

Response ID ANON-WMVF-C2UN-R

Submitted to Government response to the Landscapes Review
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About you

1 Do you want your responses to be confidential?

No

If yes, please give your reason::

2 What is your name?

Name:
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3 What is your email address?

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4 Where are you located?

South East

5 Which of the following do you identify yourself as?

National Park Authority or the Broads Authority

If other, please identify below::

A stronger mission for nature recovery

6 Should a strengthened first purpose of protected landscapes follow the proposals set out in Chapter 2?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

The SDNPA proposes the following wording for a strengthened purpose 1

"Conserve, actively restore and enhance the landscape, its natural beauty, biodiversity, Natural Capital and cultural heritage, and in so doing contribute to tackling climate change and adapting to its impacts"

Also essential to retain the Sandford principle

7 Which other priorities should be reflected in a strengthened first purpose e.g. climate, cultural heritage?

Please give us your views:

Enhancing the landscape and its natural beauty
Biodiversity
Natural Capital
Cultural heritage

Agricultural transition

8 Do you support any of the following options as we develop the role of protected landscapes in the new environmental land management schemes? Tick all that apply.

Monitoring the effectiveness and uptake of the new environmental land management schemes in protected landscapes. Using this to inform whether further interventions are needed to ensure we are on track for wider nature recovery ambitions., Creating a clear role for protected landscape organisations in the preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Our recent LNRS consultation specifically asks for views on the role of different organisations in the preparation of LNRSs, including protected landscapes., Building on FiPL, empowering protected landscapes to support decision-making and delivery against agreed priorities, including through dedicated project coordinators and advisers.

9 Do you have any views or supporting evidence you would like to input as we develop the role of protected landscapes in the new environmental land management schemes?

Please give us your views:

The final point above is the key one for NPAs. The existing proven NPA role in delivering FiPL needs to be extended to give NPAs a permanent role in the design, delivery and outcome monitoring for the new middle tier of ELMs – the nature recovery scheme. This is because the scheme is so crucial to the purposes of NPAs that it is vital that NPAs have these tools in their toolboxes

FiPL has provided a host of evidence about the ability of NPAs to deliver rapidly on the ground through farmer led projects. In parallel, we are seeking a strong role for NPAs in developing LNRS, to ensure that these embed the approach to nature recovery already underway in the National Park and the spatial priorities underpinning it

A stronger mission for connecting people and places

10 Should AONBs have a second purpose relating to connecting people and places, equivalent to that of National Parks?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

11 Should a strengthened second purpose of protected landscapes follow the proposals set out in Chapter 3 to improve connections to all parts of society with our protected landscapes?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

Proposed new wording:

“Enable all of society to be involved with and champion the special qualities of these places through enjoyment, access and education, whilst promoting opportunities for the nation’s health and wellbeing”.

12 Are there any other priorities that should be reflected in a strengthened second purpose?

Please give us your views:

Yes – need to add health/wellbeing and the active championing of Protected Landscapes. Also vital to retain the link to special qualities, particularly in relation to the planning functions of NPAs and the duty imposed on other relevant authorities in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 Section 11A (as inserted by Environment Act 1995 s.62)

Managing visitor pressures

13 Do you support any of the following options to grant National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority greater enforcement powers to manage visitor pressures? Tick all that apply.

Issue Fixed Penalty Notices for byelaw infringements

Please give reasons for your answer: :

Traffic authorities already have power to make TRO’s on roads (as do NPA’s in some cases) and we do not want unnecessary further duplication of powers as this could cause confusion and raise expectations which NPA’s cannot meet . The power to issue fixed penalty notices would be useful only where the NPA itself has made the byelaw. As above, it is more important to strengthen the duty inserted by s62.

14 Should we give National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority and local highway authorities additional powers to restrict recreational motor vehicle use on unsealed routes?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

To give these authorities more tools in their toolkits

15 For which reasons should National Park Authorities, the Broads Authority and local authorities exercise this power? (select all that apply)

Environmental protection, Prevention of damage, Nuisance, Amenity

Other (please state):

Improving access especially for vulnerable users

16 Should we legislate to restrict the use of motor vehicles on unsealed unclassified roads for recreational use, subject to appropriate exemptions?

Yes – everywhere

Please give reasons for your answer::

Resources would need to be available to LHAs (and/or NPAs) before such a change could be made. These enhanced powers should be available everywhere since problems with unsealed routes are universal

17 What exemptions do you think would be required to protect the rights and enjoyment of other users e.g., residents, businesses etc?

Please give us your views:

Those who need access for business purposes, such as vehicles of farmers and other landowners , the emergency services, and those for whom access is difficult such as blue badge holders, mobility scooters etc.

The role of AONB teams in planning

18 What roles should AONBs teams play in the plan-making process to achieve better outcomes?

Please give us your views:

Statutory consultees

19 Should AONB teams be made statutory consultees for development management?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer::

20 If yes, what type of planning applications should AONB teams be consulted on?

AONB teams should be consulted on all planning applications that require an Environmental Impact Assessment and are categorised as 'major development' as well as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

Other (please state):

There should be a clear distinction between the role of NPAs as planning authorities and that of AONBs as statutory consultees. NPAs should have the ability to support AONBs in this role as long as they are given the resources to do so.

