



People

People

Residents

The South West Peak comprises all or part of some 35 parishes or wards; 17 of those have more than 80% of their parish within the area. Despite the large number of parishes in the LPS area, the resident population is fairly low and highly dispersed. Whilst there are few centres of population there is a strong sense of community, particularly in subdivisions of the area like the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Taking figures from the 2011 census and adjusting for proportion of residential part of parish/ward within the South West Peak LPS area we can give a very close estimate of a resident population of 12,814 people. Some 6,515 of those live in the urban fringing wards of Buxton, Whaley Bridge, Chapel-en-le-Frith and Macclesfield which together account for 6,673ha or 18.8% of the land area. In the remaining rural 28,720ha, or 81.2% of the land area, reside the remaining 6,299 people at a population density of 22 people per square kilometre.

	Figure	Unit
Total area of the SWP	35,393	ha
Total population with adjustment for % or parish/ward in the SWP	12,814	no
Total area of the above urban parts in the SWP	6,673	ha
% urban parts	19	%
Urban population	6,515	no
% urban population (urban parish/ward)	51	%
Total area of rural parts in the SWP	28,720	ha
% rural parts	81	%
Total rural population (excluding Buxton, Whaley Bridge, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Macclesfield)	6,299	no
% rural population (rural parish/ward)	49	%
Population density urban	98	people/sqkm
Population density rural	22	people/sqkm

Looking at demographics, the most numerous age group is the 45 to 59 year olds at 24% of the population, with the 30 to 44 age group second at 18%. Under-18s make up 19% and at the other end of the scale, 20% of the population is at retirement age of 65 and over compared to the England average of 15.6%, so this area has a higher than usual proportion of retirement age residents.

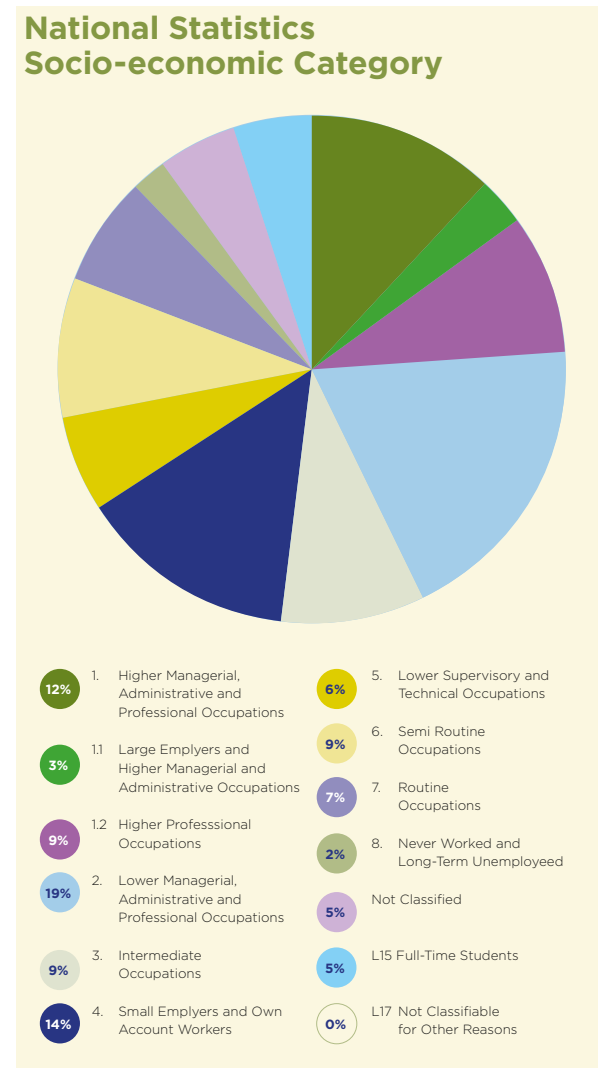
Statistics, 2015). It should be noted that these are classified independently of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and should not be directly compared with them.

The ethnic mix is unrepresentative of the country average; here 96.6% of residents classified themselves as White British compared to the England average of 79.8%.

Educational attainment is also high, with 47% of people over 16 having attained level 3 qualifications or higher, that is A-levels, NVQ level 3 or BTEC level 3 and above. In Stoke-on-Trent this figure is just 27% while the England figure is 39%.

The standard of living is relatively high; using indices of deprivation by dimension, 49% of households are deprived in one or more dimension, with less than 1% deprived in all four dimensions of employment, education, health & disability and housing. In contrast, figures for Stoke-on-Trent tell us that 66% of households are deprived in one or more dimension, while the England average is 57% (Office for National

In terms of employment, the National Statistics socio-economic classification of residents between 16 and 74 shows that the most numerous category is 'lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations' closely followed by 'small employers and own account workers'. Just 2% are categorised as never-worked or long-term unemployed, comparing favourably with the England figure of 5.6%.



proportion of lower-income, semi-skilled workers than the rest of the National Park. Across the Peak District, nearly 70% of staff employed earned less than or equal to £20,000 p.a. (Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, 2005).

