

LOCAL AGENDA 21
and
SUSTAINABILITY
in
THE PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This is the first Local Agenda 21 and sustainability statement published by the Peak District National Park Authority. Many of the ideas are, however, already at the heart of the Authority's day to day work.

1.2 The Statement serves 4 broad purposes:

- it describes Local Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development, their origins and their context in the National Park;
- it states the National Park Authority's commitment to the principles, with summaries of action to date and future intent;
- it encourages others to draw up or become involved in Local Agenda 21s and provides some useful contacts for further advice;
- it provides a base statement against which future action can be judged.

LOCAL AGENDA 21: A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

1.3 Local Agenda 21 aims to improve the quality of our lives and the lives of our children.

1.4 It is a process that gives everyone the chance to have a say about the way in which we live. Now and in the 21st Century. It integrates environmental, social, cultural and economic issues, asking how our culture can develop in a more sustainable manner.

- fairly, so that opportunities are available to all people
- without squandering natural resources
- without damaging vital environmental and social systems

1.5 The issues are fundamental. We all have a right to have a say, and a responsibility to work in partnership to put our Agenda into action - whether individuals, authorities, businesses or clubs.

1.6 The Peak District National Park Authority hopes to work with you and with all its partners to help sustain this 'Living Landscape'.

Chairman

Peak District National Park Authority

July 1997

2. WHAT IS LOCAL AGENDA 21 AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

- 2.1 At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, 172 Nations accepted the need for all countries to re-examine their priorities to improve the quality of life for everyone and safeguard future use of the world's resources.
- 2.2 **Local Agenda 21 is the process by which the people in many countries are now helping to define a vision for the 21st Century, promoting sustainable development.** The process seeks to involve as many people as possible: looking at problems and opportunities and drawing up an action plan. It lets us ask how our culture can develop in a more sustainable manner, integrating environmental, social, cultural and economic issues. The emphasis is as much on process as product: on involving people in debate about the agenda and keeping this debate and subsequent action going - not just writing an agenda and then putting it away.
- 2.3 At the Rio de Janeiro conference, heads of governments agreed that future development should be "**sustainable**". The widely quoted "Brundtland Commission" definition is that sustainable development "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".
- 2.4 **The National Park Authority places this in the context of National Park purposes and the need to conserve and enhance the Peak District National Park** (see Appendix 1). It believes that development should not irreversibly damage the local or global environment or squander non-renewable resources. It should not burden tomorrow's generations with costs and problems that we should meet today.
- 2.5 Appendix 3 gives a useful chronology of the historical "pathway" to sustainable development.

3. THE NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY'S COMMITMENT TO LOCAL AGENDA 21 AND SUSTAINABILITY

3.1 **The Peak District National Park Authority is committed to working with others as part of the Local Agenda 21 process to help achieve a more sustainable world.**

3.2 In common with the other National Parks it has adopted the statement set out in Appendix 2 to make clear its intentions for work with communities, with partners and internal to its own organisation. This is a commitment to sustainability and Local Agenda 21 in the context of the purposes given to National Park Authorities by the UK Government (see Appendix 1). Implementing those purposes should enable society to hand on to future generations National Parks of which we can all be proud. Sustaining the special character of the National Parks will in itself be a major contribution to the sustainable development of England and Wales as a whole. It will also involve the National Parks in regional, national and global debates on the best means of ensuring sustainability.

3.3 The Local Agenda 21 process will help inform the National Park Authority during its regular review of National Park Management Plans, Development Plans and other policy or management documents. It will enrich rather than replace existing processes for policy development. **Importantly, it will also involve the Authority in work to put local agendas developed by local people into action (see paras 3.11 and 3.12 and Section 4).**

3.4 The National Park Authority has a track record of environmental concern and of working in partnership to deliver services for the residents of and visitors to the area. This is at the heart of its work to conserve and enhance the National Park as a "living landscape" - a special place in which people live out their daily lives: where conservation of landscape, wildlife and culture meets the desire to fulfil modern aspirations. In this context, Local Agenda 21 and sustainable development can be seen as re-statements of that which the authority has, often successfully, already tried to put in place. This is not, however, to be complacent or pretend that there is no room for re-examination and improvement of its practices.

