans and Species Action Plans it contains. These may be Park wide or more localised, in which case they may be carried out under the umbrella of the AMPs. It is hoped that all organisations will be making data they hold available to all partners. In addition, a need for the following surveys during the Plan period has been identified: grazing and woodland regeneration; acidification; 2nd tier sites; phase 2 habitats.
- 5.9 Both the LBAP and LA21 require local public involvement in biodiversity. Wildlife indicators of local significance may be identified in the AMPs, and local communities encouraged to get involved in monitoring them.
- 5.10 Broad habitat data and indicators for the whole Park are needed for a State of the Park report. A new set of aerial photographs of the Park is required for this.

RELATED STRATEGIES

- 5.11 As already indicated, the Local Biodiversity Action Plan will set out the NPA's plans for biodiversity in more detail. It will link closely with this Plan and particularly with the AMPs. If necessary, it will be supported by policies in the UDP.

6 ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

- 6.1 Archaeology and historic landscapes are the material remains of past ways of life. The present that we live in is the product of past events, and our understanding of that past is a key factor in understanding the present and managing for the future. The landscape as a whole is a product of past human activity. Patterns of field enclosure or land use, or transport systems like the canal and its associated tramways, are historic features in their own right, and the individual features - such as megaliths or mottes - which have been the focus of attention in the past are now seen as part of a wider whole. Accepting that the landscape is dynamic and cannot be fossilised, sustainability requires a balance of the requirements of modern life with the protection of important historic landscapes and features.
- 6.2 The Park's historic landscapes are many and varied. Some, identified as being of outstanding interest in the Welsh context, with important prehistoric, medieval and industrial elements, are included in the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales. Historic parks and gardens of national importance have been included by Cadw/ICOMOS on a separate register. More sites may be added to both registers. Other historic sites range from the Mesolithic period up to redundant industrial remains only a few decades old. Of over 3700 recorded sites, 256 are protected as scheduled ancient monuments (SAMs).
- 6.3 Cadw provides the main funding for conserving SAMs. Most of the NPA's conservation projects are on SAMs because of their importance and the availability of funding. RCAHMW keeps records and is the main surveying body. It funds upland survey work carried out by the NPA in partnership with the Archaeological Trusts. The latter also hold the detailed Sites and Monuments Records, and exchange data with the NPA. The NPA has an important role in preventing needless damage to features. Recorded sites can be protected through land management advice, development control and raising awareness through interpretation and education, as well as by practical conservation work.
- 6.4 The Area Management Plans should provide a way of integrating the management of the Park's archaeological heritage with other important factors such as biodiversity and recreation activities. CCW's increasing involvement in historic landscapes (as identified jointly with Cadw and ICOMOS, see 6.2 above), and the Archaeological Trusts' assessments of landscape areas will feed into this process.
- 6.5 Involvement in the conservation of the evidence of past ways of life is one aspect of LA 21. Educating and involving the public, both adults and school groups, is an important aspect of the NPA's work.
- 6.6 The NPA's vision is that historic landscapes and archaeological features are protected, conserved and valued by local residents and visitors.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Conserve, enhance and promote, and research into, the Park's archaeological heritage		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Work with other organisations to promote the formulation of a regional strategy, within a national framework, for protecting, managing and raising awareness of the historic environment.	i) Put a regional strategy on the agenda of AT committees and other forums.	NPA, UAs, Cadw, RCAHMMW, CCW, ATs, FE, NT, experts
	ii) Develop a strategy for archaeology in the Park by the end of the Plan period, using the AMPs	NPA, Cadw, RCAHMMW, ATs, FE, local groups
2. Protect and manage historic landscapes, parks and gardens	i) Complete Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest	CCW, Cadw, ICOMOS
	ii) Protect and enhance Craig-y-nos Country Park and other NPA owned sites through management plans	NPA
	iii) Develop and apply policies in the UDP	NPA
	iv) Use AMPs to draw up management strategies	NPA, CCW, Cadw, ATs, landowners
3. Protect and enhance scheduled and designated sites	i) Make agreements, offer grants	Cadw
	ii) Protect and improve management of SAMs, using AMPs to involve local groups and owner/occupiers	NPA, Cadw, FE, EA, DC-WW, landowners, groups
	iii) Protect and enhance sites in NPA ownership through management plans	NPA
	iv) Commence programmed conservation and enhancement work on sites	Cadw, NPA, FC, DC-WW, FE, landowners
	v) Manage possible World Heritage Site at Pwll Du	UAs, Cadw, owners, NPA
	vi) Develop and apply policies in the UDP	NPA
4. Seek to manage all sites appropriately, involving local community, concentrating on threatened and neglected sites/types	i) Use AMPs to set priorities	NPA, Cadw, ATs, FE, landowners
	ii) Protect and enhance sites in NPA ownership through management plans	NPA
	iii) Survey Tir Gofal farms and advise farmers, as funding allows	CCW, Cadw, NPA, ATs
	iv) Protect and improve management of sites, using AMPs to involve local groups and owner/occupiers .	NPA, Cadw, FE, EA, DC-WW, landowners, groups
	v) Seek funding for conservation work	NPA, Cadw, CCW, ATs
	vi) Develop and apply policies in the UDP	NPA
5. Increase archaeological awareness through schools and community projects.	i) Continue the Ty Mawr project through the Plan period.	NPA
	ii) Support work of local history groups	NPA, local groups
	iii) <i>See above and Education and Information and interpretation chapters</i>	
6. Improve data availability and monitoring	i) Continue to improve data held, and ensure its compatibility with ATs' databases	NPA, ATs, RCAHMMW, Cadw, NT, FE
	ii) Set up data exchange and standards system by end of Plan period	RCAHMMW, ATs, NPA, FE, NT
	iii) Finish survey of Black Mountains by end of Plan period	AT, RCAHMMW, NPA
	iv) Programme surveys on NPA land in AMPs	NPA
	v) Carry out other research, as identified	RCAHMMW, Cadw, CCW, Welsh Historic Gardens Trust, ATs, FE, NT, NPA
	vi) Develop monitoring systems in AMPs	NPA, Cadw, ATs, FE, NT

ISSUES

- I. A **holistic view** of the Park's historic landscape and the strategies for conserving and interpreting it is needed, in the context of a strategy for archaeology in Wales. Within the Park, the AMPs will give a framework for the management of historic landscapes, supported by the work of CCW and the ATs.
- II. **Historic parks and gardens.** These are now being given due recognition, and will be given increased attention during this Plan period. The historic garden at Craig-y-nos Castle is partly in the NPA's ownership.
- III. AMPs will be the framework for prioritising the management of individual **historical and traditional features**, including those previously neglected such as the industrial heritage and redundant churches. Owners/occupiers need to be encouraged to participate in schemes to improve the management of SAMs, and to prevent the loss or deterioration of features.
- IV. The commencement of **Tir Gofal** will provide an opportunity to survey farms entering the scheme, if staffing is available.
- V. **The need for greater awareness of landscape history.** The NPA's work with schools at Ty Mawr teaches conservation and archaeological awareness as well as history, so is a long-term conservation tool.
- VI. The need for **archaeology/buildings database**, input, maintenance and exchange. The purchase of a specialist database compatible with the ATs', systems and employment of staff to input data would greatly increase working efficiency.

MONITORING

- 6.7 Data collection and the development of indicators is required for a State of the Park report. More detailed information will be needed if the condition of sites is to be kept under review. Resources will limit the amount that can be achieved.

7 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 The Park has a wide range of vernacular architecture: Norman castles and mediaeval farmhouses, concentrations of 17th and 18th century buildings within the main settlements, and a scatter of very fine rural buildings which often retain original features such as stone tiles, screens and mullioned windows. There are a number of fine country houses on the better farmland in the Usk and Wye valleys, some set within parks and gardens of historical importance (see chapter 6). The Park's ecclesiastical architecture is very rich, with Brecon Cathedral, many important mediaeval churches and some early Nonconformist chapels. Changes in building materials (mainly red sandstone and limestone) and differing styles give local distinctiveness to the Park's many farmsteads and cottages, whose original features may be masked by later adaptations.
- 7.2 The pattern of settlements and their character also vary across the Park, from valley to valley. In general, nucleated villages predominate in the east while a more dispersed pattern of isolated farms characterises the west. Industrialisation, particularly in the south of the Park, gave rise to 19th century workers' cottages, the canal, a range of mills and other features perhaps better considered as industrial archaeology.
- 7.3 Buildings are protected by being listed by Cadw, by being within one of the Park's four Conservation Areas or by ownership by bodies such as the National Trust. There are about 1500 listed buildings including 29 Grade I and 86 Grade II* (January 1999). Cadw provides grant aid to safeguard outstanding buildings or for significant works in Conservation Areas, but funding is not adequate to assist many listed or unlisted buildings. The NPA offers advice and some grant aid, supporting the use of traditional styles, techniques and materials such as lime mortar, oak window frames and authentic paint colours.
- 7.4 The character of the Park's built environment is threatened by the deterioration of listed buildings, small changes to existing buildings, the declining use of stone tiles and other traditional local materials, new developments in settlements and the countryside, and the loss of traditional uses for buildings such as stone barns. Low farm incomes mean that cash may not be available for repairs. Policies on use changes, barn conversions for example, are set out in the Local Plan (see Planning chapter).
- 7.5 It is part of the NPA's vision that the Park's irreplaceable historic settlement patterns and buildings are conserved. They represent a diminishing resource visually and culturally, and by their attraction for visitors they contribute to the Park's economy. Sustainability implies that the heritage of the past should be conserved and handed down as far as possible, balancing this with the needs of present and future generations. LA21 promotes the involvement of communities in the design and development of their settlements and surroundings. To achieve this, a major injection of resources into buildings and settlement conservation is needed in this National Park. (For new built development see chapter 18.)

ISSUES

- I. **Protection of buildings of architectural or historic interest.** All buildings of listable quality should be listed, but resurveys have increased the number of listed buildings in the Park by over 400%, and there is a lack of funding to protect them. The NPA as planning authority has a duty to conserve them, but no extra resources. Grant aid from Cadw is of limited availability. Other funding must be targeted where it is most needed, giving priority to buildings at risk.
- II. **Protecting the Park's heritage of vernacular buildings.** The many buildings of lesser quality nevertheless contribute to the character of the Park's built environment. The Local Plan policies designed to conserve this, and the need for new design guidance, are covered in the Planning chapter, but additional ways need to be sought. Where alterations are to take place to significant buildings, they need to be recorded by RCAHMW or expert contractors if the Park's built heritage is not to be lost. This has cost implications.
- III. **Settlements.** Settlement patterns need to be considered and reflected in new development so that greenfield development does not destroy village forms. This is a matter for the UDP.

Local communities and groups have a role in conserving and enhancing the quality of settlements, through village enhancement schemes and village design statements, and by getting involved in the UDP. The benefits of the Llangattock Village Design Statement need to be assessed before more projects are undertaken.

- IV. **Conservation areas.** Within existing Areas, further townscape improvements are required, perhaps related to village design statements, in partnership with local groups. Future designations are likely to be of small areas within settlements, so that scarce resources can be concentrated where they will have the best effect.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Conserve, enhance and promote the Park's built environment		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. All buildings of listable quality should be listed	i) Complete resurvey of Park in the Plan period	Cadw
2. All listed buildings and their settings should be conserved and their condition improved, concentrating on buildings at risk	i) Develop register of buildings at risk by 2000, and maintain	NPA
	ii) Actively seek funding to protect rural buildings	NPA, Cadw, UAs, WTB
	iii) Establish and finance a project for Brecon Castle by 2000	NPA, Heritage Lottery Fund
	iv) Develop and apply policies in the UDP	NPA
3. Protect unlisted buildings that contribute to the Park's built heritage	i) Develop and apply policies in the UDP	NPA
	ii) Make article 4 direction to protect unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas during Plan period	NPA
	iii) Identify and commence research/survey project in Plan period	NPA, RCAHMW, NT, local groups
	iv) Actively seek funding for grants and recording	NPA, Cadw, UAs, WTB, RCAHMW
	v) Use AMPs to prioritise work	NPA
4. Conserve and enhance settlements and settlement patterns	i) All Conservation Area plans to be completed in the Plan period, and carried out <i>ad hoc</i>	NPA, UAs, local groups
	ii) Designate 2 new small Conservation Areas in the Plan period	NPA, local communities
	iii) Assess benefits of Llangattock village design statement, and consider undertaking one more.	NPA
	iv) Draw up programme of village enhancement schemes in Plan period	NPA, UAs
	v) Continue work on Brecon town scheme	NPA, WTB, Cadw
	vi) Develop and apply proposals and policies in the UDP	NPA
	vii) Use AMPs to plan work with local groups	NPA
5. Promote built heritage education and awareness	i) Use media to increase profile as opportunities arise	NPA
	<i>ii) See above and Information and interpretation and Education chapters</i>	
6. Develop monitoring of built heritage	i) Purchase specialist cultural database and employ contract staff to enter data by 2000	NPA
	ii) Develop buildings research and monitoring strategy during Plan period	NPA, Cadw, RCAHMW

MONITORING

- 7.6 It is difficult to prioritise the spending of limited funds and time without proper data. Indicators of the condition of the Park's built heritage will be required for a State of the Park report. Improved data availability, maintenance and exchange are therefore required.

8 CULTURE AND TRADITION

- 8.1 The first purpose of National Park designation was expanded in the 1995 Environment Act to include for the first time the conservation and enhancement of the Park's cultural heritage. "Culture" includes everything that people make or do, and "heritage" comprises everything that was done or thought in the past and which remains today. Those aspects of cultural heritage that consist of built features are covered in the two preceding chapters. This chapter includes those aspects of culture not consisting of tangible objects: language, literature, music, religion, customs, folklore, crafts, art, people and former ways of life.
- 8.2 There are close links between culture and the landscape. Landscape character is strongly influenced by the patterns and traditions of past and present agriculture and other land uses, and by social and industrial history. The feel of the area is affected by the associations it carries, through place names or with literature, politics or more personal connections. This is all part of local distinctiveness.
- 8.3 Sustainability implies that the heritage of the past should be conserved and handed down as far as is possible, balancing this with the needs and well-being of present and future generations. A lively culture and living traditions contribute to a healthy community, as emphasised by LA21, and insofar as they are attractive to visitors they also contribute to a healthy economy.
- 8.4 Although the NPA is charged with conserving cultural heritage, this part of its statutory purposes is likely to be fulfilled mainly by other organisations and individuals. The area has a living culture that thrives without NPA support. Nor does the NPA have a specific budget for it. However, there are important ways in which the NPA does contribute, for example in its commitment to the Welsh language. And much of its work relates to the conservation of culture and tradition in some way, as shown in most chapters of this Plan. It is part of the NPA's vision that the Park's strong Welsh and Marches heritage and rich cultural life should thrive.

ISSUES

- I. **Conserving and enhancing the Park's culture and traditions.** The NPA needs to develop the ways in which it works with others to help conserve and enhance culture and tradition in the Park. Examples are included in the table of objectives below and in the Archaeology, Built environment, Information and interpretation, Education, Tourism, Farming and forestry and Local community chapters (chapters 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 17). CCW's local distinctiveness project, to be piloted in the Carmarthenshire part of the Park, will celebrate all aspects of cultural heritage.
- II. **Recording cultural associations.** The NPA should use the AMPs to explore with partners the need to record and evaluate the cultural associations and influences that help to make each area distinctive. This would identify the potential for management, and ensure that what might be lost is recorded in the most appropriate way

- III. **Welsh language.** The NPA can play a key role in promoting the Park's and Wales's cultural heritage by developing the use of Welsh in its own work. Its Welsh Language Scheme, approved by the Welsh Language Board, will continue to be implemented, increasing the knowledge of Welsh among Park staff and its use in publications and other written material.
- IV. **Taking economic advantage of culture and traditions.** Much of the NPA's work in support of the social and economic vitality of the Park involves making the most of the area's culture and heritage. See the Tourism, Farming and forestry and Local community chapters 13, 15 and 17.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Conserve, enhance and support the cultural life and traditions of the Park		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Develop partnerships with those concerned with cultural life and traditions	i) Identify areas where the NPA can make a contribution, and establish contacts during the Plan period.	NPA, UAs, CCW, local groups and individuals
2. Support the Park's cultural life and traditions	i) Take part in Local Distinctiveness project	CCW, NPA, local groups
	ii) Support shows, community events and festivals in line with AMPs.	NPA
	iii) Assist local organisations to obtain funding for cultural projects	NPA, local groups
	iv) Promote cultural associations of NPA's properties	NPA, UAs, local groups and individuals
	v) Organise traditional skills courses and competitions in line with Centres' management plans	NPA, craftspeople and groups
	vi) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	vii) Use AMPs to develop other distinctiveness initiatives	NPA, UAs, local groups and individuals
	viii) <i>See Information and interpretation, Tourism and Local community chapters</i>	
3. Record the Park's cultural heritage	i) Use AMPs to identify who has records of what during the Plan period	UAs, museums, local groups, NPA
	ii) Devise one project during the Plan period to fill an identified gap in records	UAs, museums, local groups, NPA
4. Promote the use of the Welsh language	i) Implement the Welsh language scheme	NPA
	ii) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
5. Promote cultural heritage as a visitor attraction	<i>i) See Tourism, Farming and forestry and Local communities chapters</i>	
6. Develop understanding and awareness of cultural life and traditions	<i>i) See above and Information and interpretation and Education chapters</i>	
7. Monitoring	i) Develop indicators during the Plan period	NPA, CCW, UAs, museums, local groups

MONITORING

- 8.5 Monitoring the cultural health of the Park will not be easy, and certainly not something for the NPA to undertake alone. The main tasks for this Plan period will be developing partnerships and identifying the various aspects of culture and tradition in the area, to give a base for future monitoring, and to suggest suitable indicators. The AMPs will be a useful framework for this. CCW is working on data sets to help classify cultural associations and influence. If it is implemented within the Park, LANDMAP would assist in recording and evaluating cultural heritage.

9 ACCESS AND RIGHTS OF WAY

- 9.1 Access is the key to the enjoyment and understanding of the National Park, while outdoor exercise on foot, horseback or bicycle helps people keep healthy, an important aspect of LA21. The NPA's chief recreational objective is to promote public access to and within the Park, in appropriate and sustainable ways which do not conflict with its conservation objectives. This chapter covers access to open country and the public rights of ways network, incorporating accessibility for the less able. Access to and within the Park by road and by other means of transport is covered in the Transport chapter.
- 9.2 The landscape of the Park, which is what most visitors come to enjoy, is dominated by the open hills and mountains. Most of these are registered common land and/or are owned by the National Trust, and access on foot has been legally or traditionally permitted. There are permissive routes over some areas of hill land which are not commons. Legislation is to be introduced during the Plan period to give the public access on foot to areas defined by CCW as open countryside.
- 9.3 There 1,852 km of public rights of way (PROWs) in the Park. The NPA has responsibility, delegated from the constituent local authorities, for keeping the definitive map and statement up to date and for the maintenance of public rights of way. An Adopt-a-Path scheme has been set up utilising volunteers to survey the network and identify problems. The Park is crossed by the Offa's Dyke Path, which is a National Trail, two branches of the National Cycle Network, and the Taff Trail, a walking and cycling route which incorporates an old railway line and part of the canal towpath.
- 9.4 The NPA works with local groups, and the Access and Recreation Advisory Group (ARAG) provides a forum for discussion for a wide variety of issues. Disabled people are represented on ARAG and on the Disabled Access Steering Group, through which the NPA can ascertain the needs of people with disabilities. Work has already taken place to provide some suitable routes, part of the NPA's contribution to the LA21 issue of equity.
- 9.5 It is part of the NPA's vision that public access to open moorland and along rights of way should be maintained, and that all reasonable measures should be taken to make the Park and its facilities accessible to people of all abilities.

ISSUES

- I. **Access to open country.** Access to open country, open space and qualities of remoteness are among the special qualities of the National Park. It is therefore important to preserve access on foot where it exists, and increase it where possible. The NPA will be required to manage public access to mountain, moor and heath under forthcoming legislation. It will seek to protect conservation and farming interests, and to control and repair path erosion. Access to commons by horse riders will be considered in the AMPs.
- II. **Access to other parts of the Park.** Land in public, trust or company ownership and areas such as forests may have potential for greater public access, both on foot and for cyclists and horse riders. These activities are already permitted in an increasing number of Forest Enterprise forests. The AMPs and Tir Gofal agri-environment scheme will help identify further opportunities. Access to water is covered in chapter 10.
- III. **Rights of way network.** The rights of way network requires effective maintenance and management, building on the achievements of the last five years. The NPA aims to keep all public rights of way open, adequately waymarked and in a satisfactory condition for public use. A maintenance strategy highlighting priorities will be developed and a path condition survey and monitoring system commenced. The aim to have all public rights of way open, usable and signed by 2000 in accordance with the government target is constrained by under-resourcing by the Highway Authorities (HAs) and the National Assembly. HAs' Local Transport Plans (LTPs) should include a local walking strategy. Multi-use of routes will be considered in the AMPs.

- IV. **Definitive map.** The NPA will continue to pursue legal work relating to PROWs as resources allow, reclassifying RUPPs and correcting anomalies on the definitive map and statement. Applications for the diversion and/or closure of PROWs are also dealt with.
- V. **Improving the route network.** More long-distance and linking routes are required for horse riders and cyclists, to increase opportunities for these activities away from surfaced roads. Sharing may be possible in cases such as forest tracks. There could be an economic benefit, with the development of associated facilities. There is also a need for more short, accessible scenic walks around settlements. Work will continue with local groups in the context of the AMPs.
- VI. **Access for people with disabilities.** The NPA will continue its work with local groups to ascertain needs. The AMPs will be used to programme path improvements. Management plans will ensure that all the NPA's buildings are accessible. Access to the Park by public transport is covered in the Transport chapter.
- VII. **Visitor management.** The public needs to be aware what rights of access there are over land and routes in the Park, and what are the responsibilities of users of the countryside. The NPA can use its contacts with Park users as a visitor management tool. The wardens and Visitor Services section work to ensure that people are able to enjoy the Park in a sustainable way.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Promote public access to the Park for the enjoyment of its special qualities		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Support access on foot to open country, recognising landscape, nature conservation, historic and agricultural concerns	i) Permit access on foot to common land owned or managed by the NPA	NPA, commoners
	ii) Support existing access on foot to common land and other areas, pending legislation	NPA
	iii) Use AMPs to identify potential for improving access, and management requirements	NPA, OSS, RA, users, landowners
	iv) Implement the Upland Erosion Project to repair eroded paths.	NPA
2. Promote access to other parts of the Park by agreement	i) Review land in NPA ownership with a view to creating a right of access.	NPA
	ii) Promote free access on foot to FE forests, subject to operational needs	FE
	iii) Promote managed access to FE land for cyclists and horse riders	FE
	iv) Ensure access agreements are made on land sold by FE	FE, NPA
	v) Use AMPs, Tir Gofal and other opportunities to identify potential for improving access	CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, NT, WT, Cadw, NPA, landowners
3. Maintain all PROWs in a signed, waymarked and usable condition, aiming for a fully operating PROW system by 2000.	i) Set up path condition monitoring system and commence work during the Plan period	NPA, RA, OSS, Offa's Dyke Path Manag't Service, BHS, community councils
	ii) Repair and maintain PROWs as resources allow	NPA, HAs, community councils, user groups
	iii) Press NAFW and HAs for adequate funding for delegation agreements	NPA, CCW, NAFW, HAs
	iv) Review management of PROW network	NPA, ARAG
	v) Maintain National Trails	CCW, NPA, Offa's Dyke Path Manag't Service
4. Continue PROW legal work	i) Consider applications for PROW orders in the light of the NPA's aims and policies, and the AMPs	NPA, HAs, community councils, RA, OSS, BHS, users, landowners
	ii) Complete 10 RUPP reclassifications p.a. in Powys	NPA

	iii) Correct definitive map anomalies as resources allow	NPA
5. Improve PROW and permitted route network	i) Identify and open new and shared routes and links, particularly for cyclists and horse riders, through AMPs	NPA, UAs, RA, BHS, cycling organisations
	ii) Identify and open new short routes around settlements through AMPs	NPA, UAs, community councils, RA, BHS, cycling orgs., landowners
	iii) See also Recreation and Transport chapters	
6. Improve accessibility to and within the Park for people with disabilities.	i) Use AMPs to work with local groups to identify needs and opportunities	NPA, disability groups
	ii) Provide and promote suitable access to FE land	FE
	iii) Ensure all NPA's buildings and their grounds are accessible.	NPA, disability groups
	iv) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
7. Inform and educate public on access opportunities and responsibilities	i) See Information and interpretation chapter	
8. Monitor public access	i) See 3. i) above	NPA
	ii) Use AMPs to monitor access opportunities	NPA, users, landowners

MONITORING

9.6 Although records are kept of rights of way and the work done on them, the NPA does not as yet have a path condition monitoring system. Setting up such a system and starting to operate it are actions to be undertaken during this Plan period.

POLICIES

9.7 The NPA is permitted by statute to recover its costs in making public path orders by charging the applicant, who will benefit from the diversion or extinguishment. However, it may waive charges in appropriate cases. The NPA operates a charging policy as follows.

Policy A1. Charging for public path orders

Applicants will be charged a flat rate in respect of the administrative costs of making a public path order over one path, with an additional sum for each extra path. The actual advertising cost will be charged to the applicant and the applicant will bear all the costs associated with the construction of the new route in all cases except ii, iii, iv and vi below. The NPA will consider waiving part of the costs and assisting with or contributing towards accommodation costs in special circumstances, judged on their merits, and will waive all costs where:

- i) a path is to be diverted out of a working farmyard;
- ii) there is an overriding benefit to the public;
- iii) definitive map anomalies are amended for mutual benefit;
- iv) a path is to be diverted away from land which is difficult or unusable for much of the time, or is being eroded;
- v) the order is in the interest of public safety;
- vi) the path has been over-planted by forest and clearing the line is not feasible or the alternative is more commodious.

10 RECREATION

- 10.1 The Brecon Beacons National Park offers opportunities for a wide range of recreational activities and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. This chapter deals with countryside recreation other than the use of rights of way and walking in the open countryside, which are covered in chapter 9.
- 10.2 It is the NPA's statutory purpose to promote opportunities for the enjoyment of the Park's special qualities (see chapter 3). These include the landscape and natural beauty, peace and tranquillity, opportunities for walking and access to open country, open spaces and qualities of remoteness, traditionally managed farmland, and wildlife. The challenge for all involved is to enable as many people as possible to enjoy them, through pursuing their chosen activity with minimal regulation and in a sustainable way.
- 10.3 The impacts of recreational activity vary greatly, between activities and according to where, when and how they are undertaken. Pursuits often seen as harmful can be harmless if properly managed, while apparently harmless ones can be damaging on too large a scale or in the wrong setting. Serious recreational conflict is rare, and may mostly be resolved through negotiation and compromise. Promoting public enjoyment of the Park and ensuring its conservation are two equal purposes for the NPA; and only in the event of irreconcilable conflict are the needs of conservation put first, in line with the 1995 Environment Act.
- 10.4 Welsh Office circular 13/99 indicates that NPAs should promote the widest range of opportunities for recreation, while respecting the Park's special qualities and environmental capacity. Subject to their proper management, the recreational activities listed below are regarded by the NPA as being generally appropriate within the setting of the National Park. The list is not exhaustive but includes most of the activities common within the Park.
- 10.5 Circular 13/99 agrees that it is not appropriate for all forms of recreation to take place in all parts of the Park, and that some activities can cause unacceptable damage or disturbance. The NPA cannot exclude activities from the Park as a matter of principle, but there are a limited number, listed in table 10.2, that it considers to have an unacceptable impact on the Park's special qualities and to be rarely appropriate within the setting of the National Park. Where these activities are legal, the NPA will seek to reduce their harmful effects by negotiation and by good management.

Table 10.1 Recreational activities likely to be appropriate within the National Park

Land based activities	rambling, hill walking
	rock climbing, mountaineering
	orienteering
	caving
	cycling, mountain biking
	horse riding, pony trekking, carriage driving
	bird and wildlife watching
	visiting historic sites, cultural activities
	camping and caravanning
Water based activities	angling
	sailing, board sailing
	canoeing/kayaking
	rowing
	canal cruising
	model boating
Air activities	gliding
	un-powered hang gliding, paragliding

Table 10.2 Recreational activities likely to be inappropriate within the National Park

Land based activities	recreational use of motor vehicles off surfaced roads motor rallies on roads
Water based activities	speed boating, water skiing
Air activities	microlite flying
	powered hang gliding or paragliding
	powered model aircraft flying
	parascending from power boats

- 10.6 In general, it is not the NPA's role to provide recreation facilities; these are funded by the UAs or privately, with the NPA involved as LPA (see Tourism and Planning chapters). However, it owns Craig-y-nos Country Park and the Brecon Beacons Mountain Centre, which are popular informal recreation facilities. The NPA, UAs and major corporate landholders provide small rural car parks and picnic sites. The problems associated with dependence on private motor vehicles, used by nearly everyone as part of their recreational activity or to reach parts of the Park, are covered in the Transport chapter.
- 10.7 The NPA's recreation aims and objectives are based on sustainability and reducing the impact of activities on the environment. Recreation also contributes to the objectives of LA 21: it brings health, fitness and refreshment of the spirits, and can be of benefit to the local economy.
- 10.8 It is part of the NPA's vision that quiet public enjoyment of the Park should be encouraged, and that opportunities for people to enjoy the Park be extended.

ISSUES

- I. **Promoting recreation sustainably.** Sustainability in recreation activities involves protecting the landscape and biodiversity from irremediable harm, and ensuring that the effect on quality of life and the economy locally is positive. It includes issues of carrying capacity, parking, transport use and education of Park users. Carrying capacity will need to be determined through the AMPs using indicators such as path erosion where relevant, and including social impacts. Tourism Action Groups are assessing carrying capacity in certain settlements (see Tourism chapter).

- II. **Supporting and managing recreation activities.** The NPA has a role in providing the infrastructure to enable everyone, including disabled people, to enjoy the Park in appropriate ways, and in managing people and activities. The AMPs will provide a framework for identifying opportunities and problems on the ground. Information provision can also be a visitor management tool, as discussed in the Information and interpretation chapter. Cycling is covered in the Transport chapter, and horse riding in the Access chapter.
- III. **Recreation facilities.** Facilities serving the local community, such as swimming pools, are mainly a matter for the UDP, as are other buildings and facilities requiring planning permission. There are policies for pony trekking centres, golf courses etc. in the Local Plan. The NPA's tourism strategy (see Tourism chapter) is designed to increase benefits to the local community from visitors to the Park. The NPA has management plans for its own recreation facilities, Craig-y-nos country Park and the Brecon Beacons Mountain Centre.
- IV. **Problems and conflicts.** The NPA has a role in helping to resolve conflicts between different activities and between recreation and other interests, such as those of wildlife, heritage or the local community. Methods of management include zoning, policing, voluntary agreements and partnerships, and the SCW's code for resolving conflicts is supported by ARAG. Except where legal rights exist, the NPA will not allow inappropriate activities on its own land. Major issues and management measures are discussed below.
- V. **Llangorse Lake.** The NPA has resolved to make byelaws to control power boating, to protect the lake's wildlife and historic value and encourage its quiet enjoyment. The AMP will provide an opportunity to review this proposal in the light of current usage and voluntary controls.
- VI. **Organised events.** The organised participation of significant numbers of people at the same time in countryside recreation can bring problems of environmental damage and conflict with other visitors and local communities. Good management can reduce the problems, and there may be economic benefits. At present most events can be accommodated within the Park, but the number is increasing and rationing may be needed in particular areas. The NPA is preparing guidelines in consultation with ARAG. The existing policies for motor and caravan rallies (see para. 10.9 below) appear to be working satisfactorily.
- VII. **Organised group use of the Park.** The type and scale of this use, and of any problems caused, is not known. More information is required about the activities of commercial centres and schools/groups from outside the Park, and more contact needed with OEC staff. The military also use the Park for adventurous training (see chapter 16).
- VIII. **Recreational vehicular use of open country and unsurfaced routes.** The use of recreational motor vehicles on open country is illegal unless following a route with vehicular rights, or with the landowner's consent. The NPA considers that the unmanaged use of motor vehicles on unsurfaced routes is inappropriate in the National Park. Action is needed to protect these areas and routes from disturbance to stock and physical damage, and to enable other users to enjoy their tranquillity. Voluntary agreements, traffic regulation orders and future legislation are all options for dealing with this problem.
- IX. **Pressure and vulnerable areas.** The system of zoning with 'pressure' and 'vulnerable' areas was developed to protect heavily used and/or fragile areas from recreation pressure. It has been incorporated into the Local Plan. The importance of the Carmarthen Fans "remote area" was endorsed by the Meithrin Mynydd study. The areas and the criteria used to define them will be reviewed in the AMPs, and consideration given to replacing them with guidelines relating to topics or to the Park's special qualities.
- X. **National Park road hierarchy.** The road hierarchy is used in considering the impact of recreation proposals and activities. See Transport chapter.
- XI. **Safety.** Concern for safety in outdoor activities is a growing trend. NPA staff are trained in leadership and safety, and risk assessments are carried out for all its activities. Mountain and cave rescue are the responsibility of the police, and largely carried out by voluntary teams. The NPA and police work together to improve the security of cars parked in remote areas.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION**Aim A: Ensure that recreation activity is environmentally sustainable**

OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Ensure recreational activities do not exceed carrying capacity	i) Use AMPs to identify areas of sensitivity for specific activities	NPA, SCW, CCW, governing bodies, farming unions
2. Reduce recreational use of private cars and promote more sustainable forms of recreational transport	i) Identify opportunities to reduce car parking needs in AMPs ii) <i>See Transport chapter</i>	NPA, UAs, FE, DC-WW, NT, users
3. Educate Park users and recreational facility providers on responsible, sustainable and appropriate use of Park	i) Develop liaison programme with group leaders, organisations and operators ii) <i>See Information and interpretation, Education and Military use chapters</i>	NPA, AHOEC, governing bodies, operators
4. Improve knowledge of extent and effect of recreation activities	i) Develop and start implementing research programme in Plan period	SCW, NPA, governing bodies

Aim B: Promote opportunities for the enjoyment of the Park's special qualities by the public

OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Protect existing appropriate recreational opportunities	i) Maintain liaison with landowners and users ii) Use AMPs to monitor activities	NPA, SCW, landowners NPA, SCW, users
2. Support informal recreation where sustainable	i) Use AMPs to review demand for and effects of car parks, picnic sites and toilets ii) Use AMPs to identify other opportunities	NPA, FE, DC-WW, NT, communities, landowners NPA, users, landowners
3. Support appropriate land-based recreation activities	i) Prepare management plans for areas and activities in AMPs ii) Provide for appropriate sports on FE land iii) Allow access to caves on NPA land	NPA, SCW, CCW, users, landowners, communities FE NPA (see AMPs)
4. Provide more opportunities for appropriate water-sports	i) Discuss access to another reservoir for quiet water-sports by the end of the Plan period ii) Annually update canoe access agreements and form liaison group to progress and resolve problems iii) Carry out EA's water-based recreation strategy and action plans	NPA, DC-WW, EA, governing bodies EA, landowners, governing bodies, NPA, user groups EA, CCW, SCW, NPA
5. Support appropriate air sports	i) Prepare management plans for areas and activities in AMPs	NPA, SCW, governing bodies, landowners
6. Promote recreation opportunities for disabled people	i) Use AMPs to identify problems and opportunities ii) Use UDP policies to ensure that recreational buildings and facilities are accessible	NPA, DC-WW, FE, UAs, disabled groups NPA, DC-WW, FE, UAs, disabled groups
7. Permit development of appropriate recreational facilities	i) Manage Craig-y-nos Country Park and the Mountain Centre according to their plans ii) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA NPA

Aim C: Resolve problems and conflicts caused by recreational activities		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Maintain liaison with recreational and landowner interests	i) Develop work of ARAG	NPA, ARAG members
2. Manage recreational activities to avoid unacceptable disturbance or harm to the Park's special qualities, natural beauty, biodiversity, heritage, or the amenity, enjoyment or legal rights of others	i) Define criteria for activities and apply them in AMPs	NPA, SCW, governing bodies, landowners, commoners
	ii) Use AMP to agree recreational management of Llangorse Lake	NPA, CCW, EA, landowners, operators, governing bodies, users
	iii) Determine ways to improve canoeists' awareness of access agreements	EA, CCW, canoeing organisations
3. Ensure that organised events do not conflict with each other or cause unacceptable disturbance or harm	i) Ascertain level and effect of organised events in Plan period	SCW, NPA, users
	ii) Ensure events conform to good practice guidance	SCW, NPA, user organisations, landowners
	iii) Set up system for processing events applications in Plan period	NPA, user organisations
	iv) Monitor motor rally policy R1 and ensure rallies conform to it	NPA, RAC
	v) Monitor caravan rally policy R2 and ensure rallies conform to it	NPA, caravan clubs
4. Ensure that group use does not cause unacceptable disturbance or harm	i) Maintain contacts with OECs	NPA, AHOEC, ARAG
	ii) Obtain information on use of Park by groups based outside it	NPA, AHOEC, education authorities,
5. Manage recreational use of motor vehicles away from surfaced public roads	i) Campaign against illegal use of motor vehicles on open hill	Police, NPA, governing bodies
	ii) Seek new powers to manage this	NPA
	iii) Use AMPs to monitor unsurfaced tracks and determine need for maintenance and management	HAs, NPA, NT, governing bodies, users
	iv) Produce advisory leaflet for off-roaders in Plan period	Governing bodies, NPA, HAs
	v) Find sites outside the Park for off-road motor-cycling	UAs, SCW, governing bodies
6. Protect heavily used and/or fragile areas from recreation pressure	i) Review P&VAs in AMPs	NPA, CCW, communities
	ii) Incorporate P&VAs or their replacement in the UDP	NPA
7. Ensure recreational activities conform to the road hierarchy	i) Use road hierarchy in AMPs	NPA
	ii) Incorporate road hierarchy in UDP	NPA
8. Support the safe recreational use of the Park	i) Carry out risk assessment of NPA led activities, and train staff	NPA, Countryside Recreation Network
	ii) Manage car parks to reduce theft from cars	Police, NPA, FE, NT, AMPs
	<i>iii) See Interpretation and information chapter</i>	
9. Monitoring recreational activities	i) Use AMPs to develop monitoring systems for activities and their effects	NPA, SCW, users, landowners, communities

MONITORING

10.9 It will not be possible to monitor all aspects of recreational use of the Park, but a research programme will be developed and commenced in this Plan period. As surveys are costly to carry out, one outcome of the research should be a series of recreation activity indicators. Information on participation in sports is available from SCW or governing bodies, which are in a better position than the NPA to identify trends.

- 10.10 The AMPs will be used to improve knowledge of the extent and effect of recreation activities, and identify whether more detailed monitoring is required for particular areas or activities such as competitive events and the use of the Park by OECs. Visitor survey data will be part of the State of the Park report, and CCW is developing a methodology. Measures of carrying capacity for particular areas and activities will also be required.

RECREATION POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

- 10.11 Policies are required where the NPA has some influence or control over the regulation of an activity. The NPA is consulted about motor rallies on public roads, authorised by the RAC and police, and on rallies by 'exempted' caravanning clubs.

Policy R1. Motor rallies

Motor rallies using roads in the Park will normally be approved if they conform to policy guidelines:

- i) no section of route should be used more than once in any 6 week period, nor more than 6 times in any year;*
- ii) daytime events on NP Secondary and Minor roads or the use of land for stages should be avoided in the holiday season (Easter to end October) and on Sundays, except for small non-competitive road events such as vintage motor-cycle rallies. 'Classic' vehicle rallies will be kept under review;*
- iii) use of roads or facilities in major settlements should avoid the working day;*
- iv) unsurfaced public roads, tracks and paths should not be used if damage is likely to be caused;*
- v) there should be no damaging effects on 'pressure' or 'vulnerable areas'.*

Policy R2. Caravan rallies

The NPA will approve caravan rallies in the Park subject to:

- i) a maximum of 5 events and a total of 15 nights per year at any one site;*
- ii) an interval of at least 3 weeks between events on the same site;*
- iii) limits to the size of the event according to the circumstances (such as time of year, landscape, or road capacity);*
- iv) there being no adverse effects on 'pressure' or 'vulnerable areas', biodiversity or the landscape, and no other major problems being caused.*

- 10.12 The NPA is adopting guidelines for sporting and challenge events, drawing on guidance from CCW and SCW. Taking into account the type of event (foot, cycle or horse) and the number of participants, the guidelines advise on successful planning and management. Organisers are encouraged to consult the NPA and landowners well in advance, avoid inappropriate dates and locations, respect the needs of local people, prepare well and clear up afterwards. ARAG and the NPA will decide whether or not an event should be supported, but the NPA can only control events on its own land.

11 INTERPRETATION AND INFORMATION

- 11.1 The NPA's provision of information and interpretation contributes to the fulfilment of both its statutory purposes. It contributes to people's understanding and enjoyment of the Park by interpreting its landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage, and by explaining the NPA's purposes, policies and work. Such an understanding is important in encouraging people to care for and conserve the Park, thus supporting the NPA's first purpose. Information provision can also be a tool for visitor management, helping to protect areas that are over-used or sensitive to visitor pressure.
- 11.2 The NPA's information and interpretation provision is thus contributing to the sustainable management of the Park. The Visitor Services section contributes further to sustainability and LA 21 objectives by purchasing catering and other supplies and services locally as far as possible, providing a market place for locally produced craft items, hosting produce fairs and other events, and making the centres available as venues for community groups.
- 11.3 The NPA runs the Brecon Beacons Mountain Centre and Craig-y-nos Country Park, visitor attractions in themselves with interpretive displays, talks and events, and opportunities for informal recreation. Their staff, and those of the NPA's three information centres in and near the Park, provide a comprehensive information and advice service to visitors on where to go, what to see and how best to enjoy their visit without harming themselves or the landscape.
- 11.4 The information centres are operated jointly by the NPA and the UA, the latter running the Tourist Information side with its bed-booking service. The NPA has set up ten village information agencies in small shops across the Park, to provide a more comprehensive network of information points for visitors and increase the benefits of tourism locally. It also has a purpose-built mobile trailer to provide interpretation at local shows and events.
- 11.5 The NPA produces a range of publications to promote understanding of various aspects of the Park, or to help people enjoy their visit. These are mainly marketed through the visitor and information centres, which also sell other relevant literature. They are also promoted to retail outlets in and around the Park and to tourist accommodation.
- 11.6 The NPA has many other ways of communicating with the local and visiting public to explain its activities, put across the conservation message and support the local community. These include its guided walks programme, a range of organised events (see also Tourism and Farming and forestry chapters), attendance at local shows, and the giving of talks to local groups on request. The NPA undertakes this work on its own and in partnership with others. It is part of the NPA's vision that people should be able to learn about and enjoy the Park, and that the vision should continue to be shared by all.

ISSUES

- I. **Communications strategy.** The NPA will be preparing a strategy to cover all aspects of communication: public relations, the media, written and spoken material, interpretation, visitor and information centres, the education service (see Education chapter) and reference publications. The key aspect as far as this Plan is concerned is promotion of the understanding of the Park's special qualities by the public, which will involve working in partnership with other groups and organisations. The strategy will also cover internal communications within the NPA, and the NPA's house style and corporate image. ANPA is involved with promoting a corporate image for the family of national parks.
- II. **Reaching the public.** According to a 1994 survey, only 4% of Park visitors obtained information from a NPA centre. As part of the communications strategy, the effectiveness of this work will be assessed, and the range of information and interpretive material developed, to include a visitor newspaper, web page, and the all Parks CD-ROM. The NPA's events and guided walks programmes also contribute, the latter being aimed at those less used to walking. The AMPs will help determine what more can be done to promote awareness and influence visitor behaviour, and to prepare interpretation strategies, as a basis for a strategy for the Park.
- III. **Visitor centre management.** The visitor centre and country park have management plans that require review and up-dating, to create and maintain best value despite resource constraints. Their carrying capacity, particularly in relation to the areas surrounding the centres where the NPA has other management responsibilities, is an issue for the AMPs.
- IV. **Information centres and village information agencies.** As set out in the *Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in the Brecon Beacons National Park*, (see Tourism chapter) the aim is to establish a cohesive system of information provision across the Park. The management and operation of the existing centres will be reviewed, to rationalise the functions of the NPA and UAs and provide the best possible service. Stronger links are required with the few privately run TICs. The use and value of the agencies will be reviewed in the context of the AMPs, and if appropriate the number increased to 20 in the Plan period.
- V. **Welsh language.** The NPA's Welsh Language Scheme includes producing as much material as possible bilingually.

MONITORING AND BEST VALUE

- 11.7 Monitoring and evaluation of the provision and effectiveness of information and interpretation in the Park by the NPA, UAs and other parties is needed. 1994 survey results show that the information centres are not being effective in reaching many visitors; they are currently being assessed in accordance with nationally agreed standards of good practice. Interpretive services and activities such as trails, talks and displays will need to be assessed against stated objectives. More visitor surveys may be needed, and data obtained relating to the Park unit rather than by UA areas. The Area Management Plans may show that aspects or areas of the Park have been neglected or over-emphasised.
- 11.8 Best Value performance indicators will be needed to show that public money is being spent efficiently on good quality services. For the Park's information and interpretation services, Best Value will involve working towards achieving the optimum balance between quality of service, including seasonal length, and the need for income generation and economy. Visitor centres, information and interpretation are among the services for which Best Value service reviews are to be carried out during 2000/1, in line with the Best Value programme.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Promote among Park residents and visitors an understanding of the special qualities of the National Park, and of the role of the NPA in conserving them.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Communicate effectively to Park residents and visitors about the Park's national status and the NPA's role and work	i) Complete communications strategy in the Plan period and start to implement it	NPA
	ii) Draw up and start to implement programme of workshops on NPA functions	NPA, community groups
	iii) Produce strategy for Park boundary signs in AMPs	NPA
	iv) Extend information role of warden service during the Plan period	NPA
2. Encourage the public to understand and value the Park's natural beauty, special qualities, history, culture and way of life	i) Develop interpretation strategies for areas and the whole Park	NPA, CCW, WTB, NT, UAs, FC
	ii) Develop visitor centres in line with management plans	NPA, local groups
	iii) Facilitate production of publications and development of other interpretive techniques bilingually by end of Plan period, expanding NPA staff.	NPA, UAs, FE, WTB, WTs
	iv) Produce a Park web-site in the Plan period	NPA
	v) Organise events displaying the life and work of the area including Millennium projects (<i>See also farming and forestry section</i>)	NPA, UAs, FC, WTs, community groups
	vi) Arrange annual guided walks and events programme to interpret the Park and the NPA's work	NPA, WTs, Brecon Beacons Park Society
	vii) Contact publishers etc. to influence information about the Park	NPA, FC, CD-WW, NT, publishers
	viii) See 1. iv) above	NPA
3. Provide information and advice to those wishing to enjoy the Park safely, appropriately and cost-effectively, for the benefit of users and local businesses	i) Review management of Park information centres and TICs and integrate the promotion of National Park purposes, tourism and local distinctiveness	NPA, UAs, Beacons Tourism Forum, WTB
	ii) Review operation of Village Information Agencies and increase to 20 in Plan period	NPA, village shops, communities
	iii) Use AMPs to review the role of information provision in visitor behaviour, management and safety	NPA, external assessors, police
	iv) Expand staff to facilitate production of publications and other information techniques bilingually by end of Plan period	NPA
	v) Introduce annual visitor newspaper in 2000	NPA
	vi) Answer or refer on all requests for information on the Park	NPA
	4. Evaluate success and efficiency of information and interpretation in the Park	i) Devise and implement monitoring programme by end of Plan period

RELATED STRATEGIES

- 11.9 As indicated above, a communications strategy for the Park and the NPA's work will be prepared during the Plan period. Interpretation strategies for the Park as a whole and the areas within it will be developed, using the Area Management Plans.

12 EDUCATION

- 12.1 National Parks are examples of how principles of sustainability are being applied in the countryside. The role of the NPA's education service is to demonstrate this by teaching about the role and work of the NPA, the Park area and wider issues of management, the environment and sustainability. This role has been enhanced by the new wording of the NPA's second purpose: to promote opportunities for understanding and enjoyment.
- 12.2 The NPA's education work is carried out by a wide range of staff whose skills complement each other. Full time education work is carried out by the education officer and the Danywenallt Study Centre. The Brecon Beacons Mountain Centre and Craig-y-nos Country Park have a very significant educational role, while contacts with schools are an important part of the work of the warden service. Other staff also contribute their expertise. Most of the NPA's work has an educational aspect, as is shown throughout this Plan.
- 12.3 The NPA is involved in educational work with local and visiting primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, and also with community and adult groups. The work with schools has been adapted so that teaching about sustainability and the work of the NPA can be incorporated into subjects within the national curriculum. A co-operative approach to education has been developed with other National Parks.
- 12.4 It is part of the NPA's vision that people should be able to learn about and enjoy the Park.

ISSUES

- I. **Education for sustainability.** In the formal sector, methods for raising awareness of sustainability issues such as biodiversity, resource use and management should be promoted, and where possible linked to the national curriculum and examination requirements. A greater involvement in community education would raise awareness of these issues in adults and children alike, helping them to participate in the LA21 process. This is part of the NPA's developing education strategy.
- II. **Education for conservation.** Park staff are involved in education from primary school to higher degree level. They teach about the Park's natural resources and economic and cultural life, and about the work of the NPA and others in protecting them. A balance also needs to be found between schools' curriculum and examination requirements and the NPA's duty to promote understanding of the Park and its special qualities. This will continue to develop through the centres' management plans (see also Information and interpretation chapter) and the NPA's education strategy. Relevant aspects of the Environmental Education Council for Wales' developing strategy will need to be reflected in the NPA's strategy.
- III. **Integration of the Park's education service.** The NPA's centres and many other staff are involved in education, and in giving talks (see also the Information and interpretation chapter). This includes educating each other on aspects of their work. OEC staff and teachers from local and visiting schools are also using the Park as an educational resource, and there is a need for co-operation so as to provide a better service more effectively. This will be an important part of the NPA's developing education strategy.
- IV. **Welsh language.** The NPA's provision of education services through the medium of Welsh is limited by staff skills and financial resources. Both of these will be developed in the Plan period, as part of the education strategy, in line with the Welsh language scheme.
- V. **Evaluation.** Methods of evaluating the effectiveness of the NPA's education work will be devised in the Plan period, in co-operation with the other Welsh Parks, to form part of the education strategy.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Instil understanding of sustainable development and environmental issues, in particular the special qualities of the National Park, and the NPA's work, and encourage attitudes and behaviour which will ensure a sustainable future.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Develop the NPA's education strategy	i) Revise and implement education strategy during the Plan period	NPA, Environmental Education Council for Wales
	ii) Continue programme of talks and study days for staff	NPA
	iii) Co-ordinate efforts of others including, for integrated approach.	NPA, DC-WW, FC, EA, NT, UAs
2. Initiate and develop educational projects with local and visiting schools and educational groups and the local community	i) Carry out Biodiversity project in 12 schools during the Plan period.	NPA, WTs, CCW, Powys Environment & Development Education Centre
	ii) Develop biodiversity awareness programme with local community	NPA, LBAP partners
	iii) Develop Snapshots for the Future programmes in the Plan period.	NPA
	iv) Develop the educational work of the centres in line with their management plans	NPA
	v) Develop environmental education throughout the Park	NPA, AHOEC, FC
3. Meet ad hoc demands for educational services at a high standard	i) Give talks as requested as far as possible, using relevant Park staff	NPA
4. Develop educational resources for schools and teachers	i) Produce programmed range of packs.	NPA,
	ii) Expand library/resource centre and its use	NPA
	iii) Produce a Park web-site in the Plan period	NPA
7. Develop educational provision in Welsh	i) Include staff training in education strategy	NPA
8. Monitor effectiveness of education service	i) Commence monitoring project during Plan period	NPA, other Welsh Parks, Trinity College, Carmarthen

MONITORING

12.5 The NPA will establish a project to monitor the effectiveness of its education service during the Plan period, as part of the education strategy. This is to be carried out in partnership with the other Welsh National Parks and Trinity College, Carmarthen.

12.6 For Best Value, performance indicators will be needed to show that public money is being spent efficiently on good quality services. Education is among the services for which Best Value service reviews are to be carried out during 2000/1, in line with the Best Value programme.

RELATED STRATEGIES

12.7 A review of the NPA's education strategy commenced in 1999, and the new strategy will be finalised early in the Plan period.

13 TOURISM

- 13.1 Tourism is the industry that encourages visitors to come and enjoy the National Park and which provides facilities and services for them. It is an essential component of the economy of the area. A 1994 survey indicates that the Park hosts around 3.6 million visitor days per year, divided fairly equally between day visits and overnight stays. Most day visitors come from the densely populated areas to the south of the Park, with a smaller proportion travelling from south-west England and the Midlands. Staying visitors come from all over the UK, with a third from London and the south east, and 13 % from overseas.
- 13.2 Tourists have a significant effect on sustainability in the Park, for instance in their use of private cars for transport to and within the Park, and pressures on the environment and the lives of Park residents. However, the industry is itself dependent on the Park's healthy environment, special qualities and attractions.
- 13.3 Tourism is one of the most important industries in the Park, supporting a wide range of businesses including the accommodation sector and its suppliers, canal boat hire, and attractions such as the Show Caves, historic buildings and activity centres. It can make a very positive contribution to sustainable development and LA21. There are strong links with agriculture which can be developed to mutual benefit, and many rural shops and businesses which contribute to the vitality of local communities depend upon visitor income. The NPA was instrumental in setting up Tourism Action Groups (TAGs) in Llandovery, Upper Usk (Sennybridge and Trecastle), Brecon, Llangorse, Crickhowell and Abergavenny, supported by the consultants Action for Community Tourism (ACT). They are supporting their communities by encouraging local suppliers and producers to work together, thus keeping income from tourism circulating within the individual communities.
- 13.4 The Wales Tourist Board, regional tourism councils and UAs also have strategies for tourism. The WTB is responsible for developing tourism in Wales, and its strategy document, *Tourism 2000*, endorses the partnership approach adopted by the NPA. The NPA sees its role as maintaining co-ordination and dialogue between the players within the Park. Its tourism strategy aims to increase sustainability and ensure community and economic benefits. As local planning authority, the NPA also has a role in controlling development.
- 13.5 It is part of the NPA's vision that visitors are welcome to the Park and that a sustainable tourism industry contributes to their enjoyment and to the local economy. See other chapters for the NPA's objectives in relation to recreational activities, visitor pressure, the provision of information, and for the NPA's transport strategy, which includes tourist transport.

ISSUES

- I. **A joint strategy for sustainable tourism.** Organisations involved in tourism in the Park include nine UAs, the WTB, two regional tourism companies, Brecon Beacons Tourism and two other tourism associations and Brecon Beacons Marketing Ltd., as well as the NPA. Harmony between these key players is needed to prevent destructive competition, duplication and inefficient resource use. The Visitor Forum, a joint working partnership of these interests, has been set up to develop a strategy for sustainable tourism in the Park. This will be completed and set in motion during the Plan period. Its aims, objectives and actions are included in this Plan.
- II. **Community benefits.** Tourism can swamp local life, but it can also support village shops and provide employment. Communities need to be able to manage tourism so as to support their environment and way of life rather than harming or displacing them, and the TAGs have been set up to do this.
- III. **Promoting and marketing the Park.** The tourism strategy aims to harmonise the promotional activities of partners, and enhance the economic benefits of tourism. Tourism supports agriculture and the economy by providing both additional income and a market for local produce and services. More overnight visitors would increase spending. A national park has a strong 'brand' image, which can be used in the promotion of sustainable tourism.

- IV. **Developing green tourism 'products'.** Green tourism enables visitors to appreciate the Park's special qualities without harming them, and uses local produce and resources without depleting them, thus benefiting the community. Developing such tourism is an important objective of this Plan. It may involve training for operators. The use of local food and timber produce is covered in the Farming and forestry chapter.
- V. **Tourist facilities.** The tourism strategy relies mainly on private operators to provide facilities, goods and services. The demand for these in relation to the supply needs to be identified; the TAGs' visitor surveys will help. While there may be no shortage of accommodation for visitors, some sectors such as cyclists may be less well catered for. Planning issues covering buildings, caravan sites etc. are dealt with in the UDP (see the Planning chapter).
- VI. **Environmental effects.** Appropriate sustainable tourism helps visitors appreciate the need for conservation, and with good management, more visitors could be welcomed to the Park without adverse effects. An Environmental Trust Fund would enable visitors and businesses to support conservation work financially. However, inappropriate development, lack of management or excessive visitor numbers can degrade the both the environment and long-term economic and community benefits. The TAGs are assessing carrying capacity in certain settlements.
- VII. **White on brown signs** to tourist attractions help both visitors and operators, but if over-used may degrade the visual environment and devalue their function. The signs are erected by the HAs and National Assembly, but the NPA wishes to be consulted in advance. The environmental impact of other tourist advertising is covered in the UDP.
- VIII. **Visitor access and transport.** Good quality access to and within the Park is the key to tourism. See the Access chapter for access to the countryside. The use by visitors of private motor vehicles could be reduced by developing public transport connections and promoting cycling and walking holidays. This would be more sustainable, and would make the Park more accessible to those without a car. For this see the Transport chapter.
- IX. **Visitor information.** The TAGs have identified the need for signposting and information boards; this will feed into the NPA's communications strategy (see Information and interpretation chapter).
- X. **Monitoring.** It is important to know the levels of visitor use and spending in the Park. It would help if the Park was identified separately in data already collected. The TAGs are conducting visitor surveys to measure the success of marketing and provide a baseline for monitoring the economic effects of tourism locally. Additional surveys will also be required.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Develop sustainable tourism, to increase public enjoyment of the Park's special qualities and foster the vitality of local communities.		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Achieve a clear, shared vision for the future of sustainable tourism in the Park	i) Complete first edition of tourism strategy early in Plan period.	Visitor Forum partners
	ii) Review membership and terms of reference of Beacons Visitor Forum	Visitor Forum, NPA, NT
	iii) Investigate employment of a sustainable tourism project officer	NPA, UAs, WTB
2. Communities to take a lead in tourism development to increase economic and social benefits	i) Establish and support tourism action groups in Plan period	TAGs, Visitor Forum, ACT, NPA
	ii) Support tourism projects with community involvement	TAGs, Visitor Forum, ACT, NPA
	iii) Use AMPs to identify opportunities and develop community support	NPA, Visitor Forum, ACT, WTB, tourism companies
3. Develop an integrated approach to promoting and marketing the Park and its identity	i) Agree a 5 year marketing strategy during the Plan period	Visitor Forum, partners, NT
	ii) Develop a marketing body for the Park	Brecon Beacons Marketing Ltd, Visitor Forum, NT

	iii) Prepare agreed promotional material identifying the Park separately, including annual brochure	Visitor Forum, Brecon Beacons Marketing Ltd, operators
	iv) Prepare joint mailing database	Partners
	v) <i>See Farming and forestry chapter</i>	
4. Develop and promote green tourism products based on the Park's special qualities and local produce	i) Develop short break shoulder season green activity packages	Tourism operators, WTB, NPA, NT, WTs
	ii) Develop accreditation scheme	Visitor Forum, WTs
	iii) Train operators in Welcome Host	Brecon Beacons Tourism, NT
	iv) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	v) <i>See Farming and forestry chapter</i>	
5. Identify demand and potential for tourist accommodation, facilities and services	i) Use AMPs to identify demand and potential	TAGs, NPA, partners
	ii) Survey availability of services for touring cyclists in Plan period	NPA, TAGs, cycling organisations, partners
	iii) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
6. Increase tourism sustainability and support for Park purposes, and reduce its harm to the environment and local communities	i) Implement WTB's 'Greening Your Business' guide	Visitor Forum, operators, WTB, NPA
	ii) Establish Environmental Trust Fund in the Plan period	Visitor Forum, operators, NPA
	iii) Develop work of TAGs	TAGs, ACT, NAP, Visitor Forum
	iv) Develop criteria for commenting on white on brown signs	NPA, HAs, operators, NAFW
	v) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
7. Improve monitoring of tourism	i) Identify the Park as a separate monitoring area	UAs, WTB, NPA
	ii) Use TAGs and AMPs to collect data on tourist activity and impact	Visitor Forum, TAGs, NPA, NT, partners
	iii) Build identification of further monitoring needs and methods into tourism strategy	Visitor Forum, NPA

MONITORING

13.6 The two major issues relating to monitoring tourism are i) the lack of data on tourism in the Park and its environmental, economic and social effects, and ii) the fact that the data currently collected by the WTB and UAs relates to UA areas rather than the Park. It is an aim of the tourism strategy to change both of these during the Plan period. Indicators will need to be developed for the State of the Park report.

RELATED STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

13.7 The NPA's full strategy for tourism is set out in *A Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in the Brecon Beacons National Park*. This contains more detailed aims, objectives, actions and policies, shows which partners are involved in each, and indicates priorities.

13.8 The NPA has asked the HAs to inform the NPA when they receive a request for a white on brown tourism signs. Criteria on which the NPA will base its response will be developed during this Plan period.

14 TRANSPORT

- 14.1 Transport is necessary for most journeys to and within the National Park, for both residents and visitors. The Park is particularly dependent on road transport for both people and goods. There is no railway station, and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal is at present restricted to pleasure use. Cycling and horse riding are primarily recreational activities, and outside Brecon public transport is inadequate to serve most needs. Private vehicles are therefore essential to residents, visitors, businesses and agriculture in the Park. 92% of visitor days involve the use of a private vehicle.
- 14.2 Everywhere, traffic has grown in recent decades. 1,264,000 road vehicles are licensed in Wales, an increase of 35% in the last 15 years. This level of growth will increase the pressure to improve and build new roads, taking up land, destroying habitats and countryside, and leading to further increases in car use. However, restricting road building without reducing vehicle numbers would only increase congestion, pollution and environmental degradation.
- 14.3 It is part of the NPA's vision that, for the sake of long-term sustainability, dependency on private motor vehicles for journeys to and within the Park is reduced. The need to travel should be reduced, and the attractiveness of public transport increased, without adversely affecting the overall quality of people's lives. Better links between public transport, recreational travel and access to the countryside would benefit tourists and residents alike.
- 14.4 However, there are those both in and outside the Park whose mobility is limited by a lack of transport, and there is an unmet demand for access via public transport to destinations either side of the Park boundary. Promoting access for all to the Park and ensuring that residents have access to services and facilities are important objectives for the NPA (see Access and Community chapters).
- 14.5 Highway Authorities (HAs) are required to set out their transport strategy in five-year Local Transport Plans (LTPs), with the aim of providing an integrated transport system. There must be local targets for tackling pollution and congestion, more traffic management, road safety, public transport and alternative modes of transport. There will be more certainty of funding for initiatives, wider public consultation, and powers to charge for road use and parking. HAs will also be expected to draw up regional statements on transportation strategy within which LTPs can be developed. LTPs must also be consistent and integrated with the land use strategy contained in UDPs.
- 14.6 The NPA is not the HA for the Park, but National Assembly draft guidance stresses that authorities should work together to secure integrated transport in and for their areas, especially within National Parks. The 1995 Environment Act places a duty on public bodies to have regard to National Park purposes, and to demonstrate that they have done so. It

states that "it will be important to ensure mutual co-operation across Park boundaries, particularly in planning and highway matters."

- 14.7 Furthering this, the County Surveyors' Society, National Park Officers' Group, Countryside Commission and CCW have published a *Joint Statement on Traffic and Transport Policy and Practice in National Parks*. It comprises a commitment to work together to deliver good design and sustainable traffic and transport systems which support National Park purposes, meet the needs of local communities, and are fully integrated with land use and management strategies. The consultations on this Plan are part of this process, and the NPA has made a start with its Beacons Bus partnership.

ISSUES

- I. **Working more closely with the highway authorities.** The NPA is very concerned with transport issues, because of their effect on sustainability, the environment and communities and their importance for tourism and visitors. However, its influence is limited. The relevant powers and resources rest with the National Assembly and HAs, which have a duty to have regard to national park purposes. During this Plan period the NPA will seek closer working arrangements with the National Assembly and HAs on matters identified in the 1996 joint statement, including reducing through traffic and the integration of land use, land management and transportation through the UDP. The NPA will expect HAs to consult it early on their LTPs and all significant highway works, and to take full account of environmental factors in new schemes and in maintenance programmes.
- II. **Sustainable transport strategy.** A major challenge for this Plan period is for a partnership of the NPA, National Assembly, HAs, CCW and others concerned to develop an integrated sustainable transport strategy for the Park. This will involve increasing public transport provision and use, controlling parking, integrating this with other modes of transport such as cycling, and finding ways of reducing the need to travel. The harmful effects on the environment and communities of the unavoidable use of motor vehicles should also be reduced as far as possible.
- III. **Sustainable transport.** The transport strategy will include public transport initiatives within the Park and across the boundary, to be carried out by partnerships of organisations including the NPA. The first of these is the Beacons Bus scheme, which aims to make the Park more accessible to those who have no car or wish to leave it at home. EU funding has been obtained to improve the services and promote them.
- IV. **National Park Road Hierarchy.** (See page 44) Part of the Management Plan consultation process is to seek support for the National Park Road Hierarchy from HAs and National Assembly, so that it is used to influence traffic use and improvement and maintenance programmes. The AMPs will give the opportunity to review it, and any conflicts with the HAs' categories will be addressed during the preparation of the UDP.
- V. **Highway design.** A design guide for highways in the Park is needed, to be produced in partnership between the NPA, HAs, CCW and road user groups. It should reflect the Road Hierarchy and the character of the different parts of the Park, and emphasise safety for all road users. The design and use of road signs should also be included.
- VI. **Cycling.** Cycling is a recreation activity, a viable and environmentally sound component of sustainable tourism and a sustainable form of amenity or commuter transport. A national network of routes is being developed, which passes through the Park. A Local Cycling Strategy is being developed for the Park, to include long-distance and local shared routes, as well as forest tracks and mountain biking routes. See also chapter 9.

MONITORING

- 14.8 The National Assembly and HAs monitor road traffic, but if the NPA is to have a meaningful input into transport planning within the Park, more Park specific data will be required. Indicators will need to be developed for a State of the Environment report. The AMPs will provide a framework for the monitoring of specific areas or problems.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Develop more sustainable ways for people and goods to travel to, from and within the National Park		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Develop closer liaison with HAs, to ensure that LTPs further National Park purposes	i) Set up regular liaison with all HAs covering the Park	NPA, HAs
	ii) Liaise closely on preparation and review of LTPs	HAs, NPA
2. Develop and promote an integrated strategy for sustainable transport to, from and within the Park	i) Work with HAs and others to draw up a transport strategy to form part of the UDP and AMPs	NPA, HAs, NT, BW, CNP, CCW, communities, road user groups
3. Promote sustainable transport initiatives to and within the Park	i) Extend Beacons Bus project	NPA, HAs, transport operators
	ii) Publish combined public transport timetable	NPA, HAs, transport operators, WTB
	iii) Joint working to develop and promote the network	NPA, HAs, transport & tourism operators, WTB, NT, CCW
4. Make environmental quality the primary consideration in determining appropriate use and improvement of roads, subject only to safety, by applying the Road Hierarchy to decisions	i) Include Hierarchy in UDP and develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	ii) Liaise closely and apply Hierarchy in preparation and review of LTPs and HA programmes	HAs, NPA
	iii) use AMPs to review Hierarchy	NPA, HAs, communities, user groups
5. Produce a highway design guide incorporating safety for all road users	i) Complete guide in the Plan period	HAs, CCW, NPA, BHS, cyclists, carriage drivers
6. Consult on and implement a cycling strategy in the context of national strategies	i) Develop a Local Cycling Strategy to assist production of LTPs	HAs, Sustrans, NPA, WTB, BW, cycling orgs
	ii) Promote 'Safe routes to school'	HAs, Sustrans, NPA
	iii) <i>See also Access chapter</i>	
7. Integrate the NPA's objectives for walking into the HAs' LTPs.	<i>i) See above and Access chapter</i>	
8. Monitoring roads and transport	i) Develop a monitoring strategy in the Plan period	NPA, HAs

RELATED STRATEGIES

14.9 It is an objective of this Plan that an integrated sustainable transport strategy be developed for the Park area, by the HAs, user groups and tourism and environmental interests, in conjunction with the NPA. This will draw on the HAs' Local Transport Plans, which are being produced from 1999.

14.10 A draft Local Cycling Strategy for the Park has been prepared by consultants. Implementation in consultation with UAs, users and other partners will commence early in the Plan period. This will form part of the overall transport strategy.

BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK ROAD HIERARCHY (Map J)**1. National through routes**

These routes take national through traffic. Any improvements to increase capacity or improve safety must be done to the highest standards, with environmental quality given priority. Developments likely to generate substantial increases in traffic, or large vehicles such as lorries, trailers, caravans or coaches, may be permitted if otherwise acceptable.

A465T

A470T including Brecon Bypass

2. Regional distributor routes

These roads take through traffic flows within the south/mid Wales region, but alternatives are available for long-distance and heavy traffic (M4/M5, A465T, A470T). The 'improvement' of the carrying capacity of the regional distributor routes encourages their use as alternative national through routes, which is contrary to government policy and discouraged by the NPA. On balance, bypasses to settlements along these routes will rarely be appropriate, because the negative impact on the surrounding high quality landscape will rarely outweigh the environmental relief to the settlement.

A40T except Brecon Bypass

A4059

A479T

A4067

3. Local distributor routes

These roads connect settlements with each other or with higher categories of route. While they may carry some commuter and commercial traffic with its origin or destination within the Park, they are not regarded as part of a through route network.

Improvements to these routes should be for safety reasons only, not to increase their carrying capacity. A primary aim should be to conserve their character. Developments generating traffic will be considered in relation to the existing capacity of the relevant road, including its proximity to routes of a higher category. Proposals likely to give rise to a demand for improvements that cannot be met without significant damage to the route's character, or which would cause additional hazards or inconvenience to existing road users, will be discouraged.

A4069 Brynamman - Llangadog

B4520 Brecon - Lower Chapel

A4077 Crickhowell - Gilwern

B4560 Llangynidr - Beaufort

A4078 Talgarth - Pontithel

B4601 Brecon Dorlangoch

A4215 Defynnog - Libanus

B4602 Brecon - Bishop's Meadow - Troed-yr-harn

B4248 Brynmawr - Blaenavon

Cefn Coed - Pontsticill

B4350 Glasbury - Hay-on-Wye

4. Local routes

This category includes many of the Park's most attractive roads, some carrying a significant proportion of recreational or visitor traffic, but without this being a serious problem. They may connect rural areas with settlements, or provide an alternative to a higher category route, used by local or recreational rather than through traffic.

The primary aim is to conserve the character of these roads, and the features which contribute to this character. Limited growth of local or recreational traffic will often be acceptable. However, developments likely to give rise to a demand for improvements that cannot be undertaken without significant damage to their character, or which would cause additional hazards or inconvenience to existing road users, will be discouraged.

Ffairfach - Trapp - Carreg Cennen

Talgarth - Felindre - Llanigon - Hay-on-Wye

Trapp - Llandyfan - Twynmynydd

Blaen Onneu - Llangattock

Ffairfach - Bethlehem	Crickhowell - Llanbedr
Pontarllechau - Twynllannan - Trecastle	Llangenny - Glangrwyne
Usk Reservoir spur	Brynmaur - Cheltenham - Clydach
Tafarn-y-garreg - Pont-ar-Hydfer	B4248 - Llanelly Hill
Ystradfellte - A4059	Clydach South - Llanelly Hill
Cnewr - Heol Senni - A4215	Gilwern - Govilon - Llanfoist
Heol Senni - Ystradfellte	Govilon - Blaenavon
Brecon - Cradoc	Abergavenny - Forest Coalpit
Aber - Talybont	Abergavenny - Crossways
Talybont - A40	Llanfihangel Cruorney - Llanthony
B4558 Brynich - Talybont - Llangynidr - Llangattock	Pandy - Oldcastle
Llanfrynach village	Pen-croes-oped - Mamhilad
Brynich - Groesffordd - Llangorse	B4521 Abergavenny - Skenfrith
B4560 Talgarth - Bwlch - Llangynidr	

5. Tourist pressure routes

These are roads which would come into categories 4 or 6, except that a very significant proportion of their use is by recreational traffic. This causes problems to a varying degree. The primary aim is to conserve the character of these roads, and the features which contribute to this character. Developments likely to give rise to a damaging increase of recreational traffic will generally not be acceptable, although the individual capacity of the road and the NPA's strategy for recreation will be taken into account. Apart from some provision of passing places, improvements to accommodate recreational traffic will not normally be acceptable.

Twynllannan - Llanddeusant - Llyn y Fan	Brynmaur - Llangattock Hillside
Ystradfellte - Pontneddfechan	UC583, UC584, UC585 Llangattock Hillside
Comin y Rhos - Pont Melin Fach	Forest Coalpit - Grwyne Fawr
Libanus - National Park Visitor Centre	Cwm Coed-y-cerrig
Pontsticill - Aber	Hay-on-Wye - Gospel Pass - Llanthony
Pant - Pontsticill - railway	Sugar Loaf from Pentre, Abergavenny
Ystradgynwyn - Neuadd Pumhouse	

6. Minor roads

This category includes all the other roads in the Park, many of them very narrow lanes. They generally serve hamlets, farms or other isolated dwellings, although some carry limited recreational traffic.

The primary aim is to conserve the character of these roads, and the features which contribute to this character. Small passing places may be acceptable, as may very small, low-key recreational facilities or holiday accommodation. There would be more scope for these near to routes of a higher category, or where the road is of a comparatively high standard.

15 FARMING AND FORESTRY

- 15.1 The use of land is the key to the landscapes and biodiversity of the Park, and to many of the opportunities it offers for public enjoyment. The Park's main land use is agriculture: 51% of it is in agricultural holdings, which include significant areas of woodland, and 38% is common grazing land. The largely coniferous forests planted for timber production both by public and private owners make up about 9% of the Park.
- 15.2 Farmland and forests thus cover 98% of the Park. They are the setting for its archaeology, built environment and cultural heritage, and for public access and recreation. They give full-time livelihoods directly to about 1500 Park residents (1991 census) and support those of many more. The beauty they produce was a factor in the Park's designation, and is enjoyed by the local community and visitors alike. Thus changes which affect these industries have a profound effect on all aspects of life and work within the Park.
- 15.3 Farmland in the Park is largely in the hands of family farmers, whether owners or tenants. Much woodland and forest is also privately owned, but there are also large areas in the hands of the Forestry Commission and Dŵr Cymru-Welsh Water.
- 15.4 British agriculture is in a period of crisis. The strong pound, lack of public confidence in meat due to BSE and other external factors are affecting farmers in the Park as elsewhere. Long-term effects may include bankruptcies and loss of small family farms, as well as an increase in forestry and woodland. Lack of resources for maintenance could have adverse landscape and environmental effects. The agricultural work force has continued to decline over the last Park Plan period, with more part time and casual labour used on farms, and more work being done by contractors. This also applies in forestry.
- 15.5 Farming and forestry are needed to conserve the Park's beauty and maintain the long-term vitality of its communities and way of life, but land use needs to be sustainable, in line with the objectives of LA21. Farming and forestry practices should support and enhance biodiversity and landscape beauty, while providing a good living on family farms and in the forestry industry. EU and government support needs to be targeted to both these ends.
- 15.6 National Park Authorities can pilot sustainable policies and test environmentally friendly practices. The Area Management Plans should provide a way of integrating advice on the management of farmland and forests with other important factors such as biodiversity, archaeology and recreation activities.
- 15.7 It is part of the NPA's vision that there is a thriving agricultural economy and that common grazing is maintained, woods are well managed and the wood products industry developed, and that traditional skills are kept alive.

ISSUES

- I. **EU policy.** The Agenda 2000 proposals indicate a trend towards decoupling price support from production, compensated by increased direct payments and the continuation of agri-environment measures. This should benefit the Park. However, there will be a need to ensure that Agenda 2000 as implemented in Wales contributes to the protection of the

- environment, for example by giving farmers incentives to manage woodland. The revised CAP will also cover integrated rural development. The NPA will use its examples of sustainable practice to help the lobby for CAP reform.
- II. **Agri-environment schemes.** Tir Gofal should be introduced early in the Plan period. If government commits sufficient resources, it should help conserve hay meadows, walls and old farm buildings, and integrate farming and forestry, encouraging use of timber produced on the farm. However, if it results in increased grazing pressure on commons, habitats will be damaged. The NPA will be consulted, and intends to maintain regular contact with the administrators in CCW.
- III. **Common land management.** The NPA's ownership of large areas of common, the lessons learned from the Meithrin Mynydd project, and proposed legislation on access to open countryside together create the opportunity for mutually beneficial co-operation between the NPA and commoners. However, it may be difficult to include common land management within Tir Gofal, so grazing pressures on commons could alter. Other issues relevant to common land include biodiversity (chapter 5), access (chapter 9), recreation (chapter 10) and military use (chapter 16).
- IV. **Added value and diversification.** Conversion to organic agriculture, adding value to farm and forestry products, promotion of quality local produce and diversification into related businesses or tourism are potential ways to increase farm incomes. The NPA is actively supporting agriculture in the Park through its food and tourism initiatives. These include community tourism schemes, encouraging the use of local produce by hotels, restaurants and other tourist enterprises, and support for a local livestock and livestock products marketing project, Brecon Beacons Lamb. Certification under a forestry certification scheme will help meet consumer demands for sustainable production.
- V. **Woods and forests.** Falling agricultural and land prices, targeted planting grants and the government policy of increasing tree cover may make new planting more attractive to landowners. Increased afforestation can have a potentially damaging effect on landscape and nature conservation. The NPA is formally consulted by the FC on grant-aided tree planting proposals on private sites over 5ha and on alterations to FE's Forest Design Plans. Forestry is also considered in the biodiversity chapter.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Promote and support a thriving rural economy based on the Park's natural assets		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Support sustainable agriculture and rural development	i) Lobby for reformed CAP to serve environmental and rural development objectives	CCW, NPA
	ii) Promote partnership among countryside and rural development agencies	CCW, WDA, FRCA, FC, NPA, EA, NT
	iii) Lobby for high Tir Gofal funding	CCW, NPA
	iv) Advise farmers on entry to Tir Gofal	CCW, FRCA, FC, EA, Cadw, NPA, farmers
	v) Advise farmers on sustainable and organic agricultural practices	FRCA, NAWAD, CCW, NPA, NT
	vi) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	vii) Operate farm plastics recycling scheme	Farmers, operators, NPA
2. Enhance the landscape, nature conservation, historic and agricultural value of common land by sustainable management, while maintaining public access	i) Pursue Meithrin Mynydd project	<i>See Landscape chapter</i>
	ii) Promote Tir Gofal to commoners associations	CCW, NPA, commoners
	iii) <i>See Landscape and Access chapters</i>	
3. Enhance the landscape, nature conservation and agricultural value of farmland	i) Advise landowners, including through Tir Gofal	CCW, FRCA, NPA, WTs
	ii) <i>See Biodiversity chapter</i>	

4. Support sustainable wood and forest production appropriate to the Park's landscape	i) Manage productive forests sustainably in line with forest certification standards	FE, FC
	ii) Bring farm woodlands into management as part of Tir Gofal and the Woodland Grant Scheme.	CCW, FC, EA, Cadw, NPA, NT, farmers, Coed Cymru
	iii) Contribute to Coed Cymru programmes.	Coed Cymru, NPA
	iv) Work with woodland and forest owners towards forestry certification standards	NPA, FC, FE, NT, Coed Cymru, woodland owners
	v) Advice to farmers and landowners	FC, Coed Cymru, NPA
	vi) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	vii) See <i>Biodiversity chapter</i>	
5. Develop strategy for promoting local food, timber, other produce and craft work	i) Support Brecon Beacons Lamb	Producer group, NPA, NAWAD, Welsh Institute of Rural Studies
	ii) Develop Food and tourism initiative	Beacons Tourism Forum, ACT, Food Project Group, NPA
	iii) Support marketing initiatives: organic promotions, farmers market, local food directory, timber products	NPA, Coed Cymru, LEADER groups, WDA, local producers,
	iv) Organise festivals - food, wood, Made in the Park	NPA, Coed Cymru, producers
	v) Use local goods and produce in BBNP centres	NPA, Coed Cymru
6. Control farm and forestry built development appropriately	i) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	ii) See <i>Planning chapter</i>	
7. Support appropriate farm diversification	i) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	ii) Liaison and advice	CCW, NPA, FC, Coed Cymru, Business Connect, WDA, WTB
	iii) See also <i>Tourism chapter</i>	
8. Monitor farming and forestry	i) Produce agricultural statistics for Park area by end of Plan period	NAWAD
	ii) Develop indicators for the NPA's farm liaison work during the Plan period	NPA, NAWAD, farming unions
	iii) Introduce ANPA/FC woodland monitoring system	ANPA, FC, NPA

MONITORING

- 15.8 Agricultural trends are influenced by market forces and by changes in EU and government support, and very little by the actions of the NPA. Agricultural statistics are collected by the National Assembly for Wales Agriculture Department on a community basis, so that accurate data for the Park is difficult to calculate. The NPA hopes for a change in this during the Plan period. It will have a particular interest in the numbers and areas of farms entering into Tir Gofal and the Organic Aid Scheme. CCW's Tir Gofal indicators may be a useful monitoring tool.
- 15.9 The NPA has a role in supporting farming in the Park, and indicators of the effects of its work are required. Data might usefully be collected on, for example, the recycling of farm plastics, the MOD's use of common land, participation in farmers markets, the publication of a food directory, attendance at festivals, and farm diversification enterprises. EU funded schemes such as Brecon Beacons Lamb have their own monitoring systems.
- 15.10 The NPA has good data on woodlands in the Park, which will be kept up to date for the State of the Park report, identifying any gaps. An ANPA and FC working group is to introduce a woodland monitoring system in 1999/2000, which the NPA intends to adopt. FE monitors its own land holdings.

16 MILITARY USE OF THE PARK

- 16.1 Although military use of the Brecon Beacons National Park is not on the same scale as in Dartmoor or Northumberland, its effects are sufficiently broad to warrant a separate chapter in this Plan. The Brecon area has a long history of military connections, and the Army headquarters for units based in Wales remains situated in the Barracks. While the MOD no longer owns any significant training areas in the Park, it has substantial areas just outside the boundary. It uses the Park's open country and air space for adventurous pursuits and training. These activities affect several aspects of the life and work of the Park, and thus are the concern of the NPA.
- 16.2 The MOD currently owns about 114ha of land in the Park. This includes the Roman Island Gunsite, an area of land above Trecastle; the camp at Sennybridge, base for the Training Area north of the Park; in Brecon the Dering Lines training camp and sports fields and the Barracks, headquarters of 160 (Wales) Brigade; and Cwrt y Gollen near Crickhowell, formerly a Territorial Army base but most now surplus to requirements. Two small outdoor pursuits centres in the Park are owned by the Navy.
- 16.3 Military training takes place on the MOD's own bases, and there is considerable movement of vehicles to and from Brecon and Sennybridge, on route to the Sennybridge Training Area. Helicopters are used both for moving personnel and for training. Jets and Hercules aircraft use the Park's airspace for low flying training. Services personnel use the hills and rights of way for military and tactical training in uniform with packs and weapons, and for adventurous pursuits such as hill walking and rock climbing. Canoeing, caving and hang-gliding are also undertaken.
- 16.4 The military presence in the Park is part of the area's history, culture and economy. Brecon Barracks were the home of the South Wales Borderers Regiment, whose museum there is open to the public. The various establishments offer employment to local civilians and use local services, an important contribution to the economy. The permanent staff and their families, including a Gurkha company, add diversity to Brecon's cultural life. Staff housing at Brecon and Cwrt y Gollen is significant in planning terms.
- 16.5 The Park benefits from the help of military units training in the Park through Exercise Dipper, under which the skills, manpower and helicopters of visiting units are employed to build footbridges, repair paths and other such tasks. The NPA maintains liaison with Defence Estates, the land managing arm of the MOD, and with HQ 160 (W) Bde for the control of units using NPA common land for training. As a public body, the MOD must under the 1995 Environment Act take account of national park purposes in carrying out its activities.
- 16.6 The NPA's vision for the Park incorporates continued military use if liaison is maintained and improved, but seeks a reduction in disturbance by low flying aircraft.

ISSUES

- I. **Special qualities.** One of the Park's special qualities is peace and tranquillity, which can be severely affected by the noise from low flying training aircraft and helicopters. The concern generated by this issue varies with training schedules, but it is not open to influence by the NPA, the UAs nor concerned local organisations.
- II. **MOD's Rural Estates Strategy.** The MOD proposes to develop a strategy that takes appropriate account of stakeholders' concerns, consulting with them on detailed codes of practice relating to its management objectives and implementation activities. The MOD owns little rural land in the Park, but any changes to the use of the Sennybridge Ranges might be significant.
- III. **Adventurous training.** The military use of the Park for exercises and adventurous training has effects similar to those caused by organised outdoor pursuits groups. If poorly managed or overdone, these can include traffic on narrow lanes, disturbance to stock, erosion of paths, litter and inconvenience to farmers through occasional damage to walls and fences. An additional factor is the effect on enjoyment for some of the sight of armed troops in

uniform. Where relevant, adventurous events will be covered by the NPA's developing policy on sporting and challenge events.

- IV. **Liaison** between the NPA and MOD has improved significantly in the last year. A Memorandum of Understanding exists between the MOD and ANPA, and a local one is being developed. This will deal with notifications of use of land, levels of use and sensitive areas. The Strategic Defence Review is not expected to have a significant effect on the level of military use of the Park. Exercise Dipper gives visiting units an opportunity to contribute to the Park.
- V. **Development.** The MOD needs planning clearance rather than planning permission to carry out development on Crown land. The NPA will apply the same design criteria as elsewhere in making comments, and the National Assembly for Wales will arbitrate in any dispute. See Planning chapter.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Reduce the adverse impact of military use on the Park, and maximise benefits		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Conserve and enhance the Park's peace and tranquillity	i) Seek reduction of military low flying and helicopter flights	NPA, communities, MOD
2. Reduce adverse effects on the Park's landscape, biodiversity and historic interest and on others' enjoyment caused by military exercises and adventurous training	i) Develop and apply Memorandum of Understanding during the Plan period	NPA, MOD, landowners, commoners
	ii) Early liaison between MOD, services users and landowners	NPA, MOD, landowners, commoners
	iii) Use monitoring to spread load appropriately	NPA, MOD, landowners, commoners
	iv) <i>See Landscape, Access and Recreation chapters</i>	
3. Educate service users on responsible, sustainable and appropriate use of Park	i) Develop and apply Memorandum of Understanding and develop liaison programme with MOD and services users	NPA, MOD
	ii) Develop Exercise Dipper	NPA, MOD
4. Ensure that MOD development is as far as possible consistent with Park purposes	i) Liaise with MOD over land use and design	NPA, MOD
	ii) <i>See Planning chapter</i>	
5. Manage MOD's rural land in and affecting the Park to support Park purposes	i) Liaise on Memorandum of Understanding and development of Rural Estates Strategy	MOD, NPA,
6. Monitor service use of the Park	i) Build monitoring into Memorandum of Understanding	MOD, NPA

MONITORING

- 16.7 Monitoring will be required of the use of the Park by military units, with a view to reducing problems and spreading the load if appropriate. This will take place in liaison with the MOD.

17 FOSTERING THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL BEING OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

- 17.1 The Brecon Beacons National Park has a population of about 32,000, concentrated in the Usk valley between Brecon and Gilwern, and in the Clydach Gorge between Gilwern and Brynmawr. The main settlements are Brecon (pop. 7,500), Gilwern, Hay-on-Wye, Crickhowell, Talgarth and Sennybridge. There are many smaller villages, hamlets and scattered farms.
- 17.2 Although agriculture has long been the basis of the Park's economy, only a tenth of the working population are now directly employed in it. Public, financial and other services are the main employers of Park residents, followed by distribution and catering. As with all rural areas, the centralisation of shopping and other services and reduction in public transport have radically affected the way of life.
- 17.3 The NPA's vision for the National Park includes healthy and socially inclusive communities and a sustainable, thriving economic, social and cultural life. The NPA in pursuing its two statutory purposes must "seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities." It is directed not to incur significant expenditure on this, but to work together with other agencies. It does not have a primary responsibility for economic development, but it is an important catalyst in its role as LPA, allocating land for development and community needs. Major components of the local economy, especially agriculture and tourism, are directly related to the NPA's statutory purposes, while the position of the National Park close to industrial South Wales is important in attracting industry there. Thus the NPA's work makes a direct contribution to economic life.
- 17.4 The NPA's approach to this duty is rooted in its commitment to sustainability and to Local Agenda 21. LA21 is the process whereby people devise their own strategies to make their community, environment and economy healthy and sustainable. The government's priorities for LA21 are health, education and social exclusion, to which the NPA's objectives for access and countryside recreation will contribute.
- 17.5 The long-term sustainability of NPA policies is dependent on good working relationships with other agencies and with local people. The NPA's remit does not cover all aspects of LA21, and joint working is essential with the UAs, which have a special responsibility for developing LA21, and with voluntary organisations. For this reason, the NPA will not draw up a LA21 strategy as such; this Park Management Plan covers all the aspects of the NPA's work which relate to LA21.
- 17.6 In a common statement on LA21, the three Welsh NPAs have made an undertaking to:
- involve local people in the development of appropriate policies and recognise the strength and value of local aspirations and skills as well as the importance of national designations and approaches;

- seek to ensure that all sectors of the local population have an opportunity to participate in this process;
- assist local communities to meet the obligations of sustainable development despite any handicaps resulting from remoteness or a narrow economic base.

17.7 Community councils represent local democracy at the grassroots and the NPA has a statutory responsibility to consult with them over development control issues. In addition, a close working relationship with the 50 councils in the Park is of mutual benefit in achieving the NPA's objectives and improving the quality of life locally.

ISSUES

- I. **Local Agenda 21.** Much of the NPA's work contributes to LA21, as indicated in every chapter of this Plan. The NPA is investing in community development and support for local initiatives, helping to build skills, confidence and an awareness of the wider context of life in the Park. This will not only help to maintain the character of the Park as an inhabited landscape; it should also lead to increased viability and to local participation in bringing about the NPA's statutory objectives.
- II. **Employment.** While the NPA does not have a direct role in economic development, it can play a part in supporting the economic well being of the Park's communities. It supports sustainable rural development in its role as LPA, through the UDP and development control. It helps to support crafts-people and other producers by encouraging innovation and marketing. It is closely involved with industries such as agriculture and tourism. The NPA also creates employment itself, using EU and other sources of funding to carry out conservation or recreation management schemes.
- III. **EU funding.** Carmarthenshire and the Unitary Authorities along the southern edge of the Park have objective 1 status, eligible for 75% grant aid for approved projects. Western Powys is objective 2, with up to 50% grant for a more restricted range of projects. However, eastern Powys and Monmouthshire only have objective 3 status. The NPA must make the best use of these new structural funds.
- IV. **Housing.** Housing, particularly low-cost housing for local people, will be a major issue in this Plan period. Changes to the Park's population must be estimated and its housing needs for the next 10 years determined, to inform the NPA's UDP for the Park area. LPAs are required by government guidance to maintain a 5 year supply of housing land available at all times, by making sufficient allocations of land in the UDP.
- V. **Other community support.** The NPA, with other bodies, is able to use its contacts and expertise to help communities retain, provide and improve facilities and amenities. This in turn can help communities to remain viable, in line with the NPA's vision for the Park.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim A: Enable communities to develop the skills, confidence and knowledge to address local concerns successfully and sustainably, in line with Local Agenda 21.		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Organise liaison and training for community councils	i) 7 area meetings, 2 training events and 4 briefing sheets p.a.	NPA, UAs
2. Provide training and project support for community groups	i) Support 3 major and 10 minor community projects p.a.	NPA, LEADER groups, communities, voluntary agencies
3. Promote appraisals and other LA21 based projects which encourage identification of local needs or conserve local identity	i) Develop LA21 initiatives in 2 communities	NPA, Princes Trust, UAs, CPRW, communities, voluntary agencies
	ii) Maintain close liaison with UA LA21 officers	NPA, UAs
	<i>iii) See also Culture and tradition and Tourism chapters</i>	
4. Monitor success of community projects	i) Develop monitoring methods during the Plan period	UAs, NPA

Aim B: Develop the Park's economic base to offer a range of employment opportunities in sectors appropriate to the Park's special qualities.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Enable appropriate industries to establish and expand	i) Allocate land in UDP	NPA, WDA
	ii) Develop and apply UDP policies on use of premises	NPA, WDA
2. Promote local crafts and produce, working jointly with producers	i) Continue festivals at the Mountain Centre and elsewhere	NPA, WDA, producers
	ii) Support new and existing producer networks	NPA, WDA, producers
	<i>iii) See Tourism and Farming and forestry chapters</i>	
3. Generate employment using EU funded programmes and the New Deal	i) Upland erosion project (<i>see Access chapter</i>)	NPA
	ii) Make use of LEADER III, Objective 1 & 2 funding and any other opportunities arising	UAs, NPA, LEADER groups
4. Support agriculture and tourism industries	<i>i) See Tourism and Farming and forestry chapters</i>	
5. Monitor and review employment	i) Continue to collect employment statistics and advise NPA of land requirements	WDA, UAs

Aim C: Ensure that communities in the Park have access to housing and a full range of services and facilities to meet everyday needs

OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Identify population structure, trends and housing needs	i) Obtain and assess census data	NPA,
	ii) Consult on UDP housing allocations	NPA, UAs, communities
2. Identify needs for low-cost housing	i) Conduct housing needs surveys	UAs, communities, NPA
	ii) Consult on UDP housing allocations	NPA, UAs, communities
	iii) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
3. Support community groups in provision and retention of facilities and amenities	i) Promote and support community appraisals and other such projects	Communities, UAs, LEADER groups, voluntary agencies, NPA
	ii) Develop and apply UDP policies	NPA
	iii) Use advocacy for retention of services	NPA, UAs
	<i>iv) See Aim A 2. i) above</i>	
4. Monitor housing and community facilities	i) Monitor housing needs and supply through UDP	NPA
	ii) Keep community needs under review	UAs, NPA

MONITORING

17.8 Housing will be monitored through the UDP process, and economic development as a whole is a matter for the UAs. The NPA needs to monitor its own contribution to the economic and social well being of the local community. This can be achieved by measuring:

- the amount and type of external funding attracted into the Park, by the NPA or by community groups acting on the NPA's advice;
- the number of funded projects supported;
- the number of people benefited by funded projects;
- the number and type of other supported projects and the number of people benefited by them.

17.9 EU funded projects are required to include built-in monitoring measures, which will be implemented. The NPA's input into projects will vary. Its contribution to each will be measured in staff days.

17.10 The NPA will need to monitor the effectiveness of its community development work, and indicators for this will be developed during the Plan period.

18 FORWARD PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

- 18.1 The NPA is the local planning authority for the area of the Park, and has the statutory functions of controlling development and producing a development plan for the Park. The NPA has an adopted Local Plan, and will consult on and publish a Unitary Development Plan during this Management Plan period. The NPA works with neighbouring LPAs to draw up strategic planning guidance. Because of its location, it is represented on three of Wales' four sub-regional planning groups.
- 18.2 In fulfilling their planning roles, the NPA and other LPAs are subject to planning legislation, government guidance and regulations. In most cases, these apply in the same way both inside and outside National Parks, for example in the strict control over residential development in the countryside. Government planning guidance for Wales requires NPAs to give great weight to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty within the Park. It states that major developments should not take place except in exceptional circumstances.
- 18.3 The NPA uses its planning function to help achieve its wider aims and objectives. Planning is a means of protecting the landscape and settlements from unsuitable development, integrating development with transport, allowing for recreational facilities and providing housing and employment for local people. Thus many of the objectives in this Plan involve an action to include relevant policies in the UDP. Land use and transport planning will be linked through the Local Transport Plans.
- 18.4 It is part of the NPA's vision that development in the Park should be sustainable. Its role as LPA gives the NPA many opportunities to apply the principles of sustainability and LA21. Sustainability involves ensuring a better future for the planet's environment and people by conserving resources and involving local people in decision-making. The NPA is developing its land allocations, policies and design guidance so as to save energy and reduce waste, pollution and the need to travel. Planning for Real™ techniques were used to involve Park residents in developing the Local Plan. The public will also be involved in consultation on both strategic and local aspects of the UDP.

ISSUES

- I. **Sustainable development.** The overriding principle behind the NPA's planning policies is a striving towards sustainable development, in ways that are appropriate to the Park's statutory purposes and its rural situation. A long-term strategy will be required in the UDP, covering resource management, land allocation, land use policies and the siting and design of buildings.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION

Aim: Provide a policy framework to guide the sustainable development and use of land within the Park in line with the NPA's statutory purposes.		
OBJECTIVE	ACTION/TARGET	ACTION BY:
1. Contribute to regional strategic planning	i) Participate in relevant regional planning forums	NPA, UAs
2. Prepare a UDP for the Park in line with the principles of sustainable development	i) Involve public bodies, the public and other consultees in policy formulation	NPA, consultees
	ii) Adopt the UDP by end 2000	NPA, consultees
3. Reduce the damage done to the Park by mineral working, while fulfilling the NPA's obligations as MPA	i) Develop and apply policies in the UDP	NPA
	ii) Discuss QPA's plan to reduce quarrying in national parks with minerals operators	NPA, minerals operators
	iii) Liaison with MPAs in the region	NPA, MPAs
4. Prevent damage to the Park from waste disposal and promote recycling	i) Develop and apply policies in the UDP	NPA
	ii) Promote recycling at all levels	UAs, NPA
5. Operate an effective development control and enforcement system	i) Carry out development control work	NPA
	ii) Implement consultants' recommendations on enforcement as resources allow	NPA
6. Improve design, energy efficiency and use of materials in new buildings	i) Publish Design Guide and Shop-front Design Guide in the Plan period	NPA, CCW
	ii) Actively search for sources of building stone and tiles during Plan period	NPA
	iii) Publish sustainability guidance in the Plan period	NPA
7. Increase public involvement in, understanding of and satisfaction with the NPA's planning service	i) Continue to involve the public in UDP and policy development	NPA
	ii) Produce new and revised planning advice notes as required.	NPA
	iii) Maintain planning advice centres	NPA
	iv) Review Planning Services Charter during the Plan period	NPA
	v) Devise on-going education programme for Community Councillors and others	NPA
8. Develop a monitoring system for the NPA's planning services	i) Keep planning services charter under review and monitor public views	NPA
	ii) Monitor development control performance	NPA, NAFW
	iii) Obtain air photos of the Park during the Plan period to aid enforcement and monitoring	NPA

ISSUES cont.

- II. **Regional strategic guidance.** The guidance being prepared on a regional basis by the LPAs in Wales will provide a wider context for the UDPs. It will help to reduce contradictions between neighbouring authorities' plans, and help in planning facilities to serve the region as a whole.
- III. **UDP issues.** The NPA's UDP will cover the same issues as any UA's UDP. Those relating to the NPA's statutory purposes are discussed in other chapters of this Plan: for housing, see the Local communities chapter; for employment, see the Local communities, Tourism, and Farming and forestry chapters; for roads and transport see the Transport chapter. Other UDP issues will be minerals and waste, shopping, schools, health and telecommunications.
- IV. **Public bodies.** HAs, statutory undertakers and telecommunications providers are among public bodies obliged under the Environment Act to have regard to national park purposes. The NPA will be pressing them through its UDP consultations to acknowledge this, and adapt their proposals accordingly, even where planning permission is not required.
- V. **Mineral working.** The government is determined to give national parks further protection from quarrying and opencasting and states that minerals applications in national parks must be subject to the most rigorous examination. The UDP will reflect this. The Quarry Products

Association's commitment to reduce development pressure is welcomed. The NPA believes that national parks should not be required to contribute proportionally to regional landbanks. The UDP will cover the restoration and after-use of closed mines and quarries.

- VI. **Waste disposal.** The NPA's only role in this is as LPA. Close liaison with the UAs, which are responsible for waste collection, and the EA, which regulates waste disposal, will be required in developing the UDP. The NPA will identify opportunities to promote recycling.
- VII. **Development control and enforcement.** As LPA, the NPA decides planning applications within the Park, in line with legislation, regulations and government guidance. This is a statutory function and a major aspect of its work. Enforcing planning control will be a major issue in this Plan period following a report on enforcement and monitoring in national parks commissioned by CCW, the Countryside Commission and ANPA.
- VIII. **Design and materials.** Building styles from different centuries are to be seen in the fabric of the older buildings across the Park. These need to be conserved and appropriate elements reflected in the designs for new developments. Sources of building stone and stone tiles are needed, so that old walls and barns are not cannibalised. Artificial stone tiles may be preferable to slate on some unlisted rural buildings. This might require a subsidy. The NPA needs to produce up-dated guidance on building design and materials in the National Park. Guidance for applicants is also needed on maximising the energy efficiency of their proposals, and reducing the materials used and waste produced.
- IX. **Involving the public.** The NPA's role as LPA gives it a high profile in the local community, and it seeks to involve the public as much as possible in the development of planning policy. The Planning Services Charter sets out how the NPA aims to make development control and all its planning services user-friendly. The planning system is complex, and the NPA has a role in explaining it to community councils and others.

MONITORING AND BEST VALUE

- 18.5 The NPA monitors public satisfaction with its planning service, and development control performance and statistics are monitored by the Welsh Office. A new set of aerial photographs would be useful in providing a picture of development in the Park, and as a base for comparison for monitoring and enforcement purposes.
- 18.6 Development control and enforcement are among the services for which Best Value service reviews are to be carried out during 2000/1, in line with the Best Value programme.

19 AREA MANAGEMENT PLANS

- 19.1 The first section of the National Park Management Plan contains the NPA's aims, objectives and actions for all aspects of its work. The second section will comprise a set of 11 area management plans (AMPs) covering the Park, through which the NPA's vision for the Park will be worked out in detail. (See map K.) Taking into account the special identity and qualities of each area and viewing its life and management needs as a whole, they will bring the actions from the first section, other strategies such as the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) and the work of other organisations together into detailed management plans with costed targets.
- 19.2 The AMPs will include the data on which plans and targets will be based, and built-in monitoring systems. Once these systems are in place, they will form the basis of the NPA's management work programmes, and be continually kept up to date. They will be a key factor in preparing bids for resources.
- 19.3 The initial work for the AMPs was carried out in 1997, when a series of public meetings was held across the Park, and views sought from Park residents and visitors on issues of importance and concern. This information is being incorporated into the AMPs, which are being prepared in a rolling programme over the three years to 2002. The first on the list is the north scarp of the Black Mountains (Area 9), a preliminary draft of which was published in May 1999.
- 19.4 The AMP areas were drawn up principally on the basis of landscape character, using a methodology designed to divide the Park into a manageable number of reasonably homogenous areas. Their boundaries are not to be regarded as unchangeable: if an adjustment proves sensible for management purposes it may be made.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN AREAS

Area 1: Mynydd Du foothills

This is an area of parallel NE/SW ridges of the Towy Anticline, elevation 80 - 400m. The National Park boundary forms its west and north border, and to the south-east is the distinct boundary of common land on Mynydd Du. In the north-east the area boundary follows the border between Carmarthenshire and Powys between the Park and common land boundaries. This line approximates to the watershed between the Gwydderig and the Usk.

The area mainly comprises enclosed farmland, woods and forested land, with a few small settlements.

Area 2: Mynydd Du

The area comprises the mountainous, extensively grazed common land of Mynydd Du and the Great Forest West, plus some adjacent areas of moorland on the eastern and southern fringes. Elevation 250 - 800m. There is a north facing escarpment of Old Red Sandstone (in the north-east) and Carboniferous rocks (in the west), with a dissected dip slope to the south. The area has a strong sense of remoteness, with no settlements and few roads.

Area 3: Upper Aman and Tawe Valleys

This area has three distinct parts. There is the area of small farms and urban fringe along the south-western boundary of the Park, below the common land boundary (Area 2) in the valleys of the Amman, Twrch and Tawe. Some small areas of moorland which are not common have been placed in Area 2. This part is split where the common boundary coincides with the Park boundary around Brynamman.

The eastern end of the first part extends northwards to take in the second part of the area, the enclosed land in the upper Tawe Valley. There is a contrast between the moorland of Area 2 on the upper western slopes and the farmland below, so some areas of moorland which are not common have been included in Area 2.

The third part of Area 3 extends eastwards from Cwm Tawe across areas of rolling moorland and coniferous forest at elevations of up to 500m between the valleys of the Tawe and Nedd. The Carboniferous limestone, Millstone Grit and Coal Measures rocks of this part link it to the rest of Area 3, in contrast to the Old Red Sandstone of Area 6 to the north.

Area 3 contain evidence of industrial activity, mineral extraction and transportation, and the two western parts are well populated.

Area 4: Upper Usk Valley

This area comprises the valley of the River Usk and its southern tributaries, from its watershed with the Gwydderig eastwards to just below Brecon. Here the Park boundary, which forms the northern edge of the area, crosses the Usk watershed into the catchment of the Wye. The area's southern boundary is the edge of common land, or of open country on Fan Frynych and the Cnewr Estate. Elevation 100 - 450m.

The area is enclosed farmland, with commons on the hill tops between the valleys. Early "model" farms left large rectangular fields, while older estates had gardens and parkland. There are large forest blocks around the Usk Reservoir in the west. The valley has been a communications route at least since Roman times. Its settlements include Brecon, at a major river crossing point, and the former railway town of Sennybridge.

Area 5: Central Carboniferous region

The area stretches from the valleys of the Nedd and Mellte east across the Cynon to the Afon Taf, between the Old Red Sandstone moors and commons of Area 6 and the southern boundary of the Park. Across the headwaters of the Hepste the boundary with Area 6 is not well defined as the geology is masked by boulder clay. The area includes much of Coed y Rhaiaadr Forest in the south-west, and in the south-east the forests west of the Taf Fawr by Llwyn-onn Reservoir, where it abuts Area 7.

This is a geologically complex area, mainly of Carboniferous Limestone and Millstone Grit with many karst features. It is cut by rivers flowing southwards, some through underground passages and deep gorges with waterfalls. There is common grazing land and extensive coniferous afforestation on the plateaux, and enclosed farmland in the valleys. Mineral and industrial workings or their remains are significant along the southern fringe. Elevation 100 - 450m.

Area 6: Brecon Beacons and Fforest Fawr

This is the core of the National Park, with its distinctive escarpment of Old Red Sandstone running west to east from Fan Gihirych to Tor y Foel through Pen-y-Fan, the highest point in the Park at 886m. Glaciated valleys run north from the scarp, and the southerly dip slopes are dissected by the headwaters of the Nedd, Taf Fawr and Taf Fechan. At its eastern end the scarp is broken by the north-easterly flowing Caerfanell.

The area's western boundary is break in the escarpment between Fan Gihirych and Bannau Brycheiniog (Area 2). Its southern edge is the boundary between the Old Red Sandstone and the Carboniferous rocks of Areas 5 and 7. The boundary with Area 4 to the north follows the hill fence. In the north-east where the hill fence is higher up the slope, the area abuts Area 8, the lower Usk valley, which is defined as a narrow corridor. The boundary between Areas 4 and 8 therefore follows approximately the 200m contour.

The area is mainly common land, with extensively grazed acid grasslands and some dwarf-shrub heath, important for birds, and for recreation. Some valleys contain reservoirs, and large blocks of coniferous forest extend up the slopes. In the east the area includes upland farmland and woods.

Area 7: South east plateaux

This is an area of mainly Carboniferous rocks along the Park's southern edge. Its western boundary with Area 5 includes the enclosed land in the Taf valley. Further east, the area includes the limestone and Millstone Grit plateaux and scarps of Mynydd Llangynidr and

Mynydd Llangattock, following the common land boundary, and ends along the Heads of the Valleys Road on the northern side of the Clydach Gorge. Elevation 250 - 600m.

The area is predominantly moorland, with characteristic limestone scenery and no major watercourses apart from lower reaches of the Taf Fawr and Fechan. Past and present quarrying is a major element in the landscape, and there are nationally important cave systems. There are settlements in the Taf Fawr and Fechan valleys, and in the Clydach Gorge.

Area 8: Lower Usk Valley

This area includes the valley of the River Usk and the lower parts of its tributary valleys from just below Brecon to the Park boundary at Abergavenny. Some of the valley slopes are steep, rising to the uplands of the Brecon Beacons (Area 6) and Mynydd Llangynidr/ Llangattock (Area 7) to the south, and Black Mountains (Area 10) to the north-east. Its boundary generally follows the break of slope, where the ground steepens to rise up to the hill fence. However, some anomalies are admitted in order to conserve the integrity of adjacent areas, where a watershed or change of rock type are defining characteristics.

Separated from the main portion of Area 8 by Area 10, which reaches the Park boundary around Abergavenny, are the lower Honddu and Gavenny valleys and the Skirrid mountain, lying between Area 10 and the Park's eastern boundary. This area has been included because its lowland river valley character is closer in type to the Usk valley than to the adjacent Black Mountains.

Apart from the Skirrid and Buckland Hill, this area consists entirely of enclosed land. It has some of the Park's most fertile farmland, with arable and improved pasture and few unimproved areas. There are many small broadleaved woodlands, forestry on Buckland Hill and the Myarth, and several areas of parkland. The River Usk is an important feature.

The area is well populated, including the large villages of Crickhowell, Gilwern and Govilon and smaller villages and hamlets. It has been inhabited from prehistoric times and carries transport routes from a Roman road to the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, a former railway and A40T.

Area 9: Northern foothills of Black Mountains

This area extends from Hay-on-Wye to Llangors, and from the Park's north-west boundary to the hill fence below the Black Mountains escarpment. Most of the area forms a plateau below the escarpment, deeply dissected into ridges by north-westerly flowing streams. In the south is the basin of Llangors Lake, with higher land around.

There are a few small commons on the ridges and a larger area in the east of the Llangors basin. Most of the area is farmland, with broadleaved and coniferous woodland on the steep valley sides. The Lake and its surrounds are important wetland habitats. The area includes the towns of Hay on Wye and Talgarth, plus Llangors and several smaller villages.

Area 10: Black Mountains

The area includes the entire Black Mountains block, with its north-west facing scarp and long southerly ridges. These embrace the valleys of the Rhiangoll, Grwyne Fechan, Grwyne Fawr and Honddu. Its eastern edge is the Park and national boundary, and the north-western limit is the hill fence below the scarp. To the west, the area includes the outliers of Mynydd Troed, Pen Tir and Cefn Moel. In the Usk valley, the boundary with Area 8 runs along the base of the steep hillside. In the south-east, the area extends across the Grwyne valley to include the Sugar Loaf and Bryn Arw.

Nearly two thirds of the area is open common land with heather and rough grass, and extensive views. Over a third is enclosed, with large blocks of coniferous forest as well as farmland in the deep valleys. The main settlements are Cwmdu, Llanbedr and Llangenny.

Area 11: Blorengge Ridge

This area comprises the south-eastern extremity of the Park, from the Clydach Gorge down to Pontypool. The Park boundary forms the south and west edge of the area, and its eastern edge north to Abergavenny. Where the Park boundary leaves the canal, the area boundary follows the edge of common land round to the Clydach Gorge, where it joins with Area 7 along the Heads of the Valleys Road.

This area consists of a steep-sided ridge of open common land with wooded, forested and farmed areas below. In the north are former quarries and industrial dereliction, related to iron, limestone and coal mining, processing and transport.