

# wildwaterforestmountains ennerdale

## Stewardship Plan 2018-2028



The mark of  
responsible forestry

Forestry Commission  
woodlands have  
been certified in  
accordance with the  
rules of the Forest  
Stewardship Council.



National Trust



United  
Utilities



Forestry Commission  
England

NATURAL  
ENGLAND

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## 1.Foreword

“Leave the path of the  
world’s business to go wild  
alone.”

The Brothers, William Wordsworth

Peace, solitude, beauty, wildness, closeness to nature and dynamic landscapes are just some of the qualities special to people which helped form the original concept of ‘Wild Ennerdale’ back in 2002.

The early focus was to move away from a primarily economically driven landscape and seek opportunities where we could do things a little differently; becoming more in tune with the land and enabling nature greater freedom to shape the look, feel and function of the valley. Understanding our starting point was key; an interaction of people and place shaped by the valleys natural assets which has evolved over thousands of years.

The way our changing relationship with the land has created the spectacular landscapes of the Lake District is now recognised by our World Heritage site designation. In Ennerdale that relationship is evidenced by stories that remain through footprints of archaeology still visible and ‘ghosts of our past’ which may not be evident on the surface but delve deeper into the land and the soils too inform us. The charcoal pit-steads, medieval cattle holdings, clearance cairns and Viking longhouses are still visible features to varying degrees. Less so is the story of our wooded landscape; a range of

scrubby, pioneering species that would have formed part of the valley’s structure but have been cleared over time with the ebb and flow of human activity. We get a glimpse of the past and realise the future potential for greater landscape diversity as we shift from intensive management systems to a more natural process led way of managing. The interplay between traditional activities becomes much subtler and delivers an increasingly robust, healthy and thriving place.

Wild Ennerdale is a combined effort. The partners drive the ambition, remain true to large-scale thinking and a joined-up approach. Many others help deliver the vision through practical support, advocacy, challenge and encouragement.

As we see growing interest in the Lake District and wider circles towards a nature- led approach for land management, our vision remains strong and the evidence from this valley of what natural processes can deliver when given a little more freedom is telling.

This stewardship plan is a key focus for guiding our work, enabling the partners to share information with a range of audiences and to maintain and engage with new supporters. This plan also provides a reference for future generations of our aspirations for evolving Ennerdale as a wilder place.

The Wild Ennerdale Partners  
Spring 2018

## 2. The Stewardship Plan

The Stewardship Plan is our core partnership document which helps steer and influence decisions. It represents the day-to-day work and longer term aspirations of the four partners to help deliver a cohesive and effective approach. The plan covers the combined partnership owned land of 4,400 ha (10,872 acres).

The first Stewardship Plan was completed in 2006 to document and share our thinking and practical approaches to enable a more natural process led approach in Ennerdale. It replaced the first Forestry Commission Ennerdale Forest Design Plan from 1996 and saw an important shift from management focused on separate land ownership to a holistic landscape scale plan representing all three major landowners. It has been widely distributed and available on our website over the last decade. This update aims to continue to engage, provide a steer and insight into our plans for the next decade.

The Stewardship Plan is not a typical management plan with prescriptive targets and deadlines. There is no end point. As emphasis is on moving away from 'management' in the traditional, controlling sense, it aims to demonstrate the broader concepts for

change and 'direction of travel' in Ennerdale. Broad levels of detail are provided by themed maps listed in [Appendix 1](#), though any such information should be viewed as indicative of what could happen, not what will, as nature is unpredictable, and our approach is opportunistic as we continue to learn.



### 2.1 The Last Decade

Whilst we are forward thinking over the long term, it's important to look back at our original aims and objectives as a measure of where we are today. In the first plan these were done as a series of statements with associated actions. An overview of how these have been implemented is shown in [Appendix 2](#).

In summary, most of the actions from 2006 have been successfully achieved and we are excited at the way the valley is responding to change. We are particularly pleased with the successful introduction of Galloway cattle and how extensive grazing is influencing habitat change and providing new insights into how farming can play an important role in wilding a landscape. Another highlight has been learning how the River Liza

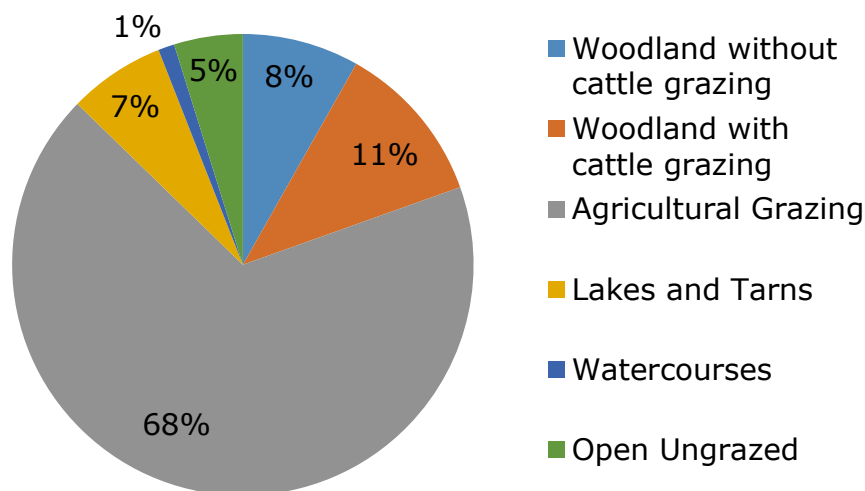
responds in high rainfall events.

This has involved us learning to stand back and let nature operate. In addition we have learnt levels of intervention, in terms of flood mitigation, reduced clean-up costs and broadening our understanding of dynamic river processes.

With the long-term nature of our work, many of the actions remain ongoing and are incorporated into this refreshed plan. A minority of actions have not been met, primarily due to reasons unforeseen at the time of them being set, or due to funding limitations. An example would be the removal of the lakeshore revetment. This had been surveyed in detail in the past and plans drawn up for a phased removal. More recently, the decision by statutory authorities to cease water abstraction and the future likely lowering of the lake level means this action is less of a priority.

## 2.2 Land Use

To help set the context of the more detailed mapping provided by this plan, it's important to have an overview of the land composition in Ennerdale. The valley is often referred to as 'forested', however actual woodland cover only makes up a part (c.19%) of the overall land use and is much less than the general perception. ([Map 12](#))



### Current Percentage Landuse

Over the last decade, the primary land uses of commercial forestry and farming are becoming less controlled by economic outputs and more natural process led. This means more integration between forestry and farming, with commercial crops giving way to natural scrub and woodland regeneration and cattle grazing on some land which hadn't been grazed for over 80 years. This is a significant shift in approach and is starting to influence existing boundaries within the landscape. The pie chart provides a helpful overview, but the lines on it are far from definitive in reality and represents an ever evolving mix of land uses and 'blurring' of traditional boundaries.



### 3. The Partnership

The Wild Ennerdale partnership comprises a team of people and organisations led by the principal landowners in the valley (Map 2). We bring together two government bodies (Forestry Commission & Natural England), a charity (National Trust) and a private utility company (United Utilities). A 'Memorandum of Agreement' provides a framework for cooperation and is signed by each of the Regional Directors.

Beyond the core team, we are supported by other colleagues and partner organisations such as West Cumbria Rivers Trust, Lake District National Park and our Wild Ennerdale volunteers. The volunteers take part in weekly work parties covering a range of practical tasks and monitoring work. Their efforts and skills help deliver a programme of work which would not otherwise be achievable with staff resources alone.

Our ethos is based on the relationship between people and the environment.

#### Our Approach:

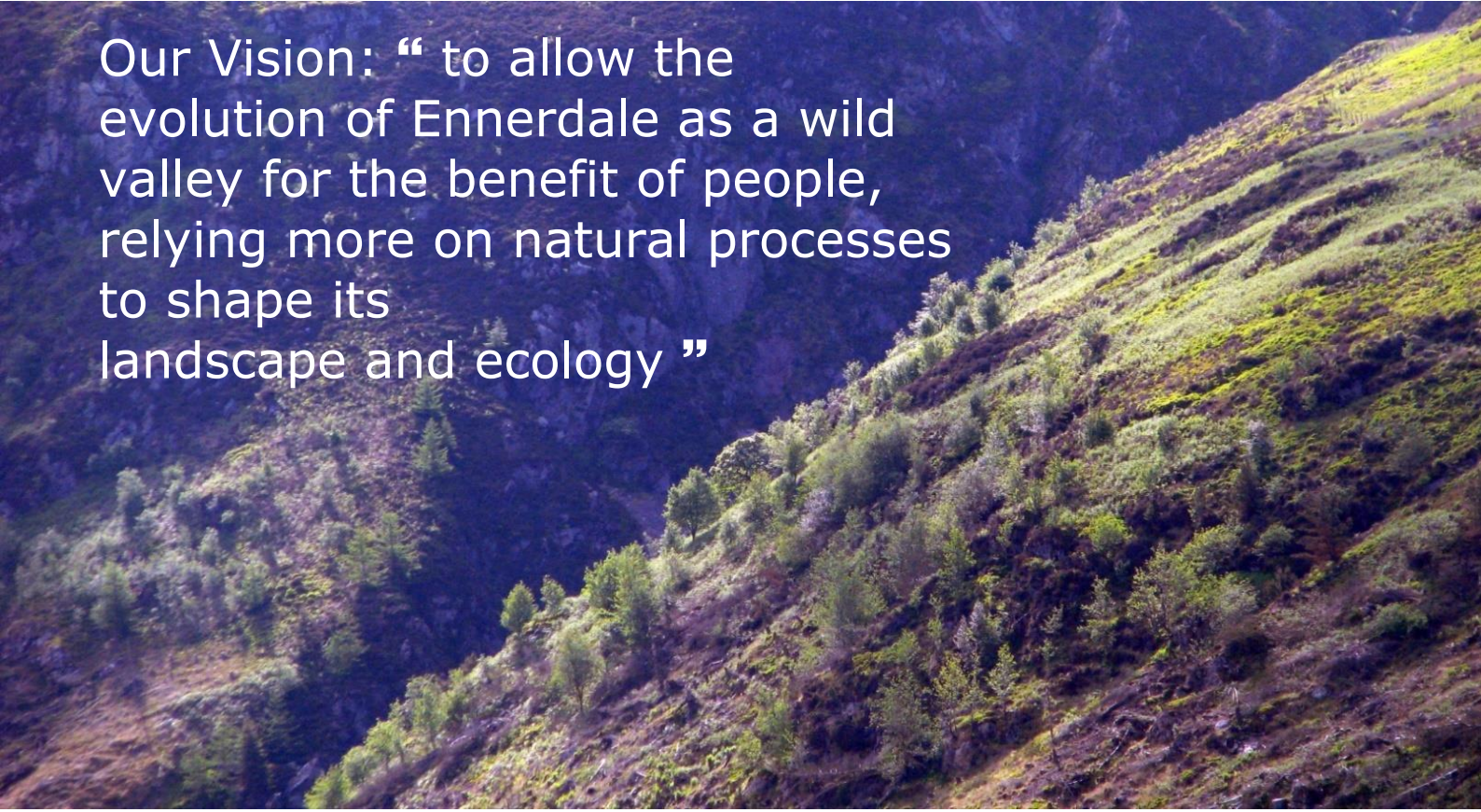
- **Thinking big** > landscape scale
- **Working as one** > beyond ownership & management boundaries
- **Giving nature freedom** > natural processes shaping the landscape
- **Planning long term** > no fixed end point or prescriptive targets
- **Self-sustaining** > low input systems and redirecting existing valley funding

Wild Ennerdale employs a Partnership Officer who along with two representatives from each of the four partner organisations make up the core leadership team. The Partnership team meets formally bi-monthly, along with site visits and regular contact during the working week. This practical, collaborative working over the last decade has been the key driver for change in Ennerdale.

Fundamentally, we believe that by giving nature greater control to shape and evolve the landscape, we put in less but get more in return: healthier ecosystems, new business opportunities, community well-being, recreational and tourism benefits. Ultimately over time, a wilder landscape evolves in which people form an essential part of and gain benefits from.



## 4. Vision & Principles



Our Vision: “ to allow the evolution of Ennerdale as a wild valley for the benefit of people, relying more on natural processes to shape its landscape and ecology ”

Our vision has guided us since 2002 when the partnership was formed. It inspires our thinking and provides a grounding to our decision making. It continues to capture our philosophy and ambition. Supporting the vision are our 14 guiding principles:

- Protect and enhance the sense of wildness
- Give freedom for natural processes to enable more robust, resilient and better functioning ecosystems to develop
- Only intervene where complementary to the vision or where a threat to the vision is posed
- Operate as a partnership in all aspects of decision making, implementation and research proving mutual support across partners
- Celebrate and apply the learning experiences that all partners gain from their involvement
- Promote Wild Ennerdale and its constituent partners' involvement within it
- Focus practical management, monitoring and decision making at a landscape scale using the Stewardship Plan as the main tool for guidance
- Strive to put people at the heart of the environment through public enjoyment, engagement and connection with nature



- Support business opportunities that are appropriate and fitting with our branding and vision
- Promote the management of partner assets within the valley to reflect the vision
- Share information and promote case studies to demonstrate and inspire others, prompting engagement across a wider sphere of influence.



- Promote improved structure and diversity of habitats to sustain healthy wildlife and functioning ecosystems based on the Lawton principles of 'more, bigger, better and joined up'
- Consider, respect and continue to monitor the historical and cultural assets of the valley
- Promote the natural capital approach to further understand the broader value of Wild Ennerdale
- Protect and enhance the distinctive landscape and character of Ennerdale.



## 5. A Special Place

Ennerdale lies in the north-west of Cumbria within the Lake District National Park (Map 1). It narrows from west to east and is surrounded by a dramatic mountain ridgeline. From these summits the mountain becks feed the wild and dynamic River Liza which flows the length of the upper and middle valley and into Ennerdale Water. The high fells are grazed by sheep and an increasing number of hardy cattle which also roam much of the extensive forest and valley bottom. The mountains at the western end give way to pastoral farmland then out to the Cumbrian coast. Visitor numbers are lower than neighbouring valleys, primarily due to the remote location, restricted vehicle access and limited tourist facilities (Map 3).

This most remote of all the Lakeland valleys has a distinctive character all of its own. There's a hint of Scottish ruggedness, gleaned from the wild nature and freedom of expression of the valley. The combined assets of mountains, rivers, forest and lake offer fantastic opportunities for nature, landscape and people.

### 5.1 Designated land

Sitting within the Lake District National Park, the significance of Ennerdale in wildlife, cultural and ecological terms is reflected by the amount of land designated which influences our

ambitions and management approaches as custodians (Map 5).

The valley is home to a wide range of habitats (over 70 National Vegetation Classification types recognised) which reflect the range in altitude from 100 metres beside the lake to nearly 900 metres on the mountain summits. Over 40% of the valley is protected as Sites of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

“what a  
wonderful and  
exciting place  
its going to be,  
its going to be  
unique in the  
United  
Kingdom”

Sir Chris Bonington  
Mountaineer, 2013

The historical record indicates the landscape has been influenced by the ebb and flow of people and communities for over 3,500 years. Through a series of archaeological surveys commissioned by the partners, over 500 individual sites have been identified and recorded and led to an archaeological management plan being produced in 2007. This plan was updated in 2015 to include 14 scheduled ancient monuments and continues to provide a focus for observing, recording and

actively managing key archaeological sites. (Map 6) Ennerdale's rich historical record sets it apart as the best example of a settled medieval valley in the Lake District. In addition Ennerdale lies within the Lake District World Heritage Site which was confirmed in July 2017. The inscription document recognises Ennerdale as a separate valley which contributes significantly towards the third Outstanding Universal Value of Conservation.

Geology plays a key part within the valley's character in a national, regional and local context. The iconic Pillar Rock

is an imposing buttress from which early rock climbing pioneers took inspiration from the towering pinnacles and challenging crags. The rocky outcrop of Bowness Knott is a SSSI and the glacial moraines at the valley head beyond Black Sail YHA together with the Liza Delta form important Local Geological Sites (LGS).

## 5.2 Wildlife

A natural process led landscape scale approach is increasingly recognised as being of benefit to wildlife offering a greater range of habitats and vegetation structure across a better connected area. We are on this journey within the partnership and are starting to see some real tangible evidence of our early decisions.

Whilst not becoming too 'species focused' with our management, we continue to intervene where a need is identified to help protect and expand missing or struggling species. The rare Arctic Char in Ennerdale Water, juniper, the (once extinct) Marsh Fritillary butterfly and the iconic Red Squirrel are key species which have had focused resource over the last decade to help boost numbers, expand suitable habitats and protect from threats such as the invasive non-native grey squirrel.

Our ambition over the next decade is to continue to monitor and intervene where appropriate to a point where species become self-sustaining.

The top-predator discussions often associated with rewilding is not something we are actively engaged with. We are however considering and developing our understanding of the benefits of the native Pine Marten for nature conservation and how research

is demonstrating the benefits to Red Squirrels.

Ennerdale is a special place. Whatever our associations are with the valley, the combined elements within the landscape offer great insights into the past and unique opportunities for the future.





## 6. Natural Processes

We often refer to Wild Ennerdale as a 'natural process led approach' and the term is featured in our vision.

A natural process is defined as "existing in or produced by nature rather than by the intent of human beings". Examples of natural processes in Ennerdale could be the slow movement of water down the river to the lake, or the growth of natural vegetation or the storage of carbon in woodland soils.

The landscape is influenced by natural geological features of which Ennerdale has an impressive array. The very nature of the high imposing ridgeline, the iconic Pillar Rock and scree slopes add to the sense of place for Ennerdale. Less obvious are the geological 'footprints' within the landscape which can provide a fascinating story of our ever evolving landscape from the last ice age to the present; valley head moraines, old river terraces, River Liza delta, alluvial fans being just some examples of natural processes at work.

By promoting and supporting natural processes we can restore healthy functioning ecosystems and maximise the public benefits that we freely gain from the natural environment. These public benefits are sometimes called "ecosystem services". Examples would be the supply of clean water, the protection against flooding that a catchment provides, provision of food or recreation or spiritual refreshment.

For Wild Ennerdale, we associate the terms 'wilding' and 'natural processes' as being core to our ethos and approach. We recognise that we have a landscape shaped by people over

"Nature is ever at work building and pulling down, creating and destroying, keeping everything whirling and flowing, allowing no rest but in rhythmical motion,."

John Muir

thousands of years and that our ecological baseline is influenced heavily by more recent economic activity such as sheep grazing and commercial forestry.

The words 'natural' and 'wild' are not used in an ecologically pure way rather to describe a philosophical approach to managing the valley encompassing two key areas:

- The degree to which natural processes influence the environment (physical attributes)
- The sense of wildness which people experience (emotive reactions)

For us as a partnership, 'wilding' is a process of change that involves reducing the intensity and type of human intervention and allowing natural processes greater freedom to operate. This will bring greater public benefits including enhancing people's experiences when visiting the valley. Through this approach there is also an opportunity to create a landscape that is resilient to flooding, future changes in climate and the threat of pest and disease.

## Case Study: Cattle Grazing in the valley



In 2007, together with a local farmer we started grazing the valley in a different way- using black Galloway cattle in small numbers and year round. This was led by consideration of a more natural way of grazing rather than that of the prevailing farming activity. Natural grazing would have been dominated by large native herbivores such as Red Deer, Aurochs or European Bison. All three of these species can cause disturbance – creating a varied sward and hoof-print niches for tree seedlings to regenerate within. The change has allowed a more diverse and rougher sward to develop, more space for flowers and tree seedlings. The cattle behave in a way closer to natural grazing- they move about the valley looking for good grazing and shelter from heat or cold. The grazing has provided ideal conditions for Marsh Fritillary butterflies which are thriving, created colourful species-rich pastures and scrubby woodland edge full of birds. The naturalistic grazing has helped blur the boundary between woodlands and fields, forest and farming, creating softer boundaries which are great for wildlife and visually attractive.

## Case Study: Woundell Beck Bridge



In 2011 we removed and rebuilt a bridge over the Woundell beck – one of the tributaries to the River Liza. This was a decision based on understanding and restoring natural process. The existing bridge with its narrow pipe design (see pipes below excavator in image) prevented the natural process of gravel movement downstream. This led to gravel build up on the upstream side of the bridge. There was a maintenance cost to clear this gravel but in addition the pipe bridge design prevented salmon migration. The fish could not navigate the narrow pipes and were therefore not spawning in the upper reaches of these quiet tributaries. Understanding the natural processes- the transport of gravel in the river and the migration of fish led us to re-build a bridge that spanned the whole river and restored the natural processes. In the Autumn following bridge replacement, salmon spawned for several miles upstream of the bridge. Restoring the natural movement of gravel also appears to have helped restore natural river gravel banks, the spawning grounds of Arctic Charr in Charr Dub further down the River Liza.



## 7. Wilder for People, Nature and Business

The terms 'wilding', 'wild land' and 'rewilding' are becoming more commonly used in relation to how and why we look after land. This has brought about a raised profile on the subject, prompted more debate and is increased public understanding and enthusiasm. Counter to that, there is a feeling of unease, misunderstanding and on occasions misinterpretation of what 'wilding/rewilding' is.

demonstrate and advise how land can be managed more sensitively and in harmony with nature to deliver greater public goods within and beyond our own boundary of Ennerdale.

Rewilding Britain defines rewilding as: "The large-scale restoration of ecosystems where nature can take care of itself. It seeks to reinstate natural processes and, where appropriate, missing species – allowing them to shape the landscape and the habitats within. Rewilding encourages a balance between people and the rest of nature



It is not the remit of the Wild Ennerdale partnership to define 'rewilding'. In our vision however, we describe Ennerdale as an evolving wild place, thus a clear statement of intent. We can and do have the ability and knowledge (based on over a decade of working) to

where each can thrive. It provides opportunities for communities to diversify and create nature-based economies; for living systems to provide the ecological functions on which we all depend; and for people to re-connect with wild nature".<sup>1</sup>



Since the outset of Wild Ennerdale, we've use the term 'wild' to describe the qualities people value most about the place (Spirit of Place) along with our natural process led approach and both sit comfortably with the Rewilding Britain definition. It doesn't mean retreating from the landscape, alienating people or (for Ennerdale) introducing top predators such as Lynx and Wolves. It does mean working together across boundaries, with a more observant outlook on creating opportunities for nature to deliver an increasingly resilient, varied, healthy and better functioning landscape.

For almost 20 years, the Scottish Government has formerly recognised the importance of wild land as a valid form of land use and incorporated it into planning frameworks and policy statements. In addition, the work of the John Muir Trust advocates the protection of wild land and its value to people.

process has been carried out in Ennerdale with four 'wild zones' identified within the valley, each reflecting different characteristics and our associated ways of working ([Maps 15 - 19](#)). Beyond the UK, the wilding momentum is growing with individual projects, partnerships and membership forums sharing experiences and knowledge on various nature-led approaches. One such example is the European Rewilding Network<sup>iii</sup> of which Wild Ennerdale is excited to have become a member in 2017.

## 7.1 Wilder for People

Wild land can provide multiple benefits for people. Nature delivers our life essentials of clean water, air and food and wild places are valued for recreation, spiritual refreshment, personal challenge and adventure. Experiencing nature first hand can develop an understanding, appreciation



The John Muir Trust and Wildland Research Institute<sup>ii</sup> have mapped areas of wild land across Scotland. A similar

and respect for wild land which can last a lifetime. As people experience what wild land means to them, the more they



connect and become part of the natural systems.

There is increasing awareness amongst landowners and government of the benefits of 'natural capital' for public gain. Organisations such as Forest Enterprise England (FEE) and National Trust are proactively developing methods for natural capital accounting.

Forest Enterprise England describes 'Natural Capital' as: "The stock of natural assets upon which our economy and society is built. Natural capital produces value for people in the form of 'goods' such as timber or minerals and 'services' such as climate regulation and air purification. Sometimes humans need to intervene to realise the benefits but in other instances production is simply the result of natural capital combining with natural processes.

'Natural Capital Accounting' provides: "A structured and transparent way of quantifying the full value of the services provided by the natural assets in FEE's care and the impact of FEE's management of them. The account reflects both value to the organisation (private value) and wider society (external value), providing a broader perspective compared to financial".<sup>iv</sup>

For Wild Ennerdale, we want to do more over the coming years to understand what the land is delivering for us and

how to put a value on it through the 'Natural Capital' approach which is otherwise not captured in traditional financial accounting. It is clear simply through the power of observation, for example, that the River Liza does much more than just move water downstream. It connects with the land (across a huge floodplain), drops bedload and materials, shifts channels, provides habitat and helps prevent flooding downstream. This is not captured in financial terms at present, particularly in relation to events such as Storm Desmond in 2015 and the £1.3 billion<sup>v</sup> insurance bill, along with massive infrastructure clean-up/replacement costs to roads, paths, bridges etc.



Understanding the natural capital for Ennerdale will, we hope, help us share the benefits of our approach to land management more widely.

## 7.2 Wilder for Nature

Nature needs space and freedom. The landscape of Ennerdale offers a wealth of diversity and beauty which has been shaped by human activity over thousands of years. This also brings with it control and boundaries. Grazing animals, woodland expansion, river systems, wildlife corridors, water catchments, lake ecosystems are just some of the processes influenced by how we manage the landscape. As natural processes are given greater freedom to operate, how and to what extent they influence the landscape can be difficult to predict. For Ennerdale, shifting away from management boundaries and enabling nature more freedom is already resulting in more varied and natural transition zones between the forest and fell, where wind and water erosion, vegetation succession, river dynamics and the impact of grazing animals, native flora and fauna are increasingly important components in the valley.

For wildlife, more connectivity of habitats influenced by natural processes are starting to bring positive results. This approach was reinforced by the launch in September 2010 of Sir John Lawton's White Paper 'Making Space for Nature' in which he states: "There is compelling evidence that England's collection of wildlife sites are generally too small and too isolated, leading to declines in many of England's characteristic species. With climate change, the situation is likely to get worse.<sup>vi</sup>



The paper was summarised with what needed to be done in four key words: "More, Bigger, Better and Joined."

Intervention is playing a part in helping to maintain and restore healthy populations in a number of species in Ennerdale (Map 5). **Devils bit scabious** is one of the many plant

species to benefit from the change in valley bottom grazing from intensive sheep to extensive cattle. This plant is regenerating and expanding up and down the wetter valley bottom fields and river Liza corridor. This plant is the food plant for the **Marsh Fritillary** butterfly which became extinct in the valley many decades ago. Led by Butterfly Conservation we re-introduced this species in 2007. Now seven colonies are established across the valley. The population numbers enough to withstand extreme weather events and the Gillerthwaite population is now self-managing and expanding with no additional habitat management required. It is now the largest and healthiest population in England and contributing to the spread of this



butterfly across to the West Cumbrian coast.

**Red Squirrels** have been supported by a monitoring and trapping programme in started in 2011 and continues to work across the valley and support local community action. The population is considered healthy, but the presence of Grey squirrels continues to pose a constant threat.

England's largest **freshwater mussel** population can be found in the upper 3km of the river Ehen immediately downstream of Ennerdale Water. Whilst the population is

and to improve water supply resilience Ennerdale Water will hopefully be restored as a natural lake in the near future. This will provide the opportunity to create new lakeshore habitats as the lake level lowers.

Whilst actively targeting resources for some species, our approach is centred on delivering the Lawton principle of 'bigger, better, more and joined' across the whole valley, bringing multiple benefits for wildlife and nature.

Wild Ennerdale will continue to explore opportunities to reintroduce missing and support struggling species, so they become self-reliant and add to the valleys natural processes.



surviving it is not healthy and is not recruiting sufficiently to ensure its future survival. The Wild Ennerdale Partnership has been supporting an ongoing project led by United Utilities, West Cumbria Rivers Trust, Natural England and the Environment Agency to protect and restore the population. This has included incorporating a new area of land, purchase by United Utilities, into Wild Ennerdale. As part of the freshwater mussel restoration works

Following a long period of monitoring **Pine marten** have been confirmed as not present in Ennerdale. Evidence from the Vincent Wildlife Trust's successful reintroduction in Wales shows that released Pine Martens travel many miles before

settling in one place. Recently published work from Scotland shows that there is strong evidence to show how native Pine marten recovery reverses the decline of the red squirrel by suppressing grey squirrel populations.<sup>vii</sup> There is a desire within the partnership to explore the feasibility of a re-introduction but also recognition that such a project would need to be Cumbria wide.





The **Arctic Char** population in the lake was at serious risk. Over a five-year period, an off-site breeding programme was led by the Environment Agency to boost young juvenile fish numbers and ultimately restore a viable breeding population of this unique fish back to Ennerdale Water. The Forestry Commission replaced a forest road bridge with a single span bridleway bridge to kick start natural gravel flow and increase opportunities for spawning. Together these actions have seen Arctic charr spawning increase from a handful of individuals to over 300 in just a few years.

We monitor annually the health of a few remnant old **Juniper** bushes in the valley. The name Ennerdale is old Norse and can be translated as Juniper Valley. The Forestry Commission's ecological site classification software suggests that Juniper is a very suitable habitat for much of the south-facing valley slopes. In response to this the partnership has planted over 10,000 juniper across the valley. Many are now established and slowly restoring this missing habitat.





## 7.3 Wilder for Business

Wild land can be a marketing tool, mechanism for investment and an asset to business. We are aware of wild places abroad through media and travel, but perhaps less so of the economic benefits of wild land in Britain. The Lake District is world renowned for its natural beauty, attracting 18.4 million visitors annually and supporting a wide range of livelihoods. Whilst recognised as a cultural landscape, the Lake District also offers raw nature, rugged and dynamic scenery where the human experience is more towards self-

livelihoods become more sustained by greater involvement of a whole valley rather than its parts.

Farming and land management opportunities are changing as there is a move towards more environmental stewardship and different approaches to grazing the open fells and valley bottoms. The emphasis on natural processes, landscape scale approaches and ecosystem services may not be a formally recognised 'land use' as such, but this shift compliments the ethos of allowing nature more freedom.

'Wild Ennerdale' is now a brand used by local business and community enterprises and enables people to promote the valley and help sustain livelihoods in ways which are not only in keeping with, but also enhance the valley's special qualities. A broader cross-section of local people now has a greater sense

The Wild Ennerdale Partnership has supported the development of The Gather Café, shop and meeting rooms. The Partners have helped with project development, provision of the site at a peppercorn lease and helped design and fund the visitor interpretation



exploration and challenge. The tourism industry is increasingly marketing wild places; wild camping, wild swimming, wild sporting events, wild walks and wild scenery are just some examples.

We tend to think of livelihoods in terms of professions and economic outputs (e.g. farming & forestry). Wild Ennerdale is starting to demonstrate that as land use becomes more integrated, so is our thinking and

of involvement in its future.

The Wild Ennerdale Partnership will continue to work with local business and community to explore how a wilder valley can support business enterprise which fits with our vision and principals.

## 8. Links to Other Plans

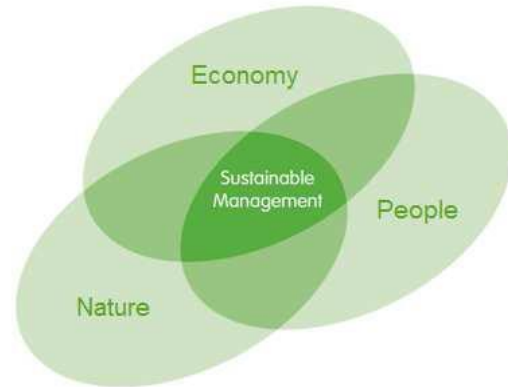
The Stewardship Plan is focussed on the land within the Wild Ennerdale boundary. It is both a practical tool for delivering work but also to motivate and inspire future ambitions and opportunities. Compliance is an important element, respecting the many designations that exist within the overall land holding. To do that successfully the plan must relate to other relevant areas of work, whether within our own partner organisations or wider. The following sections are not an exhaustive list but capture the key documents which help steer our work.