3.5 In January 1991 this was assisted by setting up the Environment Policy Group: a cross-functional team led by the Assistant National Park Officer - Head of Planning, with members from the four divisions of the Authority (Planning, Administration, Recreation and Conservation), Staff Committee and Unison. The Group's terms of reference were:

- to develop the Authority's environmental policy with regard to resource use, pollution and waste;
- to encourage initiatives by Service Teams to 'green' the Authority as an organisation, concentrating on putting its own house in order.

The group is a means of encouraging and empowering everyone to make good environmental decisions. It aims to steer, support and monitor.

3.6 Local Agenda 21 and sustainability initiatives now also form part of the Environment Policy Group's work. A brief summary of relevant work undertaken so far by the Authority is given below. Much of this stems from the existing core activity of the Authority's services to the public rather than from the Environment Policy Group itself. Further information is given in the Peak National Park Plan, Development Plans and Annual Reports.

Summary of Achievements

3.7 Appendix 3 sets out the steps taken by the National Park Authority in chronological order, putting these in the context of national and international steps to date on the "Pathway to Sustainable Development". Its actions have been both internal and external.

3.8 **Internally**, the first priority of the Environment Policy Group was to consider an environmental policy which would extend to all the Authority's activities, including organisational functions, and would complement the purposes of the National Park. A Purchasing Policy, with a 10% incentive to greening, was subsequently agreed and then a decision made to further the use of white recycled or environmentally friendly paper. Appendix 4 lists relevant policies.

- 3.9 The Environment Policy Group has sought to develop member and staff commitment to the Authority's Environmental Policy in everyday working practice. It has carried out consultations with staff and raised awareness of issues via a newsletter and exhibitions. Staff and member training and seminars have also been held. Notable environmental improvements to date include paper and can recycling, the provision of bicycles for staff and energy savings. The process is ongoing.
- 3.10 Staff environmental awareness training has been followed up by each service team carrying out an audit to identify actions to improve their environmental performance. The main concerns were transport and the use of resources and energy. Some of the suggested actions were already being carried out; others involved further research. The Environment Policy Group has acted as a clearing house for these ideas encouraging individuals and service teams to continue to address issues within their control.
- 3.11 **Externally**, the National Park Authority has been working with its constituent local authorities, with other groups and with other National Parks, in order to facilitate Local Agenda 21. A number of projects have been promoted either by the Authority or by partner agencies to foster community involvement in the identification of issues, solutions and actions. These include Area Management Work, Integrated Rural Development (Monyash, Longnor, Derwent and Hope Woodlands); Village Schemes (Kettleshulme, Hope, Bamford and Calver); Peak Tourism Partnership (Hope Valley and the Roaches), LEVER (Local Enterprise and Village Economic Regeneration at Elton and Youlgrave led by North Derbyshire TEC); Tideswell 2000: Local Agenda 21 and LEADER (Links between Actions for the Rural Economy: part of the European Objective 5B programme. Extensive work with schools, visitors, landowners and others to help explain, interpret and conserve the valued characteristics of the Park adds to the understanding and appreciation of those who might then become involved in projects of this nature.

Further Action

- 3.12 **For internal practices**, the Environment Policy Group's key targets for 1997/98, in addition to drafting this Local Agenda 21 statement, are to:
- improve communication and promote best practice;
 - extend systems to reduce, re-use and re-cycle;
 - monitor the Purchasing Policy and extending it into 'Green Contracts';
 - review the environmental audit of services.
- 3.13 **Externally**, for the delivery of services to residents and visitors it will be necessary for each service to review the way in which it can foster Local Agenda 21 and sustainability as set out in the Association of National Park Authorities' Statement. This review will need to take into account the priorities set in constituent authorities' Local Agenda 21 statements. In turn it will form an integral part of drawing up a replacement National Park Management Plan, and will assist the identification of priorities for future work.

4. DRAWING UP YOUR OWN LOCAL AGENDA 21

- 4.1 You might want to help draw up a Local Agenda 21 for your area, your group or your business. The County and District Councils are leading the process to promote public involvement but the process is not exclusive to Local Authorities. Each authority in your area will have someone that can help you make a start. Several groups have started already and their experience might help you. Appendix 5 gives some useful contacts. In the National Park, the National Park Authority is seeking ways in which it can make a distinctive contribution to this.
- 4.2 Issues and Agendas can relate to a whole county or region, or to a single village or part of a town. Priorities for action will vary according to local needs. The focus could even be on an interest group (e.g. young women, or business) rather than an area. But the common theme should be to work together to draw up action points to improve our quality of life without damaging the environment. It helps if as many local partners as possible agree to work together and Parish councils can be a useful focus point.
- 4.3 Local Agenda 21s often look at:
- environment and resources (both global and local) and sustainable development;
 - opportunities to benefit from society's services, goods, and culture (health, jobs and arts for example);
 - how to measure and monitor the quality of the environment and of life;
 - how to share the message and involve as many people as possible;
 - how the local agenda relates to other LA21s and initiatives in your area, and to the existing formal policies of businesses, agencies, and local and central government;
 - how to achieve short, medium or long-term action.

