



SENS RESPONSE TO THE LDNPP MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION, JUNE 2021

ABOUT SENS

The Sustainability and Energy Network for Staveley (SENS) is a community group with 15 years' experience in catalysing and organising local action on sustainability issues. With a dedicated committee and a wide network of volunteers in the community who readily engage, the group has helped to raise the profile of climate change challenges within the Staveley community by delivering action projects on travel options, food growing, home energy efficiency and enhancing biodiversity.

We are active members of the Cumbria Sustainability Network where we work with other community groups to share good practice, information and ideas to be more effective across the wider area.

For further information about SENS and the Sustainable Staveley partnership which includes the Parish Council, local businesses and active residents, see our website www.sustainablestaveley.org.uk

GENERAL

We very much welcome the opportunity to comment on this wide-ranging action plan and broadly support the aims and objectives of the Plan. We understand the need to meet a diverse set of requirements for residents, visitors and businesses, whilst also responding to the challenges presented by the current pandemic and the on-going climate emergency. We also appreciate the difficulties in gaining consensus among such a broad range of partners.

We write as a local organisation committed to sustainability. We therefore welcome the elements of the Plan which will contribute towards Cumbria achieving the target of Zero Carbon by 2038.

However we suggest that there is an rare unique opportunity to go further with this Management Plan.

- In a climate emergency, we think the Lake District should aim for more rapid decarbonisation so that it is truly an exemplar of sustainability in action - with a particular focus on the 3 biggest CO2 emission areas ie. building, transport and food. For example the building sector nationally typically represents about 30-40% of carbon emissions so it needs proportionate attention in the Lake District.
- The Plan should also include specific action on biodiversity eg based on the national targets derived from the AICHI Biodiversity Targets published by the Convention on Biological

Diversity. At the very least, working with partners, the Plan should include initial actions to educate and inform everyone about the importance of biodiversity, and about the steps we can all take. The Plan should also commit to further action on biodiversity, and to monitor and report on progress made.

- The Lake District is in a perfect position, particularly as a UNESCO World Heritage site and in the post-pandemic era with all of the changes in behaviours, values and public expectations, to present a robust exemplar of a zero carbon, equitable and sustainable environment that meets the needs of all.

This National Park should aspire to be among the growing number of exemplar places - through its creative and bold ambition – of modern sustainable access and mobility in a visitor-dominated area.

This will

- secure the attention of regional and national policy makers and service providers
- provide significant new opportunities to attract new types of services and service providers
- attract new and additional sources of funding and investment. For actions where additional funding will need to be secured, we would champion a bold, ambitious approach by the partnership as more likely to catch the eye of funders looking for real vision or ground-breaking change.
- provide a focus and ambition around which community and local business groups can align.

In essence, we believe that it is worth rethinking some fundamental principles of the Plan to ensure that visitors, local residents and local businesses gain the benefits they deserve from a visionary proposal that can meet the significant social, economic and environmental challenges (and opportunities) that our future presents.

RESPONSE BY CHALLENGE AREA

Our consultation response is broken down into the five key challenge areas you have identified, but we observe that there is an artificial separation between these areas, which are clearly inter-dependent.

Recommendation: Alongside the graphics for each challenge, a further illustration highlighting the relationships between all the key challenges will put long term, local and global environmental protection at the heart of every action and decision.

From What does the Lake District provide for you:

The Lake District provides many crucial services for our local communities, businesses and visitors, and includes the provision of food and water, carbon storage, clean air, flood regulation, aesthetic value, inspiration, heritage and opportunities for recreation. The natural world, its biodiversity and its ecosystems are critically important to our well-being and economic prosperity; they underpin our very existence. This Plan sets out to ensure that the public benefits the natural and historic (and/or cultural) environment of the Lake District provides continue to deliver for future generations. As the UK population continues to grow, the pressure on these precious resources will increase, accentuated by the impacts of climate change.

SECTION 1

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES AND PROSPEROUS ECONOMY FOLLOWING COVID-19

SENS are supportive of the Plan but were disappointed that that carbon emissions from housing, the lack of homes which are affordable to live in as well as slightly more affordable to buy, have been omitted altogether from this plan, despite the LDNP being the planning authority.

SENS propose that buildings – both residential and business, should be a key focus, as a major source of carbon emissions. There is growing awareness that building well and retrofitting to reduce energy use are both crucial.

The National Park should be a leader at the table of national decision makers and politicians calling for some targets such as:

- by 2022 we should have guidelines for builders/developers
- by 2025 all new applications should conform to these standards
- by 2030 all retrofits should comply to these standards

This will require a rigorous approach to planning standards, and a step change in green jobs and green apprenticeships across the National Park to meet the currently unmet needs to build better and retrofit more effectively and to scale.

The LDNPA, as the planning authority should have the ambition to implement standards that are comparable to the best in class in the UK so that the Lake District is seen as a trailblazer in building standards and:

- Ensure that all new developments, new houses and extensions are close to passiv house by 2025 and close to passiv house standards for retro fit houses by 2024.

- Set guidelines for builders and developers explaining what standard they need to reach before being passed by planners
- Ensure that all specialist new developments also meet these sustainability standards including social/affordable housing and specialist housing for older people and people with disabilities

The LDNPA should also:

- Increase the numbers of affordable homes (social housing as well as houses for sale) for our working populations, homes which are affordable to buy and affordable to live in
- Provide sufficient reduced size housing which meet national building standards for older people who want to scale down, stay living locally.
- Establish more ambitious overall targets to:
 - Bring down second home numbers so no more than 10% in any community (based on the fact that an LDNPA target for over 10 years now has been: *“According to the 2011 Census, 24 per cent of the housing stock in the Lake District has no permanent resident. However, from local surveying we know that in some Parishes much higher levels exist and it is generally accepted that if the percentage of second homes is more than 20 per cent then the sustainability of the settlement is affected.”*)
 - Tax those second homes that remain, and pressurise the government to do this nationally

ACTION: We will increase the number of permanent residents and the share of the resident population that is of working age.

TASK Review and seek to increase council tax on second homes to raise additional revenue for the provision of more affordable homes.

Further to MP Tim Farron’s recent comments in the House of Commons that of all house sales in Cumbria in the past 12 months 80% have been to second home owners, this is a serious issue and we are pleased to see any attempt to address it. The Lake District National Park Planning Authority has recognised that in communities where more than 20% of the housing stock is not lived in by permanent residents, there is a tangible effect on community vibrancy, cohesion and sustainability.

Recommendation: Lobby national government to introduce more rigid legislation restricting second home ownership in National Parks.

TASK Deliver the projects within the Windermere Gateway area to improve Windermere Station, and deliver affordable housing (circa 160 units) and employment space.

Like Windermere, Staveley has been classed as one of the ‘service centres’ of the Lake District. Whilst we recognise that transport connections and local services such as healthcare, child care and primary education make the service centres attractive for development, this cannot come at the expense of protecting the landscapes, over-stretching infrastructure or ignoring the priorities of local communities for their own development. Using Community Led approaches to housing development (where the community works very much in partnership with developers and social housing providers, or leads the development themselves) can bring about less contentious developments, at appropriate scale for the local area, which meet the need identified locally.

All new housing should be built to the highest environmental standards so that they are comfortable to live in and cheap to run. Energy efficiency regulations continue to drive this improvement, but progress has been slow to date, and we may see a rush to build now, to standards we know will change in the near future. This includes the installation of gas boilers which are to be phased out, and taking a less pro-active stance on the integration of domestic renewable energy generation, which has been the victim of policy wavering in the past decade.

Recommendation: The Lake District National Park Planning Authority should apply exemplary standards to the development of affordable homes.

TASK Partners to review their landholdings and consider their potential as future affordable housing sites.

This is a laudable challenge for all Partners. See comments above about development in collaboration with communities and at appropriate scale to meet local needs.

There is not much mention of the growing needs older people have for appropriate housing. The demographic trend is still towards an aging population and we already have a higher percentage of people over 65 than the UK average.

Recommendation: Research existing housing stock and use, in particular under-occupancy, as the Lake District cannot build its way out of the population imbalance.

Recommendation: Learn from communities elsewhere in the UK and Europe where new homes are being built integrating independence and privacy, with shared space and resources to reduce pressure on land use and to foster community engagement.

Recommendation: Work with Public Health bodies to keep our population healthier for longer, reducing stress on health services (both medical and domiciliary care).

Recommendation: Partners should also review their landholdings and consider their potential as sites for the generation of renewable energy.

ACTION: We will support the Lake District's economic recovery from Covid-19.

TASK Encourage longer and overnight stays and extend the visitor season through coordinated marketing campaigns and product development.

SENS challenges the view that it is feasible to invite more people to visit without a radical rethink about the carrying capacity of the Lake District and how this can be supported without damaging both the environment and the economy.

The economy won't benefit in the medium to longer term unless negative visitor impacts are minimised.

Recommendation: See proposals in SENS Travel and Transport response – the business community needs to be engaged, with a rethink of how people visit, travel, the impact they have otherwise the very environment on which the value of the Lake District is based will be destroyed (see also recent

information in media about the predicted costs to the economy if we don't address climate change)

ACTION: We will increase private financing in natural capital and green growth to create more jobs and enhance the natural environment.

TASK Collectively explore new models for private financing in natural capital drawing on the partnerships investment ready schemes, including working through the National Park Partnerships Net Zero for Nature programme.

Recommendation: *Learn from private investment where it has already taken place to influence future investment. For instance, what is the business impact for the recent installation of PV at Mill Yard Staveley and Croppers at Burneside – motivations, investment and payback?*

Recommendation: *Seek partners and funding to deliver apprentice schemes which re-focus business towards green growth.*

ACTION: We will increase digital infrastructure coverage to grow a resilient, more diverse and sustainable economy.

TASK We will promote the Cumbria County Council Digital Infrastructure Strategy particularly to the hardest to reach areas in the Lake District.

The focus on digital connectivity is useful, but not sufficient. It is critical to acknowledge the skills shortages for a green economic recovery as well as the labour shortages in our current model. We still need people to work in retail and care, for instance, but also need updated skills and job opportunities. (See recent CAfS report on the potential for Green Jobs in Cumbria.) This will require new learning infrastructure as well as better broadband for home-working and small business development.

Recommendation: *Work with secondary and tertiary education on pathways to green employment, and with existing employers to modernise workskills (including current gaps in retrofit training)*

Recommendation: *Support individual property owners to access the best available solution for local broadband improvement. This could be B4RN.*

ACTION: We will reduce carbon emissions and improve climate change resilience in our resident communities and businesses

TASK Encourage local businesses in the area to procure locally when sourcing goods and services.

SENS questions whether this task is clear and far-reaching enough. Arguably, this plan is the last opportunity for the National Park to be truly visionary on tackling carbon reduction. A bolder ambition could be to rethink, overhaul and 're-educate' to create solidarity between all sectors of the Lake District – businesses, residents, service providers etc. to help them tackle climate change together. By presenting a new image of the Lake District - what visitors should expect, how they should expect to behave – the tourist-based economy can continue to thrive without further damage to the ecosystems which support it, or the Climate.

Recommendation: Create a new understanding of how special a National Park is and how it has to be treated differently.

SECTION 2

CLIMATE ACTION – ACHIEVING NET ZERO AND ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

ACTION: We will support Cumbria's 2037 net zero Carbon ambition.

We welcome the proposals for lobbying on renewable energy incentives and to reduce VAT on traditional buildings repair. However, this does not go far enough. Building stock of all types will need retrofit measures to reduce carbon emissions and incentives will be required for everything which is in private, or public, ownership.

Recommendation: Create something like a 'Climate Charter' which business could sign up to in order to protect their own futures. This could include a commitment to training on all areas of the management plan including travel and transport, nature and vibrant communities.

Recommendation: Lake District National Park Authority should continue to press for the highest possible environmental building standards for new build. High standards of insulation and draft proofing along with integrated renewable energy generation – these things are good practice now and must be normalised by strong leadership.

ACTION: We will lead a coordinated step change in climate action and net zero throughout the lifetime of this plan

Recommendation: Work with communities and partners to get villages to measure local progress on carbon reduction. The Greening Campaign being promoted by Cumbria County Council is one simple way to raise community awareness of the cumulative impact of many small actions. Mike Berner-Lee carbon footprinting should continue to be used to illustrate the scale and urgency of the challenge.

Recommendation: Take steps to promote and facilitate local renewable energy grids as part of the development of a desirable circular economy - which keeps invested money benefiting local people directly.

ACTION: We will implement measures over the next ten years that will help the Lake District adapt and demonstrate resilience to the effects of climate change.

Recommendation: Partners should assist community-scale projects, and lead on their own land holdings, with opportunities for appropriate and well-managed tree planting schemes, with immediate effect.

SECTION 3

FUTURE OF FARMING AND FORESTRY, NATURE RECOVERY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

SENS likes the phrase ‘nature led recovery’ and we hope that the Park Partnership will adopt this approach. While the planning process and organisational strategies may present barriers, they can be navigated successfully if there is a presumption that, where the net result of a proposed action is detrimental to nature, it must be changed, or not go ahead.

In order to assess and monitor the integrity of planned actions - and their likely impact -we advocate more support and co-operation between the regulatory agencies. This will help to over-come the potentially piecemeal nature of the development of Nature Recovery Networks and encourage a raised standard across the board.

Inspire collective and local action using positive and opportunistic messages about what can be achieved, but also highlighting the realities of degradation and environmental damage if we continue land management ‘as usual’. This could include ‘diversification, as if Climate change matters’ specifically for farmers.

Recommendation: Nurture the idea of ‘nature led recovery’ so there is a clear long term benefit to our climate and natural biodiversity in every action.

Food and Farming

Food production is a major source of CO₂ production. Change in this sector will only be achieved by LDNPA working with the farming community, which will experience major, and in some cases difficult, changes over the coming years.

There are examples of progress within the National Park and many more across the UK. Some of these have been led by individual farmers and food producers, others by partnerships in response to the climate emergency. LDNPA should publicise these and work with farmers and landowners to scale up.

LDNPA should make it easier for us all to eat food which has been produced and marketed locally. Key organisations include those who buy and sell food – shops, markets and supermarkets; cafes, pubs, restaurants, and hotels; food producers; the local public sector.

We have to be realistic about the Cumbrian climate, and LDNPA should set new planning guidance for those wanting to grow fruit and vegetables locally, including in polytunnels. These will be essential, and should be well maintained and taken down if no longer needed.

LDNPA should work with businesses and Cumbria Tourism to market local food for both local residents and for visitors.

Taken together this would support farmers and growers to optimise local food production, whilst minimising imports.

The National Park should lead the way to be an exemplar visitor location showcasing how to grow local, eat local, supporting local economies and providing a unique, sustainable eating experience for visitors.

Nature Recovery

The Government this week is publishing its response to the Glover Landscapes Review, with landscape recovery at the centre of its environmental policy. 43 leading environmental scientists are now asking the Lake District National Park to take immediate action for the protection of the Cumbrian Fells, an area of internationally important biodiversity. They say that motor vehicles on these rural tracks are doubly unsustainable: 4x4s and motorbikes pollute the atmosphere; they also have a direct impact on the landscape, contributing to a loss of biodiversity through erosion and shattering the peaceful beauty of this jewel of National Parks.

Both UNESCO and the National Trust have asked for motor vehicles to be regulated on fell tracks.

ACTION: SENS support the call for the LDNPA and CCC to regulate green lane driving with TROs.

SECTION 4

A LAKE DISTRICT FOR EVERYONE

Whilst we appreciate that this section relates mainly to fair access for all to the resource that is the National Park, and its decision-making processes, this should be accompanied by the stated desire in Section 1 to ensure that this remains a place where people can continue to live and work.

ACTION: We will increase our awareness of the needs and requirements of a diverse audience of people and seek to deliver their priorities over the next five years.

ACTION: We will improve representation of voices developing strategies and corporate processes.

Work with the current proposed changes to the planning system to create healthier communication around planning decisions. Communities and partners need an accessible way to feed into the planning cycle which is impenetrable by design, to the layperson, currently. Decisions should not rest on who can afford to pay for advice from the Planning Authority.

There is also work to be done on how Climate Change and biodiversity loss are transparently taken into account in planning applications. If see no demonstrable effort to mitigate climate change effects, or to protect special sites in the National Park (and surrounding areas) from inappropriate development (style, scale or purpose for example) then trust in the system continues to erode.

Recommendation: Trial an increase in tax on second homes in one area and use the additional income specifically to advance work on the Climate Change challenge in housing.

ACTION: We will improve visitors' understanding of how to care for the Lake District and its communities.

(See comments in Section 1 about the carrying capacity of this area and the need manage visitor numbers and interactions with both climate and community in mind.)

Proposals here could include:

1 Understand better what stops visitors to the National Park "going for a walk" for example:

Not sure where to go
Worried about getting lost
The weather
Not sure whether they have the right kit
Have never done anything like that
Don't think they're fit enough
Just came for the shops and the cafes - and for a break

2 Focus initially on enabling two groups to walk in the Lakes:

- a) Primary and secondary school pupils in the deprived areas of West Cumbria - via schools
- b) Those who come to the towns and villages but for whatever reason don't venture out into nature

3 Establish a pilot to encourage and enable people to get out:

- Offer of a voucher for a safe taster for those who have never walked before, perhaps an accompanied half day of walking and biking within easy reach of some of the visitor hubs, including information about the route and location, as well as about how the environment is cared for - and perhaps including lunch/tea
- Ensure that some routes are accessible for those with wheelchairs and buggies, and for young families
- Develop a menu of options for those who want to do a bit more eg longer walks and bike rides along clearly marked routes, water activities, visits to nature reserves, hands on experience of work to protect the natural landscape
- Provide easy access to information for new walkers and bikers about a range of well signposted 1 mile + routes, as well as clear information about the likely time needed and minimum equipment required for each route, as well as how to respect the environment
- Establish a diverse public-facing team to deliver this
- Link these ideas to public sector travel eg vouchers come with rail and coach tickets
- Evaluate both quantitatively and qualitatively

SECTION 5

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

A separate paper was submitted by SENS last week – a copy of the submission below for ease of ref:

SENS response to the Lake District Management Plan consultation – Travel and Transport

Prepared, on behalf of SENS, by Alistair Kirkbride and Isobel Stoddart (sustainable transport consultants & members of SENS)

SENS welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Transport Plan. We broadly support the aims and objectives of the Plan, and understand the need to meet a diverse set of requirements for residents, visitors and businesses, whilst also responding to the challenges presented by the current pandemic and the on-going climate emergency. We also appreciate the difficulties in gaining consensus among such a broad range of partners.

However we suggest that there is an rare unique opportunity to go further with this Transport Plan:

- In a climate emergency, it needs to be framed explicitly in terms of the UK's sixth carbon budget – namely reaching net zero carbon emissions from transport in *and to* the Lake District by 2050, and by 78% by 2035. We think the Lake District should aim for more rapid decarbonisation than these targets so that it is truly an *exemplar of sustainability in action*
- The Lake District is in a perfect position, particularly as a UNESCO World Heritage site and in the post-pandemic era with all of the changes in behaviours, values and public expectations, to present an robust exemplar of a zero carbon, equitable and sustainable transport system that meets the needs of all.

This Plan should aspire to be among the growing number of places as an exemplar - through its creative and bold ambition – of modern sustainable access and mobility in a visitor-dominated area. This will

- secure the attention of regional and national policy makers and service providers,
- provide significant new opportunities to attract new types of services and service providers,
- attract new and additional sources of funding and investment
- provide a focus and ambition around which community and local business groups can align.

It needs to aspire to be really good rather than a bit less bad.

In essence, we believe that it is worth rethinking some fundamental principles of the Plan to ensure that visitors, local residents and local businesses gain the benefits they deserve from a visionary proposal that can meet the social, economic and environmental challenges (and opportunities) that our future presents.

We have laid out our response below in Sections that relate to those in the draft Plan.

What are we trying to achieve?