### 8.1 Forest Design Plan



The Strategic Plan for the Public Forest Estate (PFE) in England<sup>ix</sup> outlines the delivery of forest policy at a national level. North England Forest District (NEFD) is the management unit responsible for the public forest estate in Northern England. This is an extensive area encompassing 9 county or unitary authority areas from the Scottish border south to Durham and Lancashire ([Appendix 3](#)).

North England Forest District encompasses 62 separate forests (of which Ennerdale is one) and their management is covered by individual ten-year forest plans that identify local issues and the broad management of the woods. These plans and their associated forest operations ensure that



produce from the woodlands is endorsed by the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification™ (PEFC™). These confirm that the forest management meets the requirements of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and the UK Forest Standard (UKFS).

Individual Forest Plans aim to deliver a range of public benefits with achievable objectives that deliver the three drivers of sustainable land management outlined in the North England Forest District Strategy.

In 2006, the Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan replaced the existing Ennerdale Forest Design Plan. This was a milestone in recognising a shift in ways of working from an economically driven commercially forested landscape, towards a more holistic approach where multiple public benefits were the key drivers, delivered more by natural processes. This management approach continues through this revised stewardship plan for the next 10 year period.



## 8.2 Sustainable Land Management



The current National Trust strategy 'Playing Our Part' (2015 – 2025) reads: "Our 21st century ambition is to meet the needs of an environment under pressure, and the challenges and expectations of a fast-moving world. We want to continue to maintain the highest standards of care for everything we look after, while working in a way that feels relevant and necessary to people and their day-to-day lives".



There are four overarching themes to deliver the ambition:

- Looking after what we've got
- Experiences that move, teach and inspire
- Restoring a healthy, beautiful, natural environment
- Looking after the places where people live

The 'Land, Outdoors and Nature (LON) programme' is a delivery tool to make better land choices which will directly support the 2025 strategy. There are six 'functions of land' to guide management and assessments of land condition:

As a minimum, all National Trust land should be classified as being in 'good' condition. The ambition however is to nurture the land to a much higher quality of state, encompassing all six functions to their optimum. That's not to say every land function delivering 100% all the time, but by reaching a balance which is appropriate to each site.

Within the Lake District, there is a focussed effort to assess the functions and condition of National Trust land, recognising each place has its own distinctiveness. Then making practical and informed decisions about how and where to change management (if appropriate) to best deliver the LON programme. The Sustainable Land Management (SLM) tool is the mechanism for doing this and involves three sources of information and guidance:

- Mapping tools
- Local staff and partner knowledge
- Farm tenant's meetings

The data-sets present a suite of information on production, water cycling, carbon storage, biodiversity, landscape & cultural history, recreation & inspiration along with an overall ambitions map for the next 50 years. Unique for Ennerdale, the SLM process has been carried out at a landscape scale (beyond National Trust ownership) to reflect the partnership working and vision ([Appendix 4](#)).

In addition to the wider national strategy focus and land condition assessments through SLM in the Lake District, the North Lakes Business Plan and Estate Management Plans are two relevant documents for Ennerdale.

Both documents set out the Trust's ambition for Ennerdale, with the Estate Management Plan's focus on improving the condition of priority habitat and tenanted farm land over the next 7-10 years. In writing the EMP, the Trust has used the Stewardship Plan as the key reference document, ensuring that the practical actions proposed within it support those of the Wild Ennerdale Plan.

### 8.3 Historic Landscape Management Plan

In the early years of the partnership, resources were put in to increase our understanding of the archaeology and cultural narrative of the valley. We have over 500 individually listed archaeological sites along with associated descriptions and management recommendations.

At a practical level, discussions have focussed on those sites which have the greatest importance for their setting, both in a national and local context ([Map 6](#)). Through advice from archaeologists from National Trust, Lake District National Park and Historic England, a Historic Landscape Management Plan was produced in 2007 for 14 key sites (featuring multiple archaeological features) within the Wild Ennerdale boundary. This was revised in 2015 to include new

scheduled sites and will be reviewed again in 2020.

### 8.4 World Heritage Site



Ennerdale sits within the Lake District World Heritage Site following the announcement in July 2017 that the Lake District had been successful in its UNESCO bid for Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) as a 'cultural landscape'. Identity, Inspiration and Conservation are the three key elements of the designation and the Lake District is well recognised as the birthplace of the global conservation movement which helped create National Parks and the National Trust over 120 years ago. This designation gives us a unique opportunity to celebrate the relationship between people and the land as it has evolved over thousands of years. It also allows us to demonstrate at a practical level how activities such as farming and forestry, that have been prominent in shaping the landscape we see today, can become more integrated across a



large area to deliver greater public benefits.

Ennerdale forms one of the 13 valley plans contained within the World Heritage designation. The introductory paragraph describes the valley as:

“Though much modified by human activity in the form of forestry, water extraction and farming, it is the large scale of its natural features that impose themselves and create an overriding sense of isolation, wildness and tranquillity”.

Followed by this final summary:

Ennerdale continues to play an important part in the development of conservation practice in the Lake District through the Wild Ennerdale project<sup>xx</sup>

The Cultural Landscape Map shows the significance of attributes from the World Heritage Site along with a table ranking significance ([Appendix 5](#)). For Ennerdale the ‘components of attributes’ with the highest rankings are:

- Conservation movement

- Opportunities for quiet and spiritual refreshment
- Extraordinary beauty and harmony
- Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture
- Common land (none within the Wild Ennerdale boundary)

These attributes and their significance within the landscape compliment the vision and guiding principles of our stewardship plan.

## 8.4 Lake District Partnership Plan

National Park Authorities have a statutory responsibility to prepare a Management Plan for a National Park. Management Plans identify Special Qualities of National Parks, which are the focus of conservation. The Lake District Partnership, comprised of representatives of key stakeholders in the Park, was formed in 2006, to guide the development and implementation of the Management Plan, now known as the ‘Partnership Plan’. The most recent Plan, adopted in December 2015 (to cover the period to 2020), addresses the additional responsibilities imposed by World Heritage Inscription. Its approach to management is based upon understanding the individual characteristics of the thirteen valleys of the Lake District, (one of which is Ennerdale). The stated purpose of the current plan is to:

- Explain the reasons for the Lake District’s potential inscription as a World Heritage Site.
- Describe the extent and diversity of the Lake District, highlighting key features.
- Define how we will protect the Outstanding Universal Value

through conserving the attributes and Special Qualities of the Lake District Outstanding Universal Value.