What happens to your Local Agenda 21? - Working in Partnership

- 4.4 Agendas drawn up for various areas and interests form the basis for discussing future action. It may not always be possible to achieve all that is desired, especially in the short term, but this should not discourage those who wish to draw up an agenda. The process of setting down aims and priorities and of discussing these with others (including agencies and authorities) is in itself a major step towards real involvement in decision making. Many things may simply require a local group, business or institution to get on and do it. It's not realistic to rely on others solving all the problems that might have been identified. Shared responsibility means shared action.
- 4.5 The National Park Authority will consider whether it can help put a local agenda into action. Wherever possible it will work in partnership with local communities and others to achieve the shared vision for the 21st century. Indeed the Authority has sought to do this for many years (see paragraphs 3.4 and 3.11).
- 4.6 Partners do not always agree every detail, and both need to be realistic about aims and responsibilities (for example the National Park Authority must seek to act in accordance with its purposes). There may sometimes be conflict between local views and the formal policies and responsibilities of bodies such as the National Park Authority. These need to be looked at openly and fairly as and when they arise. Sometimes, formal policies cannot easily be changed without lengthy and legal process. On the other hand differences can be considered when the next formal review is undertaken. Even where there are some points of disagreement, partners can always find a way forward. In the short term, they identify and act on points of agreement.
- 4.7 Sometimes it may be possible for the National Park Authority to formally agree all or part of a local agenda. Where this has relevance to decisions about development in the National Park, it might be treated as "Supplementary Planning Guidance" and referred to in the authority's decisions. This could apply for example where a village is looking for itself at local distinctiveness in design and layout, following the model advocated by the Countryside Commission.

5. INDICATORS, MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 5.1 As part of their work on Local Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development, local authorities have begun to measure the state of the environment, using indicators about land use, pollution or species diversity, for example. The family of National Parks has also been considering appropriate indicators that can be returned to periodically to show change over time.
- 5.2 For the Peak District National Park the work is complicated by the differing approaches taken by the numerous local authorities and agencies with responsibility in the area. Few collect information for the National Park as a spatial unit, or even as a distinct part of their own area. This makes the collation of data on indicators for the Park very difficult. The National Park Authority is currently asking other agencies to collect information in a more helpful way.
- 5.3 The family of National Park Authorities and the local authorities and other agencies with environmental responsibilities in the Peak District need to clarify the way in which indicators can be collected. The National Park Authority will then need to consider how these can best be presented to help inform the public decision-makers.
- 5.4 In addition, this Agenda 21 Statement will itself be reviewed annually as the basis for the work of the Environment Policy Team.

APPENDIX 1

NATIONAL PARK PURPOSES DEFINED BY THE ENVIRONMENT ACT 1995

- (a) Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.
- (b) Promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

In pursuing these purposes the National Park Authority shall seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park, but without incurring significant expenditure in doing so. For that purpose, it shall co-operate with local authorities and public bodies whose functions include the promotion of economic or social development within the National Park.

The Environment Act 1995 also makes it clear that "in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in (the) National Park any relevant authority shall have regard to the purposes specified" at (a) or (b) above. It states that if it appears that there is a conflict between those purposes, any relevant authority shall attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.

Association of National Park Authorities' Statement:

Local Agenda 21 and Sustainability in National Parks

The National Park Authorities of England and Wales (NPAs) wish to play their full part in achieving a more sustainable world and to contribute imaginatively to the fulfilment of the UK Government's commitments as a signatory to Agenda 21 at the Rio Earth Summit.

The NPAs will seek to play an appropriate role in meeting the targets set out in the National Sustainable Development Strategy.

To achieve this, the NPAs will consult with national governments, other local authorities, associations and the relevant environmental agencies to determine:

- action they should take to support the efforts of others, and
- special activities on which NPAs should take the lead.

As part of local government, NPAs will participate in the Local Agenda 21 process and will aim to follow the best practices developed for it.

We believe that NPAs can make a special contribution to work on sustainable development and Local Agenda 21. This is because their twin purposes - to protect their environment and promote understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities - allied to the duty to foster economic and social well-being through these two purposes - give them a strong statutory basis for carrying out such work.

In the case of National Parks' essential character this is likely to include initiatives on:

- Primary industries such as Farming and Forestry
- Tourism and Visitor Management
- Local action on Biodiversity
- Working with people in rural areas
- Maintaining and improving distinctive landscape character.

In their work on Local Agenda 21, National Park Authorities will:

With the local community:

- Involve people in the development of appropriate policies which recognise the strength and value of local aspirations and skills as well as the importance of national designations and attitudes.
- Seek to ensure that all sectors of the local population have an opportunity to participate in this process.
- Assist local communities in National Parks to meet the obligations of sustainable development in the face of handicaps resulting from remoteness or a narrow economic base.

With other organisations and people:

- Work with other local authorities in support of their Local Agenda 21 initiatives seeking to make a contribution to their overall aims as well as adding a special National Park element.
- Discuss with other bodies on which areas National Parks might appropriately take the lead with reference to the items noted above, and translate these into targets in National Park Management Plans.
- Work with all users of the National Parks, including private businesses and visitors, to reduce their adverse impacts on the environment and character of the Park.
- Work with national government and agencies in pursuit of sustainable development.
- Convey the importance of long-standing National Park ideals to others involved in work on sustainability.

Internally:

- Within the terms of the 1995 Environment Act, progressively integrate sustainable development into the work of each of the Authorities, starting by formally adopting sustainable development as a central objective of each Authority's work.
- Establish internal green teams, with cross sectoral representation, and ask these to consider all internal practices.
- Undertake appropriate training of members and officers in sustainability issues.
- Over the next three years, undertake a sustainability appraisal of their plans, policies and programmes and conduct an internal green audit of their practices.

THE PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

International Steps

- 1970 European Conservation Year
- 1972 Stockholm United Nations Human Environment Conference
- 1980 International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, World Wildlife Fund and United Nations Environment Programme launch the 'World Conservation Strategy - Living Resource Conservation for Sustainable Development'.
- 1982 'Brundtland' World Commission on Environment and Development established.
- 1987 'Our Common Future' - the report of the Brundtland Commission established the need for global partnership to seek sustainable development.
- 1992 Rio United Nations Conference on Environment and Development:
- Agreed principles for sustainable development in the Rio Declaration.
 - Agreed commitments to sustaining biodiversity.
 - Agreed commitments to ameliorating climate change.
 - Agreed principles for sustaining global forests.
 - Agreed global action plan to work towards sustainable development in the 21st Century - Agenda 21.
- 1994 Global Forum in Manchester to share new perceptions.
- 1995 Women's Conference in Beijing to emphasise the rôle of women.
- 1996 Habitat II - United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul to focus strategies to achieve sustainable cities Biological Diversity Convention in Buenos Aires.

UK National Steps

- 1963
1965
1970 UK Countryside in 1970 Conferences.
- 1980 Secretary of State for the Environment seeks response to World Conservation Strategy.
- 1983 World Wildlife Fund UK, Nature Conservancy Council, Countryside Commission, Countryside Commission for Scotland, The Royal Society of Arts and Council for Environmental Conservation publish 'The Conservation and Development Programme for the UK:
- | | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Industry | Seven Bridges to the Future | Marine | Conservation of Marine and Coastal Resources |
| Urban | The Liveable City | International | Overseas Environmental Policy |
| Rural | Putting Trust in the Countryside | Ethics | Environmental Ethics and Conservation Action. |
| Education | Education for Commitment | | |

- 1990 'This Common Inheritance' Government Environment White Paper.
- 1992 UK Government and UK LGMB adopt Agenda 21.
- 1993 LGMB establish Local Agenda 21 UK and embark on support programme.
- 1994 UK Government launch response to Agenda 21.
UK Strategy for Sustainable Development Biodiversity UK Action Plan.
Sustainable Forestry UK Program
Climate Change UK Programme.
- 1994 Government Panel on Sustainable Development appointed.
Government launch of Going for Green.
- 1995 Transport 'The Way Forward' Green Paper.
Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report.
Environment Act confirms value of National Parks.
- 1996 Sustainable Developments and Shelter: the UK National Report for Habitat II.