Businesses in the Peak District are typically very small, with 75% employing fewer than five people. Half of National Park residents commute outside the National Park for work whilst, conversely, an estimated 4 in 10 jobs are occupied by people commuting into the National Park for work. This reflects the complex interdependencies that the National Park economy has with neighbouring urban communities and market towns (PDNPA, 2013). Local businesses, such as village shops or pubs, are an essential component of communities. Nevertheless, these businesses are often hard to sustain due to a wider range of goods and more competitive prices in larger shops, coupled with the high number of residents who commute to work outside their community (PDNPA, 2013).

Part of the spa town of Buxton is included in the LPS area (largely as a quirk of its geology); it is well-served by restaurants, cafes, hotels, shops, recreation and cultural facilities. The town attracts and retains a highly skilled workforce thanks to the quality of the surrounding countryside.

Buxton has a significant knowledge-based economy with more than twice the national average of the working population involved in creative industries or employed in firms that invest significantly in research and development. Key employers such as the National Health and Safety Laboratories and the local quarrying industry, plus the University of Derby's Buxton campus, mean that the knowledge-based economy is significant (High Peak Borough Council, 2015).

The town is the source of Buxton water, now bottled and distributed by Nestle. Key industrial employers include: Tarmac Buxton Lime & Cement (lime products, cement and cement products), Lhoist (lime products), Cemex UK Ltd Dove Holes (aggregates), Health and Safety Executive Laboratory (UK Government agency), Baseefa (research on hazardous atmospheres, explosives & equipment), Bradbury & Son (cheese manufacture), Flowflex Ltd (plumbing/heating components) and Selden Research Ltd (develops and manufactures cleaning and hygiene chemicals) (High Peak Borough Council, 2015).

The Stoke Sentinel (James, 2016) lists the ten biggest firms, by annual turnover, in the

However, the national statistics about the general population hide some of the poverty and deprivation experienced by rural communities. The average farm business income (the financial return to all unpaid labour - farmers and spouses, non-principal partners and their spouses and family workers and capital invested in the farm business, including land and buildings) for grazing livestock farms in the Less Favoured Area in 2014/15 was £14,600. The agricultural community is experiencing significant hidden deprivation, illustrated by a decline in income, social exclusion, disadvantage in the housing market and limited education opportunities (Syson-Nibbs, 2001).

Employment

Employment in the area is mixed but predominantly small and medium land- or tourism-based businesses, with few sizeable industries and enterprises based within the South West Peak itself. Despite the high educational attainment, the South West Peak has a greater

Staffordshire Moorlands; these are predominantly based in the market town of Leek, but number seven on the list with a turnover in excess of £30m is Belle Engineering in Sheen employing 170 staff.

Neighbours

The South West Peak is flanked by some large urban conurbations, Greater Manchester to the north-west and Stoke-on-Trent to the south, with the smaller towns of Macclesfield on the western edge, Buxton on the eastern edge, Leek to the south and Chapel-en-le-Frith and Whaley Bridge to the north.

The respective population sizes of these areas are:

Greater Manchester	2,732,854 (Office for National Statistics, 2015)
Stoke-on-Trent	249,000 (Stoke City Council, 2016)
Macclesfield	57,120 (City Population, 2016)
Buxton	24,000 (High Peak Borough Council, 2015)
Leek	20,000 (Leek Town Council, 2016)
Chapel-en-le-Frith	6,500 (High Peak Borough Council, 2015)
Whaley Bridge	6,476 (Office for National Statistics, 2015)

Collectively these towns and cities place over 3 million people within striking distance of the South West Peak and yet it is relatively low on the visitor radar.

Visitors

Visitors from outside the South West Peak generally visit key well-known sites including the Roaches, Tittesworth Water, Macclesfield Forest, the Goyt Valley and Lyme Park or other small attractions such as Blaze Farm in Wildboarclough which offers farm-made ice creams, a tea room, nature trails and school visits.

Parts of the South West Peak are reasonably well used by special interest groups; notably climbers at the Roaches & Hen Cloud, Windgather rocks and Castle Naze; mountain bikers at Macclesfield Forest; scout troupes at the Roaches and Gradbach; motorcyclists on the Cat and Fiddle road between Buxton and Macclesfield; and Duke

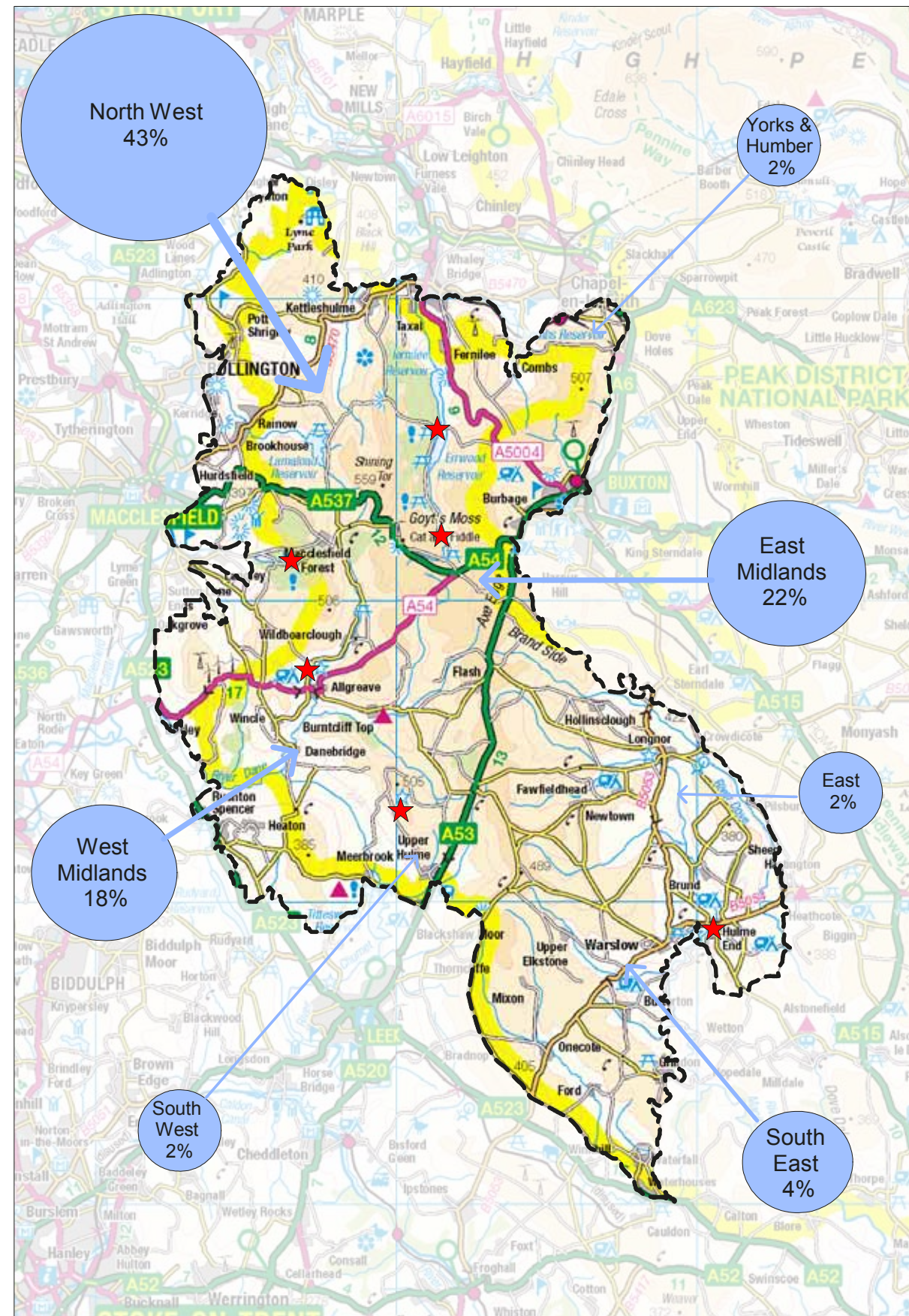
of Edinburgh groups at various locations. The challenging roads of the Staffordshire Moorlands are popular with touring and road cyclists. Guided walks are led by the Peak District National Park rangers, Cheshire East rangers, Staffordshire Moorlands walking group and private walking guides.

The 2015 visitor survey conducted between May and August surveyed 489 visitors at six sites in our area (shown on the map below). The largest number of visitors (43%) originated from the north-west region, with the east midlands and west midlands next most numerous. Few people were visiting from further afield. See map overleaf.

Visitors were asked a series of questions gathering information about the nature of their visit. Of the 489 people surveyed only 39 had heard the term 'South West Peak' as a descriptor of the landscape area they were visiting, compared to 322 and 288 who knew the terms White Peak and Dark Peak respectively, describing the other two main landscape character areas of the Peak District. This could be in large part due to the existence of the Ordnance Survey outdