

**Peak District Performance Improvement Partnership**

# **Building public sector capacity through partnership working**



**High Peak Borough Council**  
*working for our community*



Department for  
**Communities and  
Local Government**



## **Nic Hutchins**

**Programme Manager (Performance Improvement Partnership),  
Peak District National Park Authority**

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## Executive Summary

This report summarises the achievements and lessons learnt from a 2-year Performance Improvement Partnership funded by the ODPM (now DCLG). Led by the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA), and working with Derbyshire County Council (DCC), Derbyshire Dales District Council (DDDC), High Peak Borough Council (HPBC), Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) and the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA), the project aimed to build the partners capacity and make progress towards achieving the PDNPA's Performance Improvement Plan.

It runs in parallel to a book of case studies produced in May 2006, and updated in February 2007, outlining the achievements of specific projects developed and run as part of the programme.

Current public policy emphasises the importance of partnerships and partnership working for designing and delivery local public services as a way of using resources efficiently and avoiding duplication, creating synergy between organisations and building joined up, seamless services for the public. This programme aimed to do that both in the provision of services to the Peak District community, and in the development of the organisations providing those services creating long term impacts through capacity for improvement.

The project has been about developing the capacity of the organisations involved, creating further capacity for the future. This has happened in a range of overt ways including:

- Direct funding of external resources such as professional experts in the Reward and Recognition project
- Employment of specialist staff to take the projects forward e.g. Youth Engagement Worker, Equalities Outreach Officer and Communications Officer
- New connections being made between officers of the partner organisations e.g. PDNPA Ranger Service and DCC Social Services through the Looked After Children project
- Provision of training for staff through the Exceeding Excellence Programme (management development) and other projects such as Plain English Training as part of the Corporate Identity project

Capacity has also been built however in subtler ways because of the programme. These have included:

- Greater understanding of the needs of the partners involved
- Increased networking between officers of the partner organisations through joint delivery and shared training experiences
- Enhanced willingness to share experiences and knowledge between partners (and internally) because of the shared project goals and developing levels of trust

This report outlines the [background to the project](#) (section 2), and details the [approach taken](#) (section 3) to its management, evaluation and communication.

It focuses on the impacts the programme has made for the partnership in terms of:

- [Developing Learning](#) (section 5.2) – Including the provision of approximately 1290 training days for staff from across the partnership, and how the lessons learnt from the projects need to be embedded within the organisations to ensure the long-term impacts achieved through the work. It highlights areas of innovation and best practice developed and identified where lessons can be learnt by other organisations
- [Partnership working](#) (section 5.3) – How the programme has improved partnership working at both a strategic and operational level across the organisations, and proven

a catalyst for further work and ongoing developing relationships. Recognising the benefits that joint working can bring not only to the communities served by the partners, but to the organisations involved in delivering them, and further establishing the PDNPA as a reliable and equal partner

- [Using innovative approaches](#) (section 5.4) - Developing innovative approaches to delivery, seeking out best practice used elsewhere and adapting it for the local environment as well as piloting entirely new approaches for the National Park or public sector
- [Engaging with Communities](#) (section 5.5) –Through a range of strategic initiatives and direct delivery of services to both local residents and stakeholders, underrepresented groups and people from the urban areas neighbouring the National Park

Key benefits of the programme that are detailed in this report include:

- A better understanding of the different organisations and communities needs, and a growing knowledge of the Peak District NPA's performance improvement needs by the partner organisations
- Developing new methods of engagement with different audiences using different approaches
- Improving communication with the public, the ability and space to listen collectively and provide a seamless service delivery
- Good project management at both a strategic and operational level has allowed outcomes to be reached quickly and efficiently
- Providing capacity for benchmarking of services within the partnership and more widely, as well as giving the chance for organisations to try new, innovative things and take a few risks.
- The opportunity to increase staff capacity through the employment of specialist staff or increased staff hours to deliver specific projects
- The benefits of joint procurement and shared approaches and knowledge have far outweighed the initial financial contribution from partners
- Joint delivery of training has had huge benefits organisationally and individually highlighting common issues and needs of organisations, as well as stimulating cross organisational working beyond the PIP projects

It also recognises the challenges the partners face if they want to continue to develop the project:

- Mainstreaming the work and embedding the learning with the limited resources available
- Nurturing the partnership to ensure it grows and continues to add value for all the organisations involved
- Maintaining the strategic commitment and increasing the operational/frontline awareness and commitment for the projects through developing a better understanding of each others organisational needs
- Keeping up the momentum generated so far, recognising the commitments and workloads of key project managers
- Evaluating the impact over a long timescale, as for many of the projects it is too early to measure success and long term organisational change

## 1 Background and history

The Peak District National Park (PDNP) was the first of the UK's 14 National Parks established in 1951. It covers 1400 sq km and has a resident population of approximately 38,000 people living within 125 parishes.

The National Park Authority has responsibility to

- Conserve and enhance the Peak District National Park's special qualities
- Provide opportunities for their enjoyment and understanding

In doing this they seek to foster the economic and social well being of the local communities within the National Park. They are also the statutory body for both local planning issues and access to the countryside

Due to the unique location at the heart of the UK, virtually the entire population – 50 million people – live within 4 hours of the Peak District, making it one of the most visited Parks in the world. This leads to pressures on local communities, transport, housing and infrastructure that can often only be successfully addressed through partnership working.

In layers of governance over the top of this are 4 Government Regions and 12 constituent authorities made up of 3 County Councils, 4 Unitary Authorities and 5 District or Borough Councils as well as many other public, private and voluntary organisations that the NPA works with to achieve the outcomes as set out in the National Park Management Plan<sup>1</sup> (the guiding document for all organisations working in the National Park that may contribute to the achievement of the purposes and duty).

During 2004, and linked to a number of government agenda's, the PDNPA identified a range of performance improvement needs<sup>2</sup>. This was further revised during a peer reviewed National Park Authority Performance Assessment<sup>3</sup> during September 2005.

The final report reflected the hard work put into preparing for assessment and the expertise and effort of the assessment team. The assessors believed that "the Authority is performing effectively in the local delivery of national park purposes and duties and has examples of excellence."

The report also said, "the self awareness of the Authority demonstrated in the content of the self assessment produced for this performance assessment is very good. The views of the assessment team differed very little from those set out by the Authority."

The team's impression was of "an Authority that has a lot to be proud of and that is responding well to the pressures and complexities arising from its location. The Authority is making progress and the team are confident more will be made. The challenges are in how the Authority decides to move forward and how it will address this in the performance improvement plan."

Of the nine Key Lines of Enquiry, it identified

- Three strong areas (Working in partnership, Achievement in delivery of purposes and duty, Achievement of improvement in delivery of purposes and duty)
- Four areas where we had made strong progress but where minimal improvements were still needed (Quality of vision, Quality of authority's plans, Organisational capacity, Developing the effectiveness of the organisation)
- Two areas where we had made a good start but had further to go (Setting priorities, Performance management and learning)
- No weak areas

<sup>1</sup> Peak District National Park Management Plan can be viewed at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/documents](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/documents)

<sup>2</sup> PDNPA Performance Improvement Plan is available at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/pip.pdf](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/pip.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> The final assessment report from the NPAPA process is available at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/finalreport.pdf](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/finalreport.pdf)

The report made 21 recommendations. Key areas for improvement included:

- Setting priorities
- Managing our performance
- Engaging staff better in the decisions made in the Authority

Further details of current organisational priorities are stated in the corporate strategy<sup>4</sup>.

Related to this, National Parks are facing a downturn in funding from Central Government so it is imperative that all improvement work addresses this and finds solutions to problems in the most cost effective way.

Working with a number of constituent authorities and the Lake District National Park Authority, the Performance Improvement Partnership was set up to improve the PDNPA, and support the improvement agendas of the other partners. All of the partners have a commitment to working in partnership and developing organisational learning.

Of the partners, Derbyshire CC is one of the top five councils in the country, judged to be a four star authority with an "Improving Strongly" Direction of Travel in 2005. Their 9 key goals are to

1. Provide direction and leadership, and manage and improve the council's resources, in order to ensure high quality and value for money services
2. Create an environment where all children can be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing
3. Improve the health, wellbeing and choices for older people and vulnerable adults and support them to live independently
4. Create well connected communities with transport services
5. Make places where people want to live and work now and in the future
6. Strengthen the local economy and tackle deprivation within the county
7. Promote safer communities and protect local people
8. Improve access and encourage participation in leisure, recreation, information, life-long learning and culture
9. Promote Derbyshire in order to increase confidence, investment and resources.

High Peak BC and Derbyshire Dales DC are both rated as Excellent Authorities.

Priorities for High Peak BC are:

- Supporting People: To promote social inclusion and enable communities and individuals to participate in the improvement of quality of life in the High Peak
- Creating Jobs and Prosperity: To create a thriving local economy which is responsive to the needs of local communities
- Protecting the Environment: To enhance the quality of the local and global environment
- Improving the Council: To be considered a high-performing Council by the Local Community, our Partners and our Peers

Derbyshire Dales DC priorities are:

- Improve the supply of decent, affordable homes for local people
- Increase the number of people, especially young people, participating in leisure activities
- Reduce, re-use and recycle waste

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<sup>4</sup> Available at <http://resources.peakdistrict.gov.uk/ctte/authority/reports/2006/061208Item8-1Annex1.pdf>

- Protect and improve the safety and health of residents and visitors
- Stimulate economic, community and environmental regeneration
- Improve access to services
- Support service delivery improvements

Staffordshire Moorlands has a CPA rating of Good, and their priorities for improvement are:

- The provision of accessible and continually improving services
- The creation of a better Staffordshire Moorlands, both today and tomorrow
- Listening and leading in the community

The Lake District National Park Authority also underwent a NPA Performance Assessment in 2005, which showed them to have 8 of the 9 key lines of enquiry where weaknesses outweighed strengths and 1 where strengths outweighed weaknesses. Since then the LDNPA have had a second performance assessment<sup>5</sup> that has shown significant improvement for the authority, with them now demonstrating 1 strong area, 6 areas where strengths now outweigh weaknesses and 2 areas where weaknesses outweigh strengths.

The 3 key objectives of the Performance Improvement Partnership (PIP) programme were to:

- Deliver specific elements of the Peak District National Park Authority Performance Improvement Plan for 2004-9
- Support specific partnerships for delivery of improvements to visitor and resident services provided jointly with 3 District Councils and focusing on some defined communities
- Develop excellence and self-sustaining capacity by working jointly with the Lake District NPA, Derbyshire County Council and 3 District Councils, thus drawing on mainstream Local Government expertise in developing performance improvement for National Park Authorities

The work was funded through the ODPM (now DCLG) Capacity Building Fund (Pilot Programme<sup>6</sup>) with £250,000 received for phase 1 and a further £98,000 received for phase 2 (ending in March 2007). The partner organisations have contributed both time and money to the projects.

Current public policy emphasises the importance of partnerships and partnership working for designing and delivery local public services as a way of using resources efficiently and avoiding duplication, creating synergy between organisations and building joined up, seamless services for the public. This programme aimed to do that both in the provision of services to the Peak District community, and in the development of the organisations providing those services.

A key to the programme has been about creating long term impacts for the partners, and in particular the PDNPA, and the shared communities that they serve. Although still at a relatively early stage, the programme, focusing on practical delivery alongside the building of relationships between organisations and the officers within them, has made a really positive start to achieving long-term outcomes for the partners.

<sup>5</sup> Available to view at [http://www.lake-district.gov.uk/lake\\_district\\_docs95/npapa\\_report\\_oct\\_2006.doc](http://www.lake-district.gov.uk/lake_district_docs95/npapa_report_oct_2006.doc)

<sup>6</sup> Further information available about the Capacity Building Programme at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1133923>

## 2 Project themes

The overall PIP programme has 3 themes that all projects needed to meet to support the capacity building. These are

- Developing organisational and individual learning
- Working in partnership
- Using innovative approaches

The projects fell into the 3 categories of Core Organisational Development, Better Communication and Engaging with People and Communities. Figure 1 below gives an overview of the range of projects<sup>7</sup> that were involved (all of which were identified as needs in the PDNPA Performance Improvement Plan).

Projects were predominantly developed in consultation with PDNPA staff, and then proposed to the partner organisations for their agreement and involvement. A strong steer was provided by the partners through the steering group (made up of Chief Executives or senior Directors of the partners) as to how the projects should be developed, and who should be involved. The range of partner involvement has differed considerably between projects from advising on PDNPA internally focused projects such as the Corporate Identity work to a full partner steering group as in the Exceeding Excellence programme.

Appendix 4 contains a brief summary of each project and an update on where the projects plan to go beyond April 2007.

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<sup>7</sup> Case studies have been written for all the projects and are available from the Programme Manager in a separate report or at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/pipcasetudies.pdf](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/pipcasetudies.pdf)



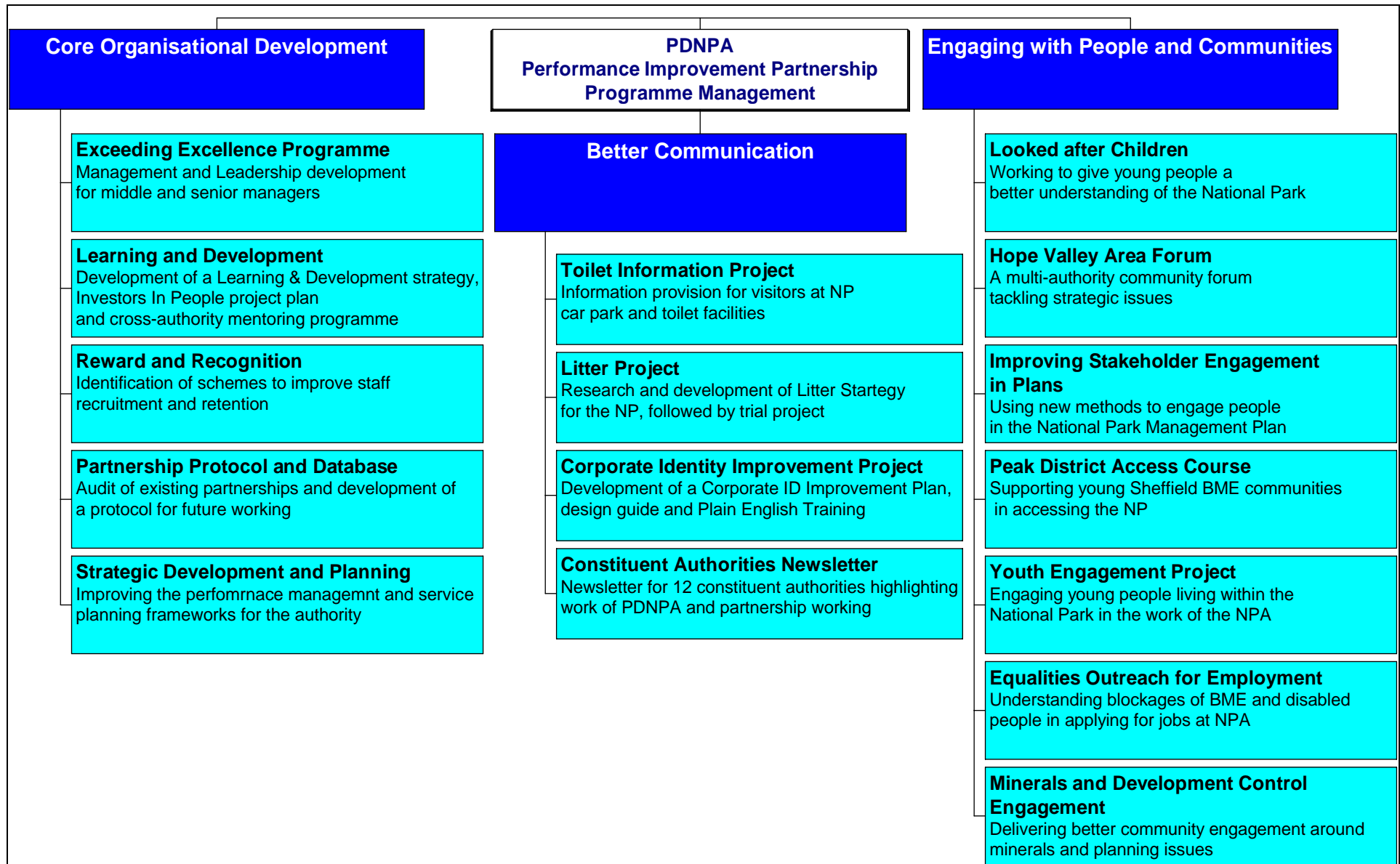


Figure 1 - Overview of projects (with themes) delivered through the Performance Improvement Partnership

### 3 Project resources and approach

#### 3.1 Programme and Project Management

Good programme and project management have been essential to achieving the outcomes for the PIP, and was built in from the beginning of development. The Programme was initially developed by the Chief Executive of the PDNPA and has continued to be championed by him throughout the process.

From the outset a Programme Manager role (a secondment opportunity for staff from within the partner authorities) was set up to develop an implementation plan and ensure good project management throughout, monitor and report on progress of projects and budget, support project leaders undertaking the project delivery, promote the learning from and achievements of the partnership both internally and externally, and evaluate the overall impact of the PIP.

This role became crucial to help identify links between the projects and identify further opportunities that could knit projects together. The programme manager also became a key member of wider project teams supporting a range of projects making progress on performance improvements in effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the PDNPA's work beyond the initial scope of the PIP.

Support from the partner organisations has been at a high level throughout the life of the programme building on existing good relationships, but lending tangible support to the projects. This has been demonstrated through a programme steering group (Programme Board) made up of Chief Executives<sup>8</sup> or senior Directors<sup>9</sup> of all the partner organisations, the Regional Director<sup>10</sup> (East Midlands) of DCLG and an independent academic expert<sup>11</sup>. The programme board has given a great strength to the programme and has been well attended given the priorities and work schedules of the individuals involved. This has been the reporting mechanism throughout the programme's life, as well as a forum to discuss any issues and develop new joint working ideas as the projects and programme develop.

Support further down the partner organisations has not always been as easy to achieve with project leaders having to work hard in some cases to generate interest in projects that were being championed by senior members of the organisations (E.g. Children Looked After project). With hindsight, a greater lead-in time and focus on building the partnership at all levels and the development of a shared cultural understanding, so projects were jointly developed from the start, may have overcome some of this. However, this would have taken a lot of time within a short project and not necessarily led to any better long term outcomes as the focus has been on developing the partnership throughout the programmes lifespan.

Individual projects were managed by officers from the PDNPA and drawn from a range of services and levels of the organisation. Initially a project template was completed and a project plan (using MS Project) completed for each individual project and collated into an overall implementation plan by the Programme Manager. Some of the larger projects set up formal cross partner steering groups, whilst others worked by involving partners through workshops or specific project delivery teams. For example the Exceeding Excellence programme had a fantastic steering group with good collective working, participation and networking of the relevant officers, whilst the Litter Strategy work ran a one-off workshop for relevant officers to network, share knowledge and develop project ideas.

Fitting all these additional projects into existing heavy work schedules and delivering new pieces of work was challenging for some of the project leaders and members of the project teams, but the commitment of key individuals helped momentum, and (in most cases) a high

<sup>8</sup> Jim Dixon – PDNPA; Nick Hodgson – DCC; David Wheatcroft – DDDC; Simon Baker - SMDC

<sup>9</sup> Pat Wilson – HPBC; Initially Tony Wolfe, then Debbie Moore - LDNPA

<sup>10</sup> Peter Murphy – Regional Director, DCLG

<sup>11</sup> Stephen P Osborne – Professor of Public Management, Edinburgh University (previously Aston University)

level of line management support was provided. The lead in time for projects was often highly condensed because of the funding conditions, and required great flexibility and determination. Officers needed to hit the ground running and have a 'can-do' approach working with both a sense of urgency and enthusiasm to make the projects happen.

### 3.2 Programme Resources

The programme received an initial grant of £250,000 from the ODPM for project delivery during the January 2005 – March 2006 period. A further £98,000 was received for a second phase to run through to March 2007. Budgets were allocated to an overall Programme Management role as well as individual projects, and closely monitored to allow rapid reallocation if some projects were showing a predicted under spend. At the end of Phase 1 (March 2006) the programme was approximately £38,000 under spent, which was carried forward into Phase 2 of the programme. There are no under spends for the end of Phase 2.

The bulk (47% of phase 1, or 79% if the trainers from Aspire of Loughborough College (for the Exceeding Excellence Programme) are built in) of the money was spent on staff salaries giving additional hours to existing members of staff, or recruiting specialists to short term contracts to deliver required outputs. This seemed to be the greatest need for the projects and demonstrated that it is people's time rather than capital costs that many improvement projects need to make happen.

Match funding (in cash terms) was received for some projects from the partners – in particular the Exceeding Excellence programme (approx £28,000), but a much greater level of support was provided in the time given by officers and members of all the partner organisations. The PDNPA alone contributed at least £80,000 worth of (unfunded) staff time to the delivery of projects.

Partners all feel that the value gained from the projects has far outweighed the initial investment in both cash and staff time.

### 3.3 Programme and Project evaluation

The Performance Improvement Partnership has operated at differing levels for the organisations involved.

- Deliverable projects – where service delivery has happened with measurable outputs for the organisations and their communities.
- Future capacity building- internally of the organisations involved developing their knowledge and skills for the delivery of future strategies.
- Partnership working – learning lessons about the process of partnership working, evaluating the work as it goes along.

All these levels produce valuable learning for the partner organisations and have been built in to an evaluation framework that encompasses:

- The strategic and operational context for the programmes and individual projects initial development
- The activity (outputs) and progress of both the projects and the overall programme
- The impact or catalytic effect the projects have had both within the partnership and more widely across the sectors

Evaluation is an essential element of any project to celebrate achievement, to capture lessons, and to highlight needs for the future. The framework is given in appendix 3, and shows some of the key questions that have been asked throughout the programme to ensure that the programme achieved the anticipated outcomes, and all learning was captured from the outset. The measures were developed to utilise as much existing data as possible, minimising additional administrative requirements on the project managers.

This evaluation framework was used to develop a workshop for partners and members of the project teams held in May 2006 that took stock of the learning to the end of phase 1. The results from the workshop<sup>12</sup> have contributed significantly to the content of this report.

### 3.4 Communication and Dissemination

Good communication within the partnership and beyond has been an intrinsic part of the programme management. This has worked very well internally within the PDNPA with briefings for staff teams about the overall programme, and production of an E-Update that was regularly circulated to all staff and members. Individual projects have also been publicised in the internal staff and member newsletters giving a profile to the work of individual project leaders.

The E-Update was also circulated to partner organisations, but the depth to which this penetrated into the organisations is unknown.

There were initial concerns from both staff and members of the PDNPA about the programme and in the generally risk averse environment of local government a perception that the programme wouldn't be able to achieve very much in the short time frame available. The outputs (and outcomes) demonstrated in the case studies have shown this to be a fallacy with the projects all meeting or exceeding their initial targets.

At a partnership-wide level (and beyond) the evaluation event for the end of phase 1 and the case studies have done much to increase the profile of not only the PIP but also the work of the PDNPA and it's willingness to work in partnership to meet the needs of itself as an organisation and the communities it serves.

Much of the work of phase 2 focused on sharing the learning developed through the projects and wider programme with relevant audiences whether they are the local communities and user groups of the National Park or the professional sector.

Projects have enabled the PDNPA to broaden its networks of organisations to work with (for example through the Youth Engagement work) as well as raising its profile as an organisation that can support other local authorities (through work such as the Exceeding Excellence programme).

Links have been developed with both the IDeA and LGEM to disseminate the case studies, and share the learning of the project including an article in the June 2006 LGEM bimonthly Bulletin<sup>13</sup> and the Youth Engagement work written up as a case study on the IDeA website<sup>14</sup>.

## 4 Programme Outputs and Outcomes

The underpinning principle for the project was to build the capacity of the organisations involved, creating further capacity for the future. This has happened in a range of overt ways including

- Direct funding of external resources such as professional experts in the Reward and Recognition project
- Employment of specialist staff to take the projects forward e.g. Youth Engagement Worker, Equalities Outreach Officer and Communications Officer
- New connections being made between officers of the partner organisations e.g. PDNPA Ranger Service and DCC Social Services through the Looked After Children project

<sup>12</sup> Report available from Programme Manager – [nic.hutchins@peakdistrict.gov.uk](mailto:nic.hutchins@peakdistrict.gov.uk)

<sup>13</sup> Available at <http://www.lg-em.gov.uk/ppimageupload/Image41364.PDF>

<sup>14</sup> Available at <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/5471066>

- Provision of training for staff through the Exceeding Excellence Programme (management development) and other projects such as Plain English Training as part of the Corporate Identity project.

Capacity has also been built however in subtler ways developing the relational capacity between the organisations through the programme. These have included

- Greater understanding of the needs of the partners involved.
- Increased networking between officers of the partner organisations through joint delivery and shared training experiences
- Enhanced willingness to share experiences and knowledge between partners (and internally) because of the shared project goals and developing levels of trust

#### 4.1 Initial effects of the PIP – What difference has it made?

As part of the evaluation process, officers involved in the delivery of the projects were asked what impact the PIP had made to them individually and their organisations. Responses were varied but focused on both the practical and more philosophical benefits of the work and approaches to it.

At a practical organisational level, benefits such as the provision of funding for projects that wouldn't have been carried out if it hadn't been available were seen as invaluable. The funding also provided the capacity to set up and trial the appropriate programme / project management systems that will be beneficial beyond the life of the programme. The programme acted as a catalyst for joint working, through the networking of officers at different levels and in different roles sharing tools and techniques to achieve results that couldn't have been achieved by a single organisation. It has been seen to give added benefits to the activities that have been delivered. Organisations beyond the initial partnership such as Shebeen and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust have been able to work alongside the partners and get involved in projects facilitated by the funding.

Collectively developing new knowledge has been seen as invaluable creating a shared language between partners, and a deeper knowledge and understanding of the individuals and organisations. It has given a new perspective to the partner organisations, and allowed a blending of cultures to take place for the benefit of service delivery recognising the commonality as well as the uniqueness for all involved. It is a general consensus that the partnership working has been and continues to be beneficial. Lessons learnt through this work have had knock-on benefits for other partnerships that the PDNPA and other partners are involved in.

As is often the case in organisations where demands and pressures are great, one project is replaced by the next and no time is built in for reflection. Production of initial project templates and case studies for the projects has allowed this to happen more than would be normal (although with resistance at times from the project leaders) and has started to develop a culture where knowledge is shared and success celebrated when milestones or outcomes are achieved.

#### 4.2 Developing and embedding learning

A key measure of the programmes success has been about the range of learning opportunities that the projects provide. These are summarised in appendix 1 at the end of the report.

At this stage, the full impact of the learning opportunities developed from the programme are difficult to measure, although the outputs have been significant. The number of directly delivered training days for staff from the partnership has exceeded 1290; guidance notes have been produced for Public Meetings and Corporate Identity; and numerous less formal opportunities have been created through networking, workshops and sharing of the work that has been done. The depth into the organisations the learning has been felt, and the changes

in working practice because of the programme, will need to be continually monitored over the coming years to identify the true long-term value that the PIP has had.

For individuals, the increase in opportunities for personal development has been huge. From the directly delivered cross-partnership training opportunities, to increasing individual officers hours or secondments, to lessons learnt about managing and delivering partnerships everyone involved agrees that they have learnt something along the way. It has given people the chance to try new ways of working, with a support network around them from a range of organisations and perspectives.

The Project Teams were asked to identify what they felt had been 'best-practice' about the overall programme or individual projects. These can be summarised into the 3 areas identified below:

- Good partnership working facilitated by an openness between individuals at all levels, teams, projects (and their recipients) and authorities, with joint procurement of services (in particular the Exceeding Excellence programme) and a seamless delivery for the customers (E.g. The Hope Valley Forum)
- Excellent project management with realistic scoping, clear milestones, good communication and regular reporting (to authorities and communities)
- The range of approaches used for reaching out to (often hard-to reach) communities from in and around the National Park, and the production of guidance notes on running public meetings

The programme as a whole has also been about increasing understanding both internally and amongst the partners of the PDNPA's performance improvement needs, and the more general need to manage performance effectively.

Internally a series of briefings for staff and the PIP E-update (circulated electronically) have helped to do this in a relatively short period of time. Making the projects high profile within the organisation has raised interest, but also expectations of real achievement and long term impact for the projects. Awareness of the PDNPA's own needs has been increased with a greater understanding of what the performance improvement plan is trying to achieve for the organisation. Cross cutting projects (such as the Corporate Identity work) have brought different groups of staff together and developed a greater appreciation of the roles officers play in the organisation.

Externally, with partners, there has been a general increase of understanding and appreciation of the difficulties that individual partners face and a general raising of the profile of PDNPA amongst partner organisations.

At a strategic level (amongst the senior managers involved in the steering group) there is a deep understanding and realisation of the support that each organisation can provide to achieve better service delivery. At the delivery level for individual projects it has been easy to see what is trying to be achieved when projects come together outputs / outcomes are stated, but the bigger picture is sometimes being missed. Much of the increased awareness has happened through informal networking between officers, project steering groups and events such as the evaluation conference. Better and more open communication has led to further support on other initiatives beyond the PIP such as the Equality Standard that all the partners are working to achieve.

Crucial to the ongoing success of the programme and the way it will be measured in the future – as a driver for change in the partnership, rather than another initiative that came and went – is to embed the learning that has come from it. Ensuring the structures are in place for this to happen formed part of Phase 2 of the programme so that new innovative approaches become the way things are done as a matter of course.

### 4.3 Partnership working

The Performance Improvement Partnership has seen the working relationships develop between the partners at both an operational and strategic level creating greater strength of working and a higher quality of outcomes.

Operationally, it has allowed projects to take place that wouldn't be viable without the partners involvement. The partners involved in individual projects has often grown beyond the original programme partnership to include a range of voluntary and community organisations (e.g. SHEBEEN<sup>15</sup> – Peak District Access Course and Equalities Outreach) and public sector bodies (e.g. Peak 11 schools – Youth Engagement).

The increased networking between officers through the Exceeding Excellence programme and projects such as the Hope Valley Forum has helped develop trust between individuals and the organisations, providing a greater willingness to work together on other projects and initiatives (e.g. Joint bids for Youth Act funding).

Partnership working has also improved internally at the PDNPA as a result of some of the projects (e.g. Corporate Identity, Workforce Planning projects) with cross-functional teams breaking down some of the silo working that has caused difficulties for organisational initiatives in the past. The work has highlighted the benefits of in-house partnerships between services, and developed the skills and understanding of officers to be able to do this.

Partners have willingly shared their expertise to develop the projects, and the results of the internally focused projects have then been shared widely throughout the partnership, adding to the developing trust and openness of the organisations involved. The personal relationships between individuals in the partnerships, rather than the statutory duty to cooperate is what has made the project a success.

Projects have also acted as a catalyst for the partners to work together where there have been traditional boundaries across government regions or district / borough borders to enable a better service provision for the targeted communities (e.g. High Peak and Derbyshire Dales with both the Hope Valley Forum and Youth Engagement work) developing Peak District wide approaches where previously the artificial boundaries may have got in the way.

Not all the partnership working has been particularly as hoped however. It has been difficult for the Lake District NPA to engage in the projects, and where it was anticipated that there would be opportunities to share learning and experiences with another National Park, it has proved very difficult because of the distances involved as well as internal issues for the LDNPA. (They have been very supportive however at a strategic level).

This has highlighted the benefits of working with local partners, and how much easier it is to work with people to deliver projects if they are geographically close. Distance has created a barrier that, even with dedicated resources for joint working, has been too difficult to overcome. These issues are also highlighted in the Derbyshire Case Study<sup>16</sup> and Welland Project<sup>17</sup>.

Communication around the partnership has also not always been as hoped with a top down approach for projects initially creating a barrier that had to be overcome between officers and their organisations to move projects forward (e.g. Children Looked After project). Many officers of partner organisations were not aware of the bigger partnership and the range of projects involved in the overall PIP. Whether this is necessary however for the successful delivery of projects and development of better relations between the organisations is untested.

At a strategic level the programme has allowed the relationships between senior managers of all the partners to continue to develop, improving individual relationships and creating an overall better understanding of the priorities of the partners involved. The programme has

<sup>15</sup> SHEBEEN – Sheffield Black and Ethnic Environmental Network

<sup>16</sup> Available at <http://www.emrlga.gov.uk/site/documents/partnershipworking.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Welland Shared Services Project: Joint Position Statement (High Peak BC) March 2005

also helped the standing of the PDNPA amongst the partners and regional bodies as reliable deliverers of activity.

Partners attending an evaluation workshop were asked about their overall satisfaction with the programme, with the average satisfaction being 78%. This high level is obviously only representative of the people attending the workshop, but recognises the 'feel-good factor' that some of the projects have generated, and the benefits of cross-functional and cross-organisational working that the projects have focused on.

It is perhaps too early however to fully measure the benefits, and long-term satisfaction that the partnership will bring to those involved individually and organisationally. To ensure and increase the satisfactions levels however, there needs to be improved dissemination about the projects to all involved in delivering them.

Through this capacity building programme the National Park has proved itself to be both a useful and valuable partner that can manage and deliver large-scale projects for the benefit of a wider network of constituent authorities.

#### 4.4 Developing innovative approaches

The overall programme and individual projects sought to develop innovative approaches to their delivery, seeking out best practice used elsewhere and adapting it for the local context as well as piloting entirely new approaches for the National Park or public sector.

The capacity to take risks, and try new approaches has been a huge benefit to the programme. It has allowed creativity in delivery for the project managers that, under the normal restrictions of money and time, organisations can't always afford to take.

The table in appendix 2 summarises these areas of innovation that range from new ways of communicating with communities and stakeholders, to working across political boundaries, to sharing of what may be thought of as sensitive organisational information.

#### 4.5 Engaging with Communities

A key outcome for the programme and many of the projects has been to create better engagement with the communities and stakeholders in and around the National Park.

Projects (Equalities Outreach for Employment, Looked after children and Peak District Access Course) have worked to increase the knowledge and involvement of people from groups underrepresented within the National Park through provision of information and opportunities for them to become more involved and better understand the role of the National Park Authority. The work of these projects has highlighted the necessity of outreach work to engage with often hard-to-reach groups.

Other projects (Hope Valley Forum, Youth Engagement and Improving Stakeholder Engagement in Plans) have worked with residents and stakeholders of the National Park to engage them (through consultation and partnership working) in local issues and develop a space for them to have their voices heard and listened to. Young peoples interest has been sparked and some excellent products, including a website<sup>18</sup> and leaflet, have been developed to provide young people with the information they want to know about the opportunities available to them within the National Park area. The Hope Valley Forum through its forum meetings has brought together local people and agencies to discuss issues of real concerns to the people living within that area. Stakeholders (both individuals and organisations) have had more opportunity than ever before to shape the future<sup>19</sup> of the National Park by the running of workshops and public meetings, and creation of electronic discussion documents to develop the National Park Management plan for 2006 – 2011.

