Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority **Item 11**

16 December 2025

Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Members of the publication of the Cumbria and North Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) and to seek formal endorsement of the Lancashire LNRS.

Recommendation

2. That the Authority:
    a. approves the publication of the Lancashire LNRS;
    b. notes the wider progress in putting in place the three LNRSs that cover parts of the National Park.

Strategic Framework

3. The information and recommendation contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and support the strategic planning framework, and in particular:

    Action Plan 2025/26
    Support North Yorkshire Council, Westmorland & Furness Council and Lancashire County Council to complete the adoption and publication of the 3 Local Nature Recovery Strategies that will cover the Yorkshire Dales National Park

Background

4. The Government's recently published Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) includes the over-arching goal to restore nature. The Plan sets an interim target of creating or restoring 250,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat outside the SSSI network by 2030.

5. Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) are central to the local delivery of the national EIP targets. They are statutory documents that identify the priorities for nature recovery in each area. The National Park will be covered by three LNRSs – the production of which are being led by Lancashire County Council, North Yorkshire Council and Westmorland and Furness Council (the 'Responsible Authorities').

6. The National Park Authority is a designated 'Supporting Authority' and has been fully involved in the development all three LNRS, using the adopted final version of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Nature Recovery Plan to guide its submission.

7. Each LNRS sets out the Biodiversity Priorities and associated 'Measures' and includes a Local Habitat Map of existing core sites, potential nature recovery areas, and the recommended 'Measures' for those areas. The priority habitats, species and associated objectives for nature recovery in the National Park are now closely aligned with the LNRSs.

8. It is a requirement of the legislation that 'Supporting Authorities' be asked formally for their approval prior to the final publication of the LNRS. The statutory consultation period is only 28 days. So, in December 2024, Members delegated the Director of Conservation and Community – in consultation with the Chair and Member Champion for Natural Environment – to respond.

9. The Cumbria LNRS was the first of the three LNRSs covering the YDNP to be accepted with formal publication due imminently. A launch event was held on Friday 5 December, attended by Mark Corner, Member Champion for the Natural Environment, representing the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

10. Final consultation on the North Yorkshire & York LNRS ended on 5 December. Again, the Authority has confirmed its support for the Strategy. Subject to final approval from all Supporting Authorities, North Yorkshire Council will look to conclude their internal processes as the Responsible Authority and seek to publish the LNRS at the end of January.

Consideration

11. The Lancashire pre-publication review period began on 4 December with the review period extended from the standard 28 days to take into account the Christmas period. The Publication Draft and associated maps are all available to view Lancashire-LNRS-FINAL-version.pdf

12. The Authority has been fully involved in the preparation of the Lancashire LNRS and it reflects the comments made during the process. It is, therefore, recommended that the Authority formally approve its publication.

The Next Stages of Local Nature Recovery Strategies

13. It is expected that all three of the LNRSs covering the YDNP will be published by the end of February.

14. Once published, the Strategies will be used to direct In the North Yorkshire LNRS mapping a significant proportion of the Priority 1 Mapped Measures fall within the YDNP. Of the area of the National Park covered by the Cumbria LNRS, almost all has been identified as either an existing core area or as a priority for nature recovery. It is clear that delivering nature recovery in the YDNP will play a crucial role in

implementation of the LNRSs. Authority officers will continue to positively engage with the Responsible Authorities and other stakeholders to support delivery.

15. It should be noted that the LNRSs are designed to be used by a wide range of stakeholders from individual farmers and landowners looking to support applications for funding, community groups looking to identify priority species to support in their local area, to organisations and partnerships to inspire and inform new landscape scale projects. The Authority will have an important role to engage and work with all of these stakeholders.

16. The LNRSs will be used within the Town and Country Planning system. Local Planning Authorities are required to 'have regard' to LNRS in preparing Local Plans and in determining applications. The LNRS will also steer proposals for offsite Biodiversity Net Gain – incentivising proposals that will restore nature in the identified priority areas.

Financial Implications

17. There is no information on the amount of any additional funding for implementation of the measures identified in LNRSs. However, Defra has confirmed an additional payment to Responsible Authorities for a further year to support the transition from development to delivery of LNRSs. Discussions are ongoing with the three Responsible Authorities about how to deploy this additional funding most effectively.

Legal implications

18. Once published, the Authority is required to have regard to the relevant LNRS when determining planning applications.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

19. None.

Climate Change Implications

20. Delivery of nature recovery objectives will also contribute to climate change mitigation, carbon capture, natural flood management, as well as improving habitat networks and connectivity to make them more resilient to climate change.

Conclusion

21. The completion of the three LNRSs is a significant milestone. It is the result of an incredible amount of work by the three Responsible Authorities and the Supporting Authorities, including YDNPA. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Nature Recovery

Plan has made an important contribution to the three LNRS that cover the YDNP, by setting out the priority habitats and species that are in most need of conserving and setting challenging targets for their recovery. Achieving the objectives and targets listed in this plan will therefore play a crucial role in meeting nature recovery objectives in Cumbria and North Yorkshire, and to a lesser extent, in Lancashire. Sufficient funding for delivery will be crucial to ensure that Protected Landscapes are focal to successful delivery of nature recovery.

Ian Court
Senior Wildlife Conservation Officer

8 December 2025

Background Papers: Update on Local Nature Recovery Strategies 17 December 2024