

Sustainable Transport Action Plan



2012 – 2017

Contents

Introduction	2
• Relationship to Other Plans	
• Scope of the Sustainable Transport Action Plan	
Background	3
• Transport Context	
• The National Park Authority Role	
Development and Delivery of the STAP	4
Ambition	5
Actions:	
• Short Term, 2012 – 2014:	6
○ Community transport services	
○ Promoting sustainable transport	
○ Existing transport vehicle use	
○ Road signs and infrastructure	
○ Cycle network	
• Medium Term, 2012 – 2017:	12
○ Footpath network	
○ Integration between modes	
○ Influence speed limits	
• Long Term, beyond 2017:	14
○ Sat nav messages	
○ Road sign standards	
Measures of Success	15

Introduction

The Sustainable Transport Action Plan (STAP) is a strategic document that outlines the Peak District National Park Authority's and partners aspirations for transport in the Peak District over the five year period from 2012 to 2017.

Relationship to Other Plans

The STAP is closely linked with a number of key strategic documents, principally the National Park Management Plan and Local Development Framework. The National Park Management Plan and Local Development Framework are statutory documents which influence all subordinate policies within the National Park, and thus provide the overarching strategy for this action plan. The National Park Management Plan coordinates the work of the National Park Authority and the many different partners to help achieve the purposes of the National Park. The STAP assists in delivering, and adds details to, the transport elements of the Management Plan.

The Core Strategy is the principal document of the Local Development Framework, and provides the spatial planning expression of the National Park Management Plan. Therefore, transport policies in the Local Development Framework address the land use planning elements of travel and transport. The STAP adds value to these policy areas, but has a greater focus on seeking to influence travel through behavioural change rather than through the planning system.

Furthermore, elements of the STAP also support the delivery of other Authority strategies, such as the Recreation Strategy and forthcoming Sustainable Tourism Strategy. Additionally, the STAP complements the Authority's Green Travel Plan, as some actions within the STAP will be available for Authority staff to use when they are travelling for business.

Scope of the Sustainable Transport Action Plan

This action plan outlines a high level ambition for travel to, within and from, the National Park, to provide a clear ambition of what we would like to achieve. However, we recognise that this ambition is long term, and as such will not be delivered overnight, particularly when all partners are being asked to make budget savings. Therefore, when the long term ambition is balanced with the practicable actions, we are able to deliver actions that work towards achieving the ambition. Further, it provides a framework to work within as and when opportunities arise, for example, if there is an opportunity to bid for grant funding to implement a specific action.

Background

Transport Context

The Peak District National Park is the fourth largest National Park in the United Kingdom. It is surrounded by large conurbations, such as Sheffield, Manchester and Derby, which increase cross-Park movements and commuting. There is one railway line within the National Park, which is the Hope Valley Line that runs between Manchester and Sheffield. This provides sustainable travel into and out of the National Park for both residents and visitors. Furthermore, although not within the National Park, the Derwent Valley line, which terminates at Matlock, and the Buxton line both act as access points for the National Park.

In terms of bus travel, there is a core network of routes, but unfortunately these have been declining in recent years due to reductions in budgets available to subsidise services. The latter has significantly impacted on weekend and bank holiday services, which are key times for leisure users to be visiting the National Park. The National Park contains 65 miles of traffic free cycle trails, along with a network of quiet lanes suitable for cycling. It has a population of 38,000 and receives more than 10.4 million visitors per year¹. As approximately 16 million people live within one hours travelling time of the National Park boundary², and given the rural nature of the location, it is perhaps not unsurprising that 85% of trips to the National Park are undertaken by private car³.

The geographical location of the National Park, combined with differing pressures from residents, businesses and visitors, creates a unique set of transport challenges for the National Park Authority and its partners to try and overcome.

The National Park Authority Role

The National Park Authority is not a highway authority and has no transport powers aside from those incorporated in our role as a planning authority and access powers. Nevertheless, the Authority is charged with pursuing our statutory purposes and duty, and has thus always maintained a more proactive position on transport through working in partnership, influencing and negotiating with those who do have the power to affect transport in the National Park and surrounding areas.



¹ 2009 STEAM data

² Peak District National Park Authority (2006) National Park Management Plan 2006-11

³ Peak District National Park Authority (2005). *Peak District Visitor Survey 2005*.

Development and Delivery of the STAP

The STAP has been developed through extensive discussion and consultation with partners representing local councils, transport operators, non-governmental organisations and individual interest groups. This has assisted in ensuring that the actions are realistic and deliverable, and that there is partner buy in for the action plan. The latter is of importance, as although the STAP has been written by the National Park Authority, a partnership approach to delivery is required for the majority of the actions. Therefore, the action plan will be implemented through partnership working, using financially sustainable mechanisms where possible. In brief, this means not focussing on subsidising services that will never be commercially viable, and therefore seeking new and innovative ways of working to encourage behavioural change to more sustainable modes of travel.

The STAP is not solely an infrastructure related plan, and in reality, is probably the opposite, as underpinning the majority of the ambition is behavioural change. The actions within this action plan aim to add value to the work already being undertaken by partners, and therefore not duplicate what is in Local Transport Plans and Service Plans. As an example, safety is a key priority for many highway authorities in the Peak District, however, this action plan aims to add value to existing safety work by minimising the impacts of safety infrastructure on the landscape and cultural heritage of the National Park. Therefore, in order to gain a holistic picture of transport work within the National Park, this action plan needs to be read alongside a number of other plans and strategies.

Although some actions will primarily have a visitor focus, many of these can also be of benefit to residents, as actions implemented to reduce the impact of visitor travel provide solutions and benefits to the wider communities of the National Park. More broadly, and as an underpinning theme to the plan, it is implicit that all of the actions will reduce carbon emissions, not only for the benefit of the Peak District, but as a part of a contribution towards national and international efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the effects of climate change.



Ambition:

“The National Park is known as a place you can easily and inexpensively travel to, within and from, without a car. Choice of travel options makes using public transport, walking and cycling more attractive and part of the National Park experience, and there is less reliance on the private car. Innovative travel solutions become part of the attraction of the National Park.

Transport infrastructure is at a minimum, sympathetically designed and there are no redundant structures. Therefore, the National Park is known as a place where transport infrastructure respects the environment and protects the valued characteristics, while promoting safety.”

This will be achieved by:

- Reducing the barriers to and enhancing use of public transport (including community transport).
- Making high quality non-car transport central to the experience of the visitor.
- Maximising integration between different modes of travel; walking, cycling, rail, bus and car.
- Raising awareness and confidence about using non-car modes and supporting behavioural change.
- Developing a strategic rights of way network into and within the National Park.
- Designing transport infrastructure (including road signs) that is sympathetic to the National Park.

The framework above applies to all of the National Park. However, local circumstances will determine which elements of the framework are more appropriate for a specific area.



Actions

We aim to deliver the Sustainable Transport Action Plan through the implementation of the following actions. Each action is specific in its aim, and categorised as a short term, medium term or long term action. Short term actions will be deliverable over the first 2 years of the STAP, medium term actions should be deliverable over the 5 year life of the action plan, and long term actions are desirable actions that will be explored when opportunities arise. Beneath each action is an indication of the amount of officer and budget resource required to implement the action.

Alongside these actions, and where relevant to delivering an action, we will learn from the experience of others, and research how a more innovative approach could or should be piloted in the unique situation of the National Park. This will contribute to both the National Park Authority and National Park becoming exemplary of sustainable travel.

Short Term (over the next 2 years)

- 1. Pilot a community transport service that takes visitors from the Hope Valley railway stations to visitor attractions, accommodation and points of interest, that can also benefit residents by taking them to local services.**

It is clear that traditional methods of subsidising local bus services have and are continuing to become financially unsustainable. As a result, this project aims to look at innovative new ways of providing a transport service capable of meeting the needs of both visitors and residents, using community transport buses. The principle behind the project is researching whether a service that serves both popular visitor attractions and local communities can work together to become financially sustainable. If this project is successful, the principles of it could be replicated elsewhere in the National Park, so this could lead to further areas being explored.