<sup>18</sup> [www.sourceofthepeak.org.uk](http://www.sourceofthepeak.org.uk)

<sup>19</sup> [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/helpshapethefuture](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/helpshapethefuture)



Many lessons have been learnt about the needs of all these groups, and the best ways to engage them, developing the skills needed and creating a dialogue that wasn't there before. Guidelines have been produced about running accessible public meetings, templates for activity based learning with young people have been produced and tested, barriers have been broken down with urban based neighbouring communities and work has fed into the PDNPA's Working with People and Communities Strategy. Crucial though is the recognition that all these new relationships are in the early stages, and need on going support and nurturing to ensure that they can all reach their maximum potential.

#### 4.6 Impacts beyond the PIP: the catalytic impact

As part of the evaluation, the project leaders looked at the unexpected spin-offs from the project (i.e. activities not project planned or defined at the start).

These have happened within individual projects for example with the production of Guidelines for Accessible Meetings drawing on experience from several projects or the Plain English Training delivered as part of the Corporate Identity project.

Many of the projects continued into Phase 2 (an unexpected development in itself) of the PIP and are in the process of developing continuation plans and bids for additional funding to develop the work into the future.

The openness with which the partners have shared what could be seen as commercially sensitive information (and not always directly related to a PIP project) has been seen as a great spin off, with the recognition that all the partners are working to deliver a high quality public service for the Peak District area and therefore shouldn't be precious about withholding activities or information.

### 5 What now and where next?

As mentioned above a phase 2 project secured further funding to focus on further leadership development and community engagement work, whilst disseminating the results and learning from phase 1.

Unfortunately, no further funding is available to continue with the overall programme beyond March 2007.

Work needs to continue however, to embed the learning and evaluate its impact across the partnership, mainstreaming the work of the projects. The long term benefits of cross-partnership learning and mentoring opportunities will only truly be seen as time goes on and individuals use the new skills and knowledge that they have developed, and not let the outcomes of the programme become redundant.

Across the partnership there needs to be a reinforcing of what's been happening, who has been involved, and the successes they have achieved. Senior management support and championing of projects needs to continue to provide strong leadership for the programme, identifying shared priorities and committing to long-term plans for joint working.

Individual projects need to establish how their outputs and outcomes can guide future planning and development of priorities, and those that have potential and identified need for further resourcing need to work to see how this can be met.

Many of the projects, and the approach to the programme, are a major step along the way to achieving the key recommendations in the new Strong and Prosperous Communities white paper.

Although no further funding is available, a scaled down phase 3 still exists with a strong commitment from the partners to work together to develop new joint initiatives that provide better services (relating to the National Park Management Plan and other local strategic documents) for the communities in and around the Peak District, and mutual support for performance improvement and organisational development within those authorities to achieve it. Many of the individual projects have also now developed their own life beyond the scope of

the project including Youth Engagement, Equalities Outreach for Employment, and the Hope Valley Area Forum (see appendix 4).

Into the future, whether additional resources are received to continue or develop the work or not, the spirit of PIP needs to find a way to the frontline, to ensure the openness of partnership working for now and in the future. The partners need to continue to work together to better engage their communities providing joined-up services, and creating more opportunities to develop and share learning together to ensure the continual development of a shared understanding of each other, there needs and priorities.

The Performance Improvement Partnership has already led to both substantive service improvements and developments, and to the enhancement of partnership capacity across the agencies involved and this momentum must not be lost.

Table 1: Organisational and individual learning facilitated through the Performance Improvement Partnership

<b>Learning opportunities</b>	
<b>For individual project leaders</b>	<b>For staff and members of the partner organisations through the projects.</b>
<p>Project management, scoping and evaluation</p> <p>Management of cross-council partnership projects</p> <p>Accessibility issues relating to public meetings.</p> <p>Better understanding of own organisation as well as partner organisations</p> <p>Strategy development</p> <p>Partnership working</p> <p>Community engagement skills</p> <p>Working with Members</p> <p>Leadership / Management skills</p> <p>Wider understanding of Local Government</p>	<p>Staff Guide to Corporate Identity</p> <p>Plain English training for Development Control (and others)</p> <p>Management and Leadership development</p> <p>Mentoring and Coaching Skills</p> <p>Development of the Practical Guidance Notes for Public Meetings, and how to use resources effectively for them</p> <p>Improved internal cross functional working and approaches</p> <p>Working with partners, often community groups, to enable activity</p> <p>Partnership working</p> <p>Addressing recruitment and retention issues</p> <p>Use of specialist staff / consultants to solve specific issues</p> <p>Awareness of young peoples knowledge and understanding of the NP, and their requirements from it.</p> <p>Range of approaches to engage different audiences</p> <p>Common language leading to greater understanding of partners</p>

Table 2: Innovation demonstrated by the Performance Improvement Partnership projects

<b>Areas of innovation</b>	<b>Projects</b>
Activity templates for suitable activities for children in care	Looked after children
Tailored communication to stakeholder organisations	Constituent Authorities newsletter, Improving Engagement in Plans
Use of strategic approaches to deliver operational change	Corporate Identity Improvement Project, Litter Strategy
Developing cross-council (accredited) training opportunities (including e-learning)	Training and Development Project (Mentoring Programme), Exceeding Excellence Programme,
Cross boundary working at all levels giving a seamless delivery to the public	Hope Valley Forum, Exceeding Excellence
New policy and strategy development through the use of external specialists or creating time for internal specialists	Learning and Development Project, Litter project, Reward and Recognition programme
National Park work with under-represented groups through outreach activity	Children looked after, Peak District Access Course, Youth Engagement, Equalities Outreach for Employment
Using other sector approaches to promote NP messages	Toilet Information
Sharing of internally focussed project results with partners in situations that may actually be competitive	Reward and Recognition
Acting as a facilitator or enabler to address community needs	Hope Valley Forum, Peak District Access Course, Youth Engagement

## Evaluation Measures at the Programme and Strategic Level

### Collecting evidence

- Project Leaders – based on the project template produced at the beginning, and the production of a case study at the end of phase 1.
- Chief Execs (steering Group) – focusing on partnership and impact
- Shared learning event – for May workshop discussions between project teams

#### A. Strategic Context

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme history</li> <li>• Local / regional issues and context</li> <li>• Objectives of programme</li> <li>• Development of PIP</li> <li>• Corporate priorities of PDNPA</li> <li>• Developing partnership between local authorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPAPA</li> <li>• History/development of individual projects</li> <li>• DEFRA funding situation</li> <li>• Resourcing</li> <li>• Hopes for long term impacts</li> </ul>
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#### B. Activity and progress

Measure	Evidence from	Baseline	Target
Progress of overall programme towards objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports to and minutes from steering group meetings</li> </ul>	N/A	Programme meets objectives
Progress of individual projects towards objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project updates</li> <li>• Reaching of milestones of individual projects</li> <li>• MS project</li> </ul>	Set in project templates at the start of the project	Projects meet individual objectives as set out in original templates
Programme management progress monitored on MS project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MS project Gantt charts</li> </ul>	On MS project	All Phase 1 projects complete by March 06
Is the budget on target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly monitoring via FRED with in kind contribution collected from project leaders</li> </ul>	Original budget forecasts with £70k of in kind contributions	Budget breaks even
How are partners involved in the development and management of the projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project leaders</li> </ul>		Partners involved as widely as possible