Local governance

21 Which of the following measures would you support to improve local governance? Tick all that apply.

Improved training and materials, Streamlined process for removing underperforming members, Greater use of advisory panels, Greater flexibility over the proportion of national, parish and local appointments, Merit-based criteria for local authority appointments, Reduced board size

Other (please state):

Time limits placed on the terms of office of LA and Parish appointed Members,

Please give reasons for your answer: :

- The SDNPA will always welcome high quality training and training materials. Training must be relevant and add value to our work and to the high quality training and development already provided to Members by the SDNPA. The Authority would welcome additional training from Defra and the wider government family to support it in delivering its outcomes.
- The SDNPA undertakes annual reviews and discussions with all Members and takes opportunities to enable Members to apply their skills, experience and capacity to engage effectively in the work of the Authority. Should a Member's significant under-performance be identified, the Authority would support a streamlined process for removal.
- The SDNPA already has an extensive network of advisory panels, including an independent partnership with an Independent Chair, that are used to support the work of the Authority including the development and delivery of its Management Plan, and is happy to share what it has learnt from working in this way with Defra and others.
- The SDNPA would welcome the ability to exercise greater flexibility over its membership and would welcome initiatives to increase the diversity of boards. The SDNPA also supports having greater flexibility over the proportionality rules as they apply to its committees to ensure we deploy the talents of our Members in the best possible way
- The SDNPA recognises that Local Authority Members in particular face conflicting demands on their time and priorities and that these, together with significant travelling distances, can affect their ability or capacity to participate fully in the NPA's activities. Whilst political considerations will inevitably play a role in LA appointments, the NPA would welcome greater awareness and consideration of relevant interests, commitment and capacity in making appointments, supplemented by opportunities for consultation prior to appointment.
- The SDNPA accepts the principle that a smaller board could result in efficiencies and streamlining of governance processes, however, the Authority has seen benefits from having a large board in terms of the range of views and experiences represented on the Board from across the diverse and widespread range of landscapes and communities that comprise the South Downs National Park. Given the significant workload and time commitment of its Planning Committee, the Authority is also concerned regarding the potential additional burden on fewer members serving on multiple committees and their capacity to do so.
- The SDNPA has concerns that a SoS appointed chair could become politicised and safeguards would need to be put in place to ensure the best possible

candidate was appointed. The SDNPA feels that locally accountable bodies benefit from locally accountable and appointed leadership and supports the position that Chairs should continue to be elected annually by their peers, however the SDNPA also considers that there should be a time limit on the role of Chair.

- The SDNPA would like to see time limits placed on the terms of office of LA and Parish appointed Members, to ensure a regular turnover of membership and opportunities for new ideas and thinking to be brought on to the Authority. The Authority would favour 2 four-year terms for such members.

A clearer role for public bodies

22 Should statutory duties be strengthened so that they are given greater weight when exercising public functions?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

The duty needs considerable strengthening i.e. "have special regard" and "furthering the purposes". The proposed National Landscape Partnership should produce a regularly updated list of relevant bodies and report on their performance against the new duty

23 Should statutory duties be made clearer with regards to the role of public bodies in preparing and implementing management plans?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

Link should be to the active delivery of Management Plans, not just to the purposes.

General power of competence

24 Should National Parks Authorities and the Broads Authority have a general power of competence?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

This is essential to achieve the income generation aspirations expressed elsewhere in the consultation. We have already sent Defra a paper giving detailed examples of how a general power of competence would have an immediate positive impact on income generation and can re-submit this if required.

Overall

25 If you have any further comments on any of the proposals in this document, please include them here.

Please give us your views:

- The original Glover report contained a powerful narrative about the opportunity, need and urgency for more action to make PLs places, which benefit all parts of society. This included references to formal education, night under the stars, diversity, access and signage, new skills for rangers and increase in ranger numbers. Further the original Glover' review made welcome comments about public transport (to bring about new and more sustainable ways for all parts of society to access protected landscapes) which are not referenced in this response. It is disappointing to see that, overall, there are very few tangible measures suggested in the response, and those, which are mentioned, are vague.
- This sits in contrast to the very detailed proposals about TROs, Green Lanes, PSPOs etc. Whilst it is accepted that these are included because they would require primary legislation, the risk is that the very positive and inclusive vision on Glover is perceived to have been reduced to measures to control visitors rather to encourage and widen participation.
- Funding is essential to address the increasing gap between rising expectations and falling public funding. We support the Glover Review's statement that "any increase in ambition will need to be matched with funds" (p22).
- Given the centrality of Net Zero to the Government's strategy, it is very disappointing to see no tangible mechanisms or levers to achieve made available to Protected Landscapes. As with Nature recovery, if PLs are to be at the vanguard of Climate Change mitigation and adaptation as the vision implies, they will need the tools to move further and faster with their communities, businesses, landowners and through their role (for NPAs) as planning authorities
- The Authority is concerned at a lack of references to culture and heritage. Not only does the SDNP contain exceptional built heritage - reflecting its settlement from the neolithic period to the present day - it also has a thriving cultural network of museums, artists and creators. We know from experience that this cultural richness has been instrumental in drawing new audiences to the NP and played a powerful means to improve health & wellbeing.
- Similarly, the lack of proposals in relation to protected landscapes becoming leaders in sustainable tourism is cause for concern. Sustainable tourism is another opportunity for NPAs / AONBs to bring so many important issues together in a 'place-based' way (as exemplars for others to learn from) that could have significant benefits locally, nationally and internationally.
- The Government response does not contain enough practical suggestions for increasing diversity of users of PLs (as opposed to diversity on their Boards). There are any good examples of how to do this across the PL family and this is a missed opportunity to provide support and tools to deliver against this important agenda.
- It is essential that the actions and outcomes arising from the landscape review is integrated with the nature white paper and other emerging statutory and non - statutory changes and promote and encourage cross governmental working to support delivery in PL's including fully exploiting PLs roles in relation to the National health and wellbeing agenda .
- The role of NPA's as planning authorities should not be overlooked and is central to the delivery of national park purposes. Planning is key tool for

managing change within the landscape, and can also generate income (through CiL, for example) to contribute to wider delivery of our outcomes