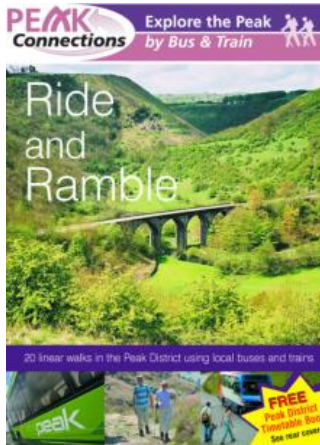
This action is contained within the National Park Authority's Policy Service, Service Plan for 2012/13, and as such there is already a commitment of officer time. In addition, there is contribution to assist with starting the pilot in the 2012/13 Transport Policy Team's baseline budget.



2. Enable Peak District wide marketing of sustainable travel options within the National Park, including working with visitor attractions and accommodation providers.

Marketing is extremely important in raising awareness of the more sustainable travel alternatives that exist, and their potential benefits to the environment, society and individual health and wellbeing. Sustainable modes of travel include bus, rail, cycling and walking. This strategic action has the following sub-actions.

a) Review the Peak Connections project to establish whether the project can be revised to make it financially sustainable.



This is a short term action that will be completed, and the findings implemented, by April 2013. The findings of this review may impact on or influence the next two sub actions.

This action is contained within the National Park Authority's Policy Service Plan for 2012/13, and as such there is already a commitment of officer time. In addition, there is limited funding to assist with the review in the 2012/13 Peak Connections project baseline budget.

b) Research, and if possible, implement a 'one-stop-shop' website for sustainable travel within the Greater Peak District.

The website would enable travel information that can be found on many different websites to be integrated into one website that would have all the travel information you need on one website. It would also allow for links to key visitor information, for instance, accommodation and attractions. To be sustainable this would need to integrate with and complement other existing websites, and how the site is hosted would also need to be sustainable. A later action would then be to develop an app to have the same information on phones. This sub action is a short to medium term action.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time and funding to implement. Therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2013/14 or beyond service plan, and would require external funding (whether from partners or grant funding).

c) Research, and if possible, implement a Peak District wide integrated ticket or 'Peak District Oyster Card' that can be used for any form of travel, and possibly include accommodation, visitor attractions and food within the Peak District.

This sub action is a long term action, to be examined after the marketing website.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time and funding to implement. Therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan, and would require external funding (whether from partners or grant funding).

3. Research using the existing transport vehicles more effectively.

- a) It is clear that traditional methods of subsidising local bus services have and are continuing to become financially unsustainable. As a result, this project aims to look at innovative new ways of providing a transport service capable of meeting the needs of the National Park by taxi, bus and community transport operators working together on a strategic plan for providing transport. In brief, the research would be to establish whether there is a way of using what we have more effectively and efficiently in order to provide a better network. This action would take account of any similar national research or projects, rather than seek to duplicate existing work.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time to implement. Therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2013/14 or beyond service plan. This action may require external funding (whether from partners or grant funding) to provide specific resources / skills.



- b) It is clear that traditional methods of subsidising local bus services have and are continuing to become financially unsustainable. As a result, this project aims to explore whether there is scope for a rural car share scheme to facilitate both resident and visitor travel.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time to implement. Therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2013/14 or beyond service plan. This action may require external funding (whether from partners or grant funding) to provide specific resources / skills.

4. Develop a road sign and similar infrastructure agreement with each highway authority.

Highway infrastructure can have a significant effect on the National Park's landscapes. Roads, markings, signposts and speed cameras are all part of the modern highway network, yet they are not natural, and can look strikingly out of place in a natural landscape. In order to reduce the effects of infrastructure on the landscape, we would like to develop a road sign and similar infrastructure agreement with each highway authority. The aim of these agreements is to develop a mutual understanding and develop solutions that satisfy the objectives and purposes of both the National Park Authority and the highway authority. It should be noted that such agreements already exist with some highway authorities, but for consistency, we would like to develop similar agreements with all highway authorities in the National Park.

This action would require a limited amount of officer time to implement. The action would need to be part of the 2013/14 or beyond service plan, as the 2012/13 service plan already has the Transport Policy Team working at full capacity. It does not require any budget.



5. Develop a plan for a strategic cycle network for the Peak District.

The Peak District has been noted as one of the best places for recreational cycling in the United Kingdom. The National Park contains 65 miles of traffic free cycle trails, along with a network of quiet lanes suitable for cycling. We are keen to develop this network further for the benefit of both visitors and residents, along with the wider economy, environment and health and wellbeing of individuals. Although this action is named as a cycle network, it would benefit other users, such as walkers, as many routes would be multi-user. This strategic action has the following sub-actions.



- a) Develop a plan for a strategic cycle network within the Peak District, including linking to surrounding urban areas and hubs.

The plan would seek to fill in the gaps where an existing cycle route stops and then re-starts, and also look for links that do not exist, particularly to enable the surrounding areas to access the National Park sustainably. It would enable funding opportunities to be taken advantage of as and when they become available.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time to implement, therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2013/14 or beyond service plan. It does not require any budget, as the action is to develop a plan, not implement proposals within the plan. However, external budget (whether from partners or grant funding) will be needed to implement the plan.

- b) Complete the Pedal Peak District Project / White Peak Loop, so there is a loop of cycle trails, including links to Buxton and Matlock, and creating a more sustainable way for visitors to enter the National Park.

The opening of the Monsal Trail tunnels in 2011 created an 8.5 mile traffic free route between Bakewell and Wyedale, 3 miles south of Buxton. The completion of the 'loop' is a sensible objective, however, the priority for intervention is the eastern side, linking Buxton and Matlock via Bakewell, and the immediate action is focussed upon the Woo Dale / Wye Dale section, to provide a link to Buxton.



This action is contained within the National Park Authority's Policy Service Plan for 2012/13, and as such there is already a commitment of officer time. There is no funding allocated to this action, and it is unlikely that the Authority would be asked to contribute any.

- c) Work with bus operators so they can carry bikes on buses.

Very few buses that operate within the Peak District can carry bikes. In other popular visitor destinations, buses capable of carrying bikes and other leisure equipment are more common. As a recognised national cycling destination, it would be desirable to have a bus network that could carry bikes, with the ability of serving trails which are predominantly accessed by car. Although we can start this sub action in the medium term, delivery will not be until the long term as it requires new buses or trailers being purchased.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time to implement, therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan. There is no funding allocated to this action, and it is unlikely that the Authority would be asked to contribute any.

- d) Influence the next rail stock so they are more able to carry bikes on rail routes into and across the National Park.

This action aims to enable more cyclists to access the National Park with their bikes by public transport, rather than 'driving and riding'. Although we can start this sub action in the medium term, delivery will not be until the long term as it requires new infrastructure.

This action would require officer time to implement; therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan. There is no funding allocated to this action, and it is unlikely that the Authority would be asked to contribute any.

- e) Carry out a desk top study into cycle hire at hubs and interchange points within the Peak District.

This action seeks to examine whether it would be beneficial to have cycle hire at places like railway stations to encourage people to cycle when they enter the National Park. This would be learning from other National Parks and rural areas and taking forward relevant elements of that scheme into a desk top study to ascertain if it is viable in the Peak District.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time to implement, therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan. There is no funding allocated to this action, as a desk top study primarily requires officer time. Any actions as a result of the desk top study would need to be financed in the future.

Medium Term (over the plan period – the next 5 years)

6. Identify gaps in footpaths in the National Park so there is a prioritised plan of which gaps to fill and new routes.

Since its foundation in 1951, the networks of footpaths that cross the Peak District have been a key feature of the National Park. These allow people to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park in ways which are sympathetic to the landscape, and its peace and tranquility. However, there are a number of gaps in both the footpath network that could be filled to make it more joined up, integrate better with other modes of travel, and link to the surrounding urban areas.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time to implement, therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan. It does not require any budget, as the action is to develop a plan, not implement proposals within the plan. However, budget will be required to implement the plan.



7. Increase integration between modes of travel so interchange between modes is more attractive.



A lack of integration can create a barrier to travel, making it difficult to connect between services and modes, or different areas in and around the National Park. Part of the problem in the Peak District is our geographical spread across different local authorities, and further issues lie in the number of operators, different modes available, and timetable synergies. To complete this action is long term; however, we can begin to implement elements that we can in the short to medium term. This strategic action has the following sub-action.

- a) Encourage 'hubs', at places like Bakewell, so visitors use these hubs to park their car and then continue to explore the National Park without the car.

Hubs are a way to encourage the use of public transport, as they allow visitors to 'park and ride' at places with shops and facilities, then allowing a more relaxed journey by bus (or rail) to other destinations in and around the National Park. This helps to reduce congestion and visitor pressures on popular destinations, whilst in turn benefitting the wider environment of the National Park that visitors come to see and enjoy.



This action would require a significant amount of officer time to implement, therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan. This action would require external funding (whether from partners or grant funding).

8. Influence highway authorities so the speed limit is 20mph in villages, an appropriate speed for lanes and 50mph elsewhere.

If there was more consistency with the speed limits in the National Park, this would reduce the amount of speed limit related signage. In addition, some roads that currently have a limit of 60mph may benefit from an improved safety record due to a decrease in speed limit.

This action would require officer time to implement; therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan. This action does not require any funding from the Authority but would from partners.



Long Term (Desirable actions that will be explored when opportunities arise)

9. Work with sat nav companies to get a message on sat nav systems that tell people they have entered the National Park and should drive appropriately, including within the speed limit.

This action aims to make visitors more aware that they have entered the National Park, and therefore should drive appropriately. Some systems already show National Parks by changing the map background colour to green within boundaries, however many people may not know what this means. Therefore, this action would be to provide a specific message on the sat nav systems to alert vehicles they have entered a National Park.

This action would require officer time to implement; therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan. This action does not require any funding. It would be beneficial if all National Parks could work together on this action.

10. Influence at the national level to ensure it is recognised that different road sign standards should be used in National Parks, i.e. less signage.

The Authority has already influenced the Department for Transport's Road Signs Policy review through 2010/11. Continuation of this influencing may help to create a change in the national policy so that different standards are used in National Parks.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time to implement, therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan. This action does not require any funding. It would be beneficial if all National Parks could work together on this action.



11. At opportune times, existing traffic management schemes will be reviewed in partnership with the relevant Highway Authorities, to ensure that they accord with LDF Core Strategy policy T1, encouraging a modal shift away from motor vehicles.

There are a number of traffic management schemes in operation in the National Park that aim to protect the area in which they are situated from the impacts of the private car. The traffic management areas are the Upper Derwent, the Goyt Valley, and Stanage. Periodic reviews of these schemes will ensure that they continue to be fit for purpose.

This action would require a significant amount of officer time to implement, therefore, the action would need to be part of the 2014/15 or beyond service plan. Implementing the outcomes of the reviews may require funding.

Measures of Success

The following four strategic measures of success will be used as an overall indication of changes in travel and accessibility within the National Park. Data for these indicators is either already being collected, in the case of the National Park Management Plan 2006-11 indicators, or collection is about to begin, the case of the National Park Management Plan 2012-17 indicators.

- Increase the proportion of visitors who access the Authority's services using sustainable means (NPMP 2012-17).
- Overall satisfaction with the experience of visitors to the National Park (NPMP 2006-11 indicator).
- No more than a 2% increase in average daily traffic flows in the National Park (NPMP 2006-11).
- Access to services by public transport (NPMP 2006-11 indicator).

In addition to the above indicators, where appropriate, we will set measures of success for individual projects. These will be more specific to the impact we would like see for the project being delivered, and will therefore be more detailed in their nature.