- Explain how we will strategically manage the Lake District to deliver the Vision, meeting the purposes of World Heritage Site and National Park designation.
- Describe how we will present and transmit the Lake District so people are aware - and understand the importance - of the Lake District.

The Plan goes on to outline a Vision for the National Park:

"The 2030 Vision for the English Lake District is that it will be: An inspirational example of sustainable development in action. A place where its prosperous economy, world class visitor experiences and vibrant communities come together to sustain the spectacular landscape, its wildlife and cultural heritage. Local people, visitors, and the many organisations working in the Lake District or have a contribution to make to it, must be united in achieving this."

## 8.5 Lake District Local Plan

The planning policy applicable to Wild Ennerdale is outlined in the Lake District Local Plan, prepared by the Lake District National Park Authority. The Local Plan is a statutory document which all planning authorities must put in place for their areas. The Plan sets out planning policies which are used to guide development decisions. It also sets out the strategic priorities for achieving sustainable development over the Plan period, which is typically 15

years (although they are reviewed more frequently - generally every five years).

The current Lake District Local Plan comprises a number of documents, centred around the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2010. It is in the process of being replaced by a new Local Plan. The new Local Plan will go through a number of public consultation stages before being adopted in 2019.

The emerging Local Plan is built upon a number of Strategic Objectives (derived from the Partnership Plan Vision), which reflect the importance of conserving the world class natural and cultural heritage assets for which the Lake District is renowned, but also recognise the need for change and adaptation, in the face of a changing environment, economy and society. The Local Plan allows for change in order to support a more sustainable approach to land management and spatial planning (including an ecosystems services approach), and supports diversification.

Both the existing Core Strategy and new Local Plan are based on an understanding of the environmental capacity of the Lake District. Many policies, which cover topics including biodiversity, and protection of cultural heritage, are of direct relevance to Wild Ennerdale. Ennerdale falls within the 'West Distinctive Area' identified by the LDNPA, wherein approximately 10% of all development in the Park is expected to take place, principally in the main towns of Gosforth and Bootle.



## 8.6 Lake District Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)

The Local Plan refers to the Lake District Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). The LCA was originally published in 2008, and is also currently in the process of being updated. The LCA is used to guide both planning and land management decisions, and has been adopted as planning guidance in its own right by the LDNPA. The LCA divides the National Park into 'Landscape Character Types' and 'Areas of Distinctive Character', based on an understanding of local character – including topography, geology, biodiversity, land cover and use, and cultural heritage. The boundary for ADC 21 'Ennerdale' closely correlates with the Wild Ennerdale boundary.

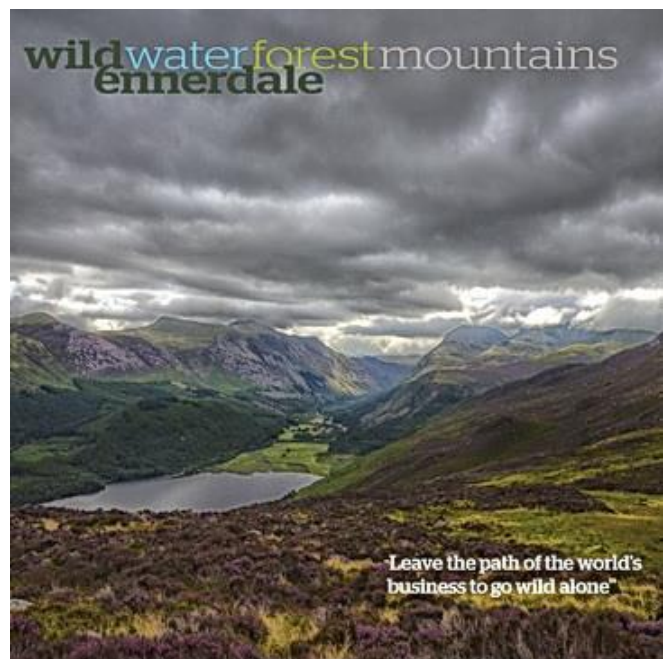
Guidelines for managing landscape change in ADC 21 include:

- Encourage low intervention management on the River Liza and Ehen and mitigate any impacts from farming and forestry activity, especially on pearl mussel and fish populations.
- Retain dispersed and small scale settlement pattern, consisting of the small village of Ennerdale and scattered farmsteads.
- Enhance the sense of wildness in the valley and enable natural processes to play a greater role in the development of a more diverse and dynamic landscape.
- Protect the incredibly strong sense of isolation and tranquillity, particularly at the lakeshore and throughout most of the area.

- Protect dramatic open views to the surrounding peaks of Great Gable, Steeple and Pillar, which contribute to recognisable sense of place, from interruption from tall vertical or large-scale developments.
- Maintain rural and undeveloped character.

## 8.7 Spirit of Place

The connections between people and the land are captured in our 'Spirit of Place' document which provides an insight into what's special about the valley and how we relate to it.



Facilitated by the National Trust our Spirit of Place process involved a 'journey of discovery' for all involved, making us think differently about the place we live, work and visit. It captures the emotions of people and identifies what is unique, cherished and distinctive. This ultimately influences our more practical approaches to management and ensures that our actions nurture the essence of this