- A bold, creative Vision that can meet the challenges – and make the most of the opportunities - of the future
- Getting around is part of the visitor experience and the private car is largely irrelevant
- Getting around is fair, affordable and open to all
- Residents and businesses have reliable journey times even in peak season
- Low carbon options for getting *to* the Lake District exist at the scale that allows for the significant reductions required in carbon emissions
- The Lake District will be part of a family of rural destinations and national parks that are exemplars of 21st century progressive, fair access and mobility

Our Asks (regional and national development)

In general, we suggest that there are a number of regional and national stakeholders that need to be closely involved at an early stage in the development of mutually beneficial strategies, policies and implementation programmes, to meet the overall objectives of this Transport Plan.

Governance, decision making and access to funding

Decision making and governance making related to access and transport in the National Park should follow the Glover proposal 19^{1,2} – namely a progressive Lake District Transport Partnership (LDTP).

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

² Kirkbride, A. 2019 *National Parks can do for rural transport what mayors are doing for travel in cities*, Local Transport Today, 25th October 2019.

This would focus explicitly on the priorities for the national park (and how this relates to its surrounding communities and travel approaches) and creates new opportunities for investment and supportive policy frameworks.

As a result of this approach, the Lake District Transport Partnership (LDTP) should:

- become a strategic partner of the **Transport for the North** alliance, working to an agreed, shared set of travel and transport objectives,
- be allowed to directly access to DfT funding rather than being reliant on funding secured via a local authority lead,
- have its own Transport Plan with equivalent powers and access to funding as the Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan (CTIP), rather than being a part of the CTIP.

Travel to the Lake District

We suggest that there is a need to develop strategic, medium term plans directly in partnership with the **Rail and Coach industries** around access to the Lake District that can encompass initiatives such as multi-modal ticketing and enhanced connectivity as part of a wider shared vision. These industries have already acknowledged that leisure travel to the Lake District is a significant and growing part of their business and therefore are likely to be receptive to closer joint working, but are looking for opportunities to be articulated to them and worked out with them.

Active Travel

There is a perfect opportunity to work in partnership with government departments and other key bodies, including **Sport England, DCMS, the Department of Health and other strategic partners** to collectively recognise the importance of active travel within both the Lake District National Park and National Parks in general, and develop a series of shared objectives and action plans to meet mutual goals around:

- improving the health and wellbeing of different sectors of our society,
- encouraging more use of appropriate 'active travel' modes in protected landscapes,
- promoting health and wellbeing benefits, linked to active travel across broad sectors of society,
- targeting the 'outdoor' audience both living in, and visiting the National Park that are likely, in general, to be fairly receptive to active travel marketing.

Visitor business development

We suggest it is worthwhile working with the **leisure/tourism industry sector**, including some of the large regional and national operators that are represented in the Lake District to gain a shared understanding of how more sustainable travel can help support their businesses rather than threaten it. And to develop shared strategic objectives and delivery plans around marketing sustainable travel and promoting responsible behaviour in the national park, as well as providing more 'active travel' opportunities at their sites.

Establishing close working relationships with tourism marketing bodies including **Visit England, Visit Britain and Cumbria Tourism** would provide a valuable chance to 'sell' these messages to both the leisure/tourism industry sector as well as directly to potential and current visitors to the national park.

A shared, national marketing strategy that promotes more responsible active travel and which offers information, advice and incentives at the point when visitors are making decisions about their travel options not only once in the Park - but also importantly - before travelling to the Park is key.

National Parks together

Working collaboratively with the other more progressive **National Parks across the UK** for mutual benefit should be a key objective for the Transport Plan. For instance, being a joined-up, louder voice when talking to the DfT about direct access to transport funding, or engaging with Visit Britain about a shared sustainable travel marketing strategy. Collaboration with other National Parks on all

the areas mentioned above, helping to develop shared strategic partnerships with other bodies, as well as learning lessons from each other's practical delivery has to be a worthwhile objective.

Our Tasks

Below we have laid out some specific suggestions, which we propose should be taken forward in partnership with the relevant organisations/bodies mentioned in the previous section – **Our Asks.**

- Develop and implement valley-scale transport implementation plans for visitor and resident access / management – peak time, attractive visitor transport services coupled with parking / traffic management and enforcement.
These will be informed by the tested case studies forced in various places around the UK by unprecedented domestic visitor numbers after lockdowns.
- Develop a new 'social contract' with visitors – there is a need now to challenge visitors to behave, act and respect in a way that acknowledges how special the Lake District is and how it needs to be protected, or we risk destroying the very assets that people come to view/experience, with the associated negative impact on the local economy. People need to understand that if they come to a unique location – and *protected landscape* - such as the Lake District they should expect to have to "Drive less, see more and respect the environment"; Indeed, the three parts "Drive less", "See more" and "Let's look after the Lake District" were developed explicitly from market research – i.e. the visitor already want opportunities to undertake these behaviours; the Plan needs to explicitly create opportunities to allow people to do this.