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Evidence from</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target</b>
What on going dissemination is taking place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of e-updates</li> <li>• Talks given</li> <li>• Articles / case studies written and published</li> </ul>	N/A	Dissemination of projects and results
How is the evaluation framework developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings and developing framework for evaluation</li> <li>• Involvement of Stephen Osborne</li> <li>• Final evaluation report</li> <li>• Report to Audit and Performance Committee</li> </ul>	No evaluation framework	Fully evaluated project

### **C. Impact and catalysis evaluation**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Evidence from</b>	<b>Target</b>
How has the partnership developed at both an operational and strategic level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview / focus group with Chief Execs (steering group)</li> <li>• May workshop discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater strength and quality of partnership working</li> <li>• Better understanding between partners of PDNPA's performance improvement needs</li> <li>• High satisfaction of partners with jointly delivered projects</li> <li>• Experiences shared between the partners</li> </ul>
What impact has the project had on the PDNPA's work with communities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project evaluations</li> <li>• Examples of feedback</li> <li>• Public meeting attendance</li> <li>• May workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement of BME communities and young people</li> <li>• Better understanding of skills needed for engagement of above groups</li> <li>• Better knowledge of running successful public consultations</li> <li>• Positive feedback from the range of communities worked with</li> </ul>

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Evidence from</b>	<b>Target</b>
<p>How has the capacity of the organisation been built by the programme?</p> <p><i>Needs to be recognised that the full impact of this may not be seen within the organisation for several years</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with steering group</li> <li>• May workshop</li> <li>• Learning logs of participants on MDP</li> <li>• Interviews with project leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrations of innovation and best practice</li> <li>• Improved management skills</li> <li>• Achievement of elements of performance improvement plan</li> <li>• Other new skills/knowledge developed by the partners</li> <li>• Unexpected spin offs from the projects</li> <li>• Structures in place to allow learning to be applied</li> <li>• Best practice shared between partners at both a strategic and operational level</li> </ul>
<p>Which projects are continuing into the future?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May workshop</li> <li>• On-going project plans</li> <li>• Project leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation and development of some of the projects initiated through this programme</li> <li>• Additional funding received to continue work</li> </ul>
<p>Have further new projects been developed with the partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Execs</li> <li>• May workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New projects with the 'local' authorities</li> <li>• Closer working with the LDNPA</li> </ul>
<p>What impact have the programme and individual projects had beyond the partnership?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External feedback</li> <li>• Final dissemination ODPM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lessons learnt and good practice shared widely around other National Parks</li> <li>• Regional level</li> <li>• National level</li> </ul>

## Project summaries and futures post April 2007

Project	Summary	Next steps (post April 2007)
<b>Constituent Authorities Newsletter</b>	<p>The publication and distribution of the pilot edition of a newsletter for 'constituent authorities' – the district, borough, county and metropolitan councils within the Peak District National Park (PDNPA) boundaries.</p> <p>Target audiences for the newsletter are constituent authority chief officers and members.</p> <p>The newsletter was coordinated by the Peak District National Park Authority and aimed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of the work of the National Park Authority and the key issues facing the National Park – such as transport, conservation and quarrying</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for partnership working between the authorities and the PDNPA.</li> </ul>	<p>A reader survey will be used to evaluate the newsletter.</p> <p>Due to lack of resources and pressure on staff time, further issues have not been built into the PDNPA communications team's service plan for 2006 / 07. However, the database of constituent authority officers / councillors will be maintained by PDNPA and updated annually.</p>
<b>Corporate Identity Improvement Project</b>	<p>The corporate identity improvement project funded a full-time Communications Officer post to investigate the improvement of corporate communications and produce a new corporate style guide.</p>	<p>The new corporate service and style guide was published in March 2007. The communications officer post and project came to a close March 2007.</p> <p>The lessons learnt and new corporate identity will continue to be incorporated in to mainstream work and carried out by the PDNPA Design team and followed by all services.</p>
<b>Equalities Outreach for Employment</b>	<p>The main aim of the project was to develop links with hard to reach and minority groups from the Sheffield area in order to encourage these groups to consider employment and volunteering opportunities within</p>	<p>The Outreach Activity has been highly successful at building the profile of the Authority as a potential employer and provider of volunteering opportunities, and networks</p>



	<p>the Peak District National Park Authority. The target groups were the BME communities, including refugees and asylum seekers and the disabled communities. Young people and schools have also been included to a limited extent.</p> <p>The project was focussed primarily on the City of Sheffield to foster and develop relationships with groups/organisations/institutions that can be maintained after the end of the project. If the work was successful, and resources became available, this work could be replicated in other cities around the national park.</p>	<p>with several underrepresented groups are now established. DCC are now leading on building on this work Derbyshire-wide and have expressions of interest from several other authorities including PDNPA.</p> <p>At PDNPA we are looking at how the momentum gained can be sustained without specialist resource. We will certainly maintain circulation of all vacancies to the target groups network.</p>
<b>Exceeding Excellence Programme</b>	<p>The project has delivered Leadership and management development training across 4 partnership authorities delivering 795 training days in year 1 and 374 in year 2 (excluding the upcoming Audience with the Chief Executives on 22 February) i.e. a total of 1169 training days in total. Year 2 saw an additional stream of the Strategic Leadership Award, the Leadership Award and the Coaching Award, 3 more Arts of Being Brilliant, a Mentoring workshop and another Audience With the Chief Executives. New events also developed and run in year 2 were a management Forum, 4 Staying Brilliant and 2 Plain English.</p>	<p>All programmes developed are now a resource to be delivered in the future subject to funding being available. The Steering Group meet on 7 March to look at next steps now the project delivery is completed. There may be the possibility of running the Leadership Award and Staying Brilliant once a year if partners are willing to pool funds. The Art of Being Brilliant has also been delivered to c 90 PDNPA employees as an in house course and other authorities are considering same.</p> <p>We are currently engaged on a process of corporate impact evaluation of the programme across the partnership authorities which will ask participants to revisit their learning and report back 3 aspects of learning, what changes have been made in their leadership/ management style and what service changes have resulted.</p> <p>Advice and guidance continues to be given to other partnerships of local authorities now following a similar project (e.g. the Chesterfield partnership).</p>
<b>Hope Valley Area Forum</b>	<p>The project was to set up and pilot a number of Hope Valley Area Forums over the programmes period. The Forums would be administered and co-ordinated by the PDNPA in partnership with DCC, HPBC, DDDC and other LSP partners.</p>	<p>The forums will continue with PDNPA playing a key role in the Hope Valley. Further developments are currently being discussed by High Peak BC in line with proposals in the Local Government white paper.</p>