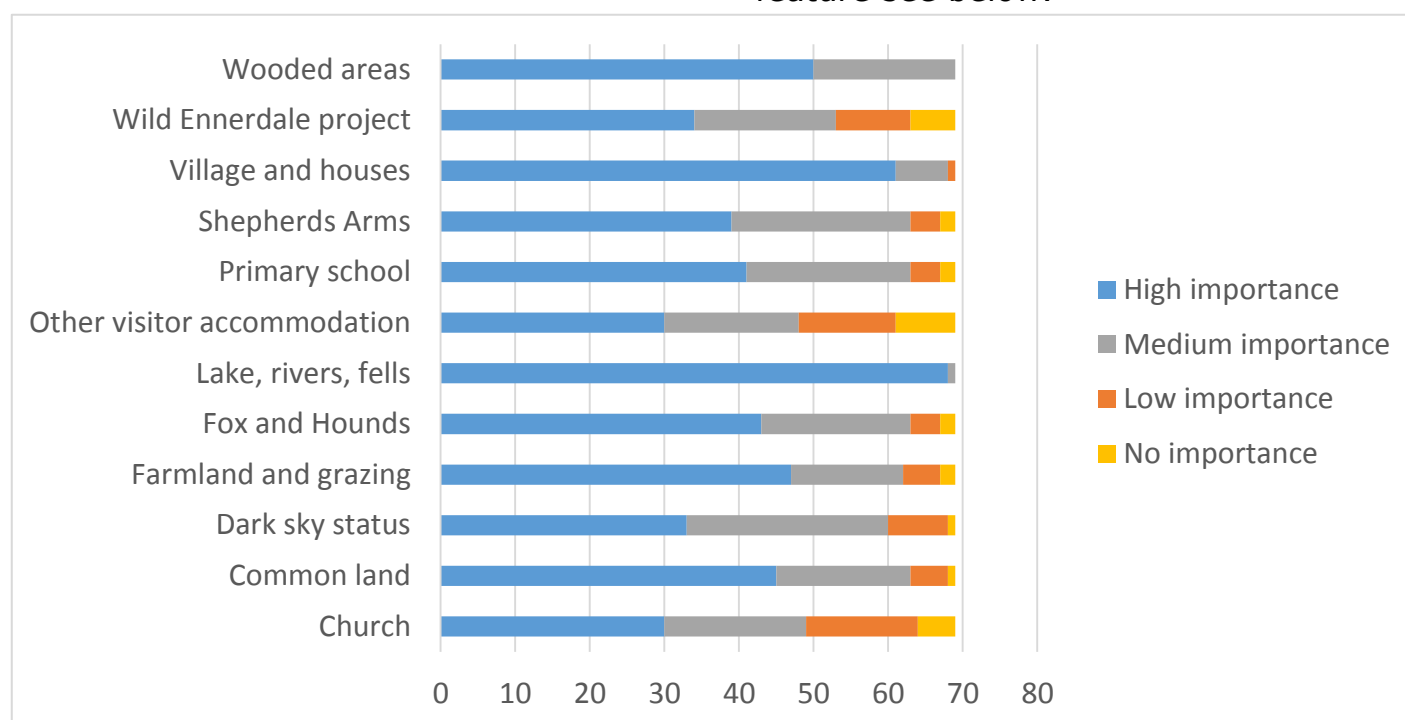
document. The Spirit of Place process was a key experience for all the partners in Wild Ennerdale. The final document is published in booklet form and online.

## 8.8 Ennerdale & Kinniside Community Led Plan

The parish of Ennerdale covers an area of 8,763 hectares (21,653 acres), all within the Lake District National Park. Wild Ennerdale sits within the Parish boundary along with a large area of Common land (National Trust) to the south ([Appendix 6](#)).

The Plan has been developed from a consultation process involving community events and a household questionnaire. A planning group was formed comprising members from the Parish Council and local community representing various interests such as tourism, farming and Wild Ennerdale. A total of 165 questionnaires were delivered with 69 returned (42%).

The Plan posed questions under a number of themed heading of which Section 4.1 'Character & Landscape' is most relevant to the Stewardship Plan. Residents were asked to rank features in terms of value and importance to them. Wild Ennerdale was listed as a feature see below.



The Ennerdale & Kinniside Community Led Plan (CLP)<sup>xi</sup> was produced in August 2017. It provides a framework for planning, budgeting and other areas of responsibility which lie with Parish Councils. It is also a channel for engaging on issues with higher tiers of government and other bodies as appropriate.

From the replies, 77% of residents rated Wild Ennerdale as being of high or medium importance. Ratings (high/medium importance) for other listed features relevant for Wild Ennerdale include 'Wooded Areas' (100%), 'Lakes, Rivers, Fells' (99%) and 'Farmland & grazing' (89%). This feedback provides a helpful steer on our



management of these features which form a significant part of Wild Ennerdale.

The Parish Council and Wild Ennerdale will continue to work together on a wide range of themes which support both the Community Led Plan and the Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan. The main channels of dialogue are through Parish Council meetings and Wild Ennerdale partner meetings. The Wild Ennerdale Partnership Officer and a nominated Parish Council member attend alternate meetings of each other's organisations.



## 9. Looking Ahead

As we continue our work into the next decade of Wild Ennerdale, we look back at our journey so far and consider the future with enthusiasm and ambition.

The next 10 years will bring significant change both in Ennerdale and the wider Lakes: agricultural reform through Brexit being key, Ennerdale Water returning to a natural lake and a changing valley head through woodland planting. Working alongside such changes are those processes that are operating day-to-day and form part of the fabric of Ennerdale; from the Arctic char in the deep cold waters of the lake to the fragile specialist mountain flora on the highest summits.

The inscription of the English Lake District as a World Heritage Site adds further context, opportunity and prestige for us. Wild Ennerdale is a unique and fascinating element of the third theme of the "Outstanding Universal Value" of the Cultural Landscape inasmuch as it continues the tradition of the Lake District being a place where ideas and conversations about the conservation of landscapes take place. We are the perfect place to explore such areas as how landscapes can deliver public benefits, and the cultural and social importance of wild places and access to nature. We will test new models and approaches to conservation, based on high levels of research and documentation, and with high levels of academic input (ecological, geomorphological, sociological and literary). If the Lakes as a whole are an "evolving masterpiece" then in Wild Ennerdale we have the opportunity for us to be right at the cutting edge of how landscape

conservation continues to evolve, and to talk openly about what that means and the challenges, debates, values and viewpoints involved.

Our vision and guiding principles steer how we implement and manage change. This plan provides a broad overview of our ambitions and thinking at this time. It doesn't try and describe the detail, much of which we hope will be left increasingly to natural processes to deliver. We have tried to capture the main issues and opportunities facing the valley into the future in the Valley Zone Maps ([Maps 13 to 17](#)).

So that this plan can deliver the approvals needed for tree felling and restocking across the valley the suite of maps in [Appendix 1](#) is completed with Future Woodland Management and Future Woodland Species maps ([Maps 18 and 19](#)). The last map is very much an interpretation of how the valley may look many decades into the future.

We have identified that we need to do more to make a natural process led approach more tangible. We need to understand our inputs across the whole partnership area, whether through forest management, farming or recreation for example and quantify outputs not just in traditional economic terms but also in added value to society (Natural Capital). This then provides a sounder platform to promote our approach.

We are also clear that we need to be more pro-active in generating funds to support our work. Our core annual spend is low for Wild Ennerdale but



there are opportunities to support our vision which would benefit from investment. Improving access infrastructure, sensitive eco-tourism opportunities and increasing our team capacity are some examples.

Our 'future natural', long-term approach has been core to our success to date. We will continue to embrace opportunities as they arise over the next decade, with the landscape of Ennerdale being the inspiration and driver.

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#### [The Wild Ennerdale Partnership](#)

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