For example, it is now the social norm *not* to drive into town and city centres or park at big events/festivals. Why shouldn't this be the same for National Parks, especially the Lake District as a unique World Heritage site?

Much more must be done to constrain inappropriate activity alongside promoting appropriate behaviour, as is taking place in Snowdonia National Park and across numerous other national parks in mainland Europe. This means being confident at

- Being clear what are appropriate car-based visitor number at different locations
- Coupling access carrots (shuttles, active travel etc) with sticks (access, parking and speed restrictions)

For many years the policy has been aimed at providing and promoting opportunities for active and/or sustainable travel but overall very little has really been achieved – initiatives with their associated funding come and go but national travel behaviour statistics change very little. Without a significant change in approach funding will continue to be wasted, and ultimately, before too long, the 'brand value' of the Lake District will be diminished – a value that local businesses rely on.

- Investigate the needs of *all* the different cohorts of people who require transport to and around the Lake District, including local employees travelling to work, the seasonal workforce that underpins the Lake District visitor economy, young people, those with disabilities, the 24% of Cumbria's households without access to a car etc. and develop appropriate resilient solutions.
- Develop an explicit strategy focussing on visitor travel to the Lake District.
This would involve understanding the scale of the problem in terms of carbon, the current gap between service provision and need, identifying the nature and required scale of travel options, and developing mutually beneficial dialogue with appropriate sector bodies and operators. All of this should be underpinned by a clearly specified carbon reduction pathway.

Local Action

- Develop a support structure or framework that enables communities to put together locally relevant community scale, low carbon, equitable transport plans. These should take into consideration collectively the needs of all residents as well as the visitors to their community areas and local businesses for the benefit of all.
- Community Plans
Ensure sustainable access & transport for all is embedded within all aspects of community planning.
- Develop broader and deeper business development & engagement with the purpose of on-boarding action that leads to required low-carbon transport and travel.
Many Lake District businesses are characterised by long approach travel of clients coupled with local journeys by employees that are currently either difficult or would lend themselves to active travel. Lake District businesses need support to understand how to realise relevant sustainable travel.

Research Priorities

1. Commission – as a priority – a key piece of research “What does a net zero carbon system look like for the Lake District?”

This would involve:

- Starting from the specific geography and nature of the Lake District’s access and travel demands
- Be informed by (i) the approaches of other coherent areas (visitor destinations, cities etc) and (ii) respected research that looks explicitly at low carbon transport systems in the UK legislative and policy framework³
- Framing explicitly with respect to the targets and timeframes as set out in the sixth carbon budget

This would make sure that decision makers locally understand not only the required scale and rate of change, but also that the resulting access and transport system is possible *and* would be attractive.

2. Commission work that looks at the business and economic impacts of shifting to (i) a zero carbon transport system and (ii) more progressive visitor access and transport systems.

This would involve

- identifying the business and opportunities and economic benefits of a different access and transport model; estimating the scale of these benefits and rate of build
- Considering the key opportunities of how the Lake District would change its high level visitor marketing strategies
- identifying the types of business and existing economic activities that would be at risk from a different visitor access and transport system
- setting out transition plans for the types of businesses that might be affected

Such a piece of work would – with the different visitor access and transport model – enable partners to feel better informed, more confident to know what an alternative model would look like and more eager to follow the more progressive approach.

3. *If not covered in the Valley Scale Access Plans*, commission work on access to the Lake District from surrounding settlements. This would focus on access for leisure as well as for employment – to reduce reliance on private cars as well as to open access to leisure and employment. It

³ Such as <https://www.transportforqualityoflife.com/policyresearch/transportandclimatechange/>

would also look to opening the Lake District to new visitor cohorts into Lake District that are currently effectively excluded through access.