	The intention with the forums was to introduce a series of community consultation meetings within the Hope Valley area to improve communication between partner organisations and the local community.	
<b>Improving Stakeholder Engagement in Plans</b>	The aim was to improve participation in plan making and widen stakeholder involvement in the plan review process to reflect the many different types of stakeholder whose activities affect the Park positively and negatively. Ultimately, the desired result was to improve the buy-in to the National Park Management Plan from stakeholders, the public and the Authority itself.	The lessons learnt during National Park Management Plan stakeholder engagement will be applied to Local Development Framework stakeholder engagement (on-going throughout 2007 and 2008). This work also places heavy emphasis on 'front loading' consultation in advance of statutory formal consultation periods.
<b>Learning and Development</b>	<p>The Peak District National Park Authority agreed its Work Force Plan in May 2005. The year 1 action plan included 3 specific learning and development outcomes, which this project fulfilled.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Learning and Development Policy</li> <li>Develop a project plan to obtain Investors in People (IIP) recognition</li> <li>Provide mentoring opportunities/ policy &amp; training</li> </ol>	<p><b>PDNPA draft Learning and Development Policy:</b> The next steps are for the Policy to be formally approved/ratified by the Authority, following any further amendments required by officers. Appropriate guidance notes /appendices to the Policy can then be completed and the implementation of the various strands of the Policy initiated.</p> <p><b>Project Plan to obtain Investors In People (IIP) recognition:</b> Due to an unsuccessful bid for resources to administer IIP in 2006, a report regarding how the project will be undertaken hasn't yet been produced. However, work is being undertaken in several key areas which will crucial to the success of the IIP project e.g. staff appraisal and performance management. It is hoped that the IIP project will be moved forward in 2007/8.</p> <p><b>Providing mentoring opportunities/ training:</b> Two mentoring skills workshops were run in 2006 (in March and October) to develop a pool of mentors across the partnership. In September 2006, it was agreed that four of the partnership authorities (Derbyshire Dales DC, High Peak BC, PDNPA and Staffordshire Moorlands DC) would take part in a year long pilot Partnership Mentoring</p>

		Programme to be launched at the beginning of 2007/8. Briefing sessions to inform potential mentees about the programme are planned for February and March 2007 at each of the participating Authorities premises. Losehill Training has agreed to take on the role of co-ordinator for the programme.
<b>Litter Project</b>	This project aimed to identify the source and scale of the local litter problem, look at best practice solutions and work with Statutory Litter Authorities (local councils) to improve the way litter is dealt with.	The background information obtained continues to provide a good baseline from which to move forward. The PDNPA is now a member of the Derbyshire Fly Tipping Forum. In addition the original posters have been adapted for use on PDNPA property. Litter pickers and gloves have also been provided to three local parish litter picking groups.
<b>Looked After Children</b>	The objective of the project was to give looked after children (children in care) in Derbyshire a 'taste' of the National Park through experiencing its landscape, cultural and wildlife heritage and its recreational opportunities at first hand. This direct experience was designed to promote the understanding of the National Park and engage the children in discovering more of the Park in their future lives.	Lessons learnt from this project have been applied in developing other programmes designed to engage young people from disadvantaged backgrounds e.g. Barnsley Young Achievers Award, Staveley YES Project.
<b>Partnership Protocol and database</b>	<p>Three phase project to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop an appraisal framework for partnership working at the PDNPA</li> <li>2. Develop an IT based product for appraising partnerships</li> <li>3. Production of a protocol for new partnership working</li> </ol> <p>This has happened in parallel and close consultation with a member scrutiny team looking at Partnership working.</p>	A protocol and toolkit will be presented to committee in April 2007, alongside the first PDNPA Directory of (Strategic and Joint Delivery) Partnerships. The protocol will then be implemented during 2007/08 and onwards with an updated Directory produced annually in April.
<b>Peak District Access Course</b>	The aim of the project was to empower black and ethnic minority urban young people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to access the Peak District National Park independently or with friends or family. Its objectives were to enable young people and youth workers to:	SHEBEEN is continuing to develop as an organisation, and the tried and tested approach for people from urban areas to experience the countryside exists as a model for organisations such as themselves to use and develop

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access information about what exists in the National Park from within Sheffield</li> <li>• Investigate and experience public transport options to, from and within the Park</li> <li>• Explore various aspects of navigation – from the basics of using information centres, notice boards and other sources of information to in-depth work on map reading, walk planning and leadership</li> <li>• Experience a range of outdoor activities available to all in the National Park</li> <li>• Find ways of sharing the experience and empowering young people to access the National Park</li> </ul>	subject to funding availability.
<b>Quarrying and Planning Communications</b>	The objective of the project was to support the Peak District National Park Authority's planning and minerals teams to engage more effectively with local communities, providing targeted information and building residents' knowledge and understanding of the Authority's policies.	Funding has been secured for a half time post for minerals communications to continue forward throughout 2007/8.
<b>Reward and Recognition</b>	The project created the capacity to respond to a specific remit from the PDNPA Work Force Plan Steering Group. The outputs of the project have been shared within the partnership as all authorities are seeking to address rewards issues in order to enable them to "have the right people in the right place at the right time" (Employer's Organisation outcome for Work Force Planning). The outcome of the project has been to establish policies that have immediately led to the recruitment and retention of key staff with specialist skills particularly in a team where there is a severe shortage of experienced people.	<p>Recruitment and retention policies are now in place and operable with other services taking up initiatives such as career pathing.</p> <p>A project recommendation to run a recognition event, led to the development of Peak Celebrations in December 2006. The event was so successful that it will be run again in December 2007.</p> <p>Outstanding recommendations are in the Phase 2 Work Force Plan for implementation during 2007/8 subject to priority and funding being available.</p>
<b>Strategic Development and Planning</b>	Workshops, led by an external consultant, were held involving members, management team, Heads of Service and team leaders to develop and gain buy in to new corporate outcomes which will give	This project provided a good, solid basis for a fundamental shift in strategic direction for the authority. It has allowed much progress to be made in moving to an organisation

	<p>clear direction to the authority's work over the next 5 years.</p> <p>The workshops aimed to align the PDNPA's business planning and work (over the next 5 years) with the new National Park Management Plan and to address areas of weakness identified by our recent National Park Authorities Performance Assessment regarding prioritisation, shared ownership, the need for SMART targets and measures and staff involvement in development of strategic planning.</p>	<p>that clearly sets the strategic direction, with prioritisation and budget alignment, that then flows into service planning. Work is ongoing to further develop performance management at service level integrating the lessons learnt through out the authority, and reinforcing the process with a cross check provided by Management Team.</p>
<b>Toilet and Car Park Information Project</b>	<p>The project had three objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve the quality of services provided by reducing the amount of time taken to identify and report damage, vandalism and faults.</li> <li>• To make use of toilets as primary information points, reaching out to PDNP users who would not normally be accessing existing information in its various guises.</li> <li>• To raise the profile of the PDNP through the provision of information which reflects its corporate image.</li> </ul>	<p>We continue to provide up to date information on a quarterly basis. Contacts and information obtained are proving to be extremely useful solving problems with the management of toilets that have recently come to light.</p>
<b>Youth Engagement Project</b>	<p>The main aim of the project was to provide the Authority with a knowledge base and understanding of the key issues that young people faced living in the rural areas of the Peak District National Park. By close partnership working with other youth agencies it aimed to address some of the more achievable issues at local level by taking actions and involving young people in the process. The project focused on particularly rural and geographically identifiable areas i.e. Staffordshire Moorlands, Hope Valley and Derbyshire Dales.</p>	<p>A proposal went to DCC with regards to contributing towards the Youth Engagement Project in the future. At the time of writing we are still waiting for a response. It is not yet fully decided whether the work will continue after March 07, and if so in what format.</p>