Steps taken by the Peak District National Park Authority

- Pre 1991 Integrated Rural Development schemes at Monyash, Longnor, Derwent and Hope Woodlands commenced.
- 1991 Environment Policy Group established.
Internal staff consultation and open days held.
Energy audit at Losehill Hall.
- 1992 Environment Policy Group reformed to include service team consultations based on open days.
Pilot recycling initiatives undertaken.
Village schemes at Kettleshulme and Hope commenced.
Peak Tourism Partnership at Hope Valley and the Roaches initiated.
- 1993/94 Environmental policy adopted in the Structure Plan.
Environment Policy Group Working Party established to implement policy.
Village Scheme at Calver commenced.
- 1994 Members' seminar on Agenda 21.
Recycling systems set up for paper and cans.
Cycles obtained for staff use.
Exhibition at National Parks' Conference.
Staff newsletter on green issues published.
Village scheme at Bamford commenced - young people involved.
Decision to assist TEC with Local Enterprise and Village Economic Regeneration at Eldon and Youlgrave.
- 1995 Decision to set up pilot community Local Agenda 21 Project for Tideswell.
Purchasing Policy adopted.
Environmental Appraisal of Key Structure Plan policies included in Local Plan Framework Consultation.
- 1996 Energy audit and conservation initiatives.
Ranger vehicle fleet renewed: all diesel.
Environmental awareness training for staff.
Environmental audits carried out by Service Teams.
Policy of using white paper instead of coloured adopted.
Solar powered car park machines installed.
Midlands Uplands LEADER programme launched (to promote links between locally based actions for the rural economy)
- 1997 Environment Policy Group agrees its priorities for 1997.
Association of National Park Authorities' statement on Local Agenda 21 and Sustainability adopted.
Chair RTP1 conference on Local Agenda 21 and Planning Systems.
Chair Derbyshire Young People's Environment Conference.
Environmental Appraisal of Local Plan Policies included with Deposit Edition.
Preparatory work for Bio-diversity Action Plan
Tideswell LA21 statement and report published.

RELEVANT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY POLICY STATEMENTS

Policy	Source
<p>Environmental policy</p> <p>The National Park Authority aims to set an example in caring for the environment and avoiding the wasteful use of natural resources.</p> <p>Its first priority is to promote the conservation and enhancement of the living landscape of the Park.</p> <p>When considering the use of resources, it will aim to Reduce, Re-use and Recycle.</p>	<p>Peak National Park Structure Plan 1994: para 2.19 (adopted by former Board)</p>
<p>Purchasing Policy</p> <p>Products and services should be competitively priced, readily available and fit for their intended purposes, bearing in mind health and safety or other legislative requirements.</p> <p>When purchasing products or services, preference will be given to those:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - from suppliers with accredited environmental practices; - that are produced and distributed using resources responsibly, with a minimum of hazardous substances and without testing on animals; - that minimise waste, energy consumption or other adverse environmental impacts in their use and disposal, and - that are produced or made available locally. <p>Where this policy would result in costs more than 10% (or £2,500 in a particular transaction) above those for otherwise satisfactory products, authority to exercise the environmental preference must be given by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the relevant Committee. In all cases, expenditure must be contained within overall budget estimates.</p> <p>Decisions will normally be based on the information made available by suppliers or by the trade and consumer press.</p>	<p>Policy & Finance Committee (October 1995) Minute 114/95 (adopted by former Board)</p>
<p>Use of Coloured Paper</p> <p>That because of environmental and cost benefits, for most purposes the Board should use white recycled or environmentally friendly paper.</p>	<p>Policy & Finance Committee (April 1996) Minute 42/96 (adopted by former Board)</p>
<p>Sustainable Development</p> <p>The importance of protecting our environment and heritage has been emphasised at all levels of government during the last few years. At the 1992 World Environment Conference in Rio de Janeiro, heads of Governments agreed that future development should be “sustainable”. The widely quoted Bruntland Commission definition of sustainable development is that it "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The National Park Authority places this concern in the context of National Park purposes (see paragraphs 1.8 & 1.9) and the need to conserve and enhance the National Parks. It believes that development should not irreversibly damage the local or global environment, or squander non-renewable resources. It should not burden tomorrow's generations with costs and problems that we should meet today.</p>	<p>Peak District National Park Local Plan, Deposit Edition 1997, para 1.18 (adopted by former Board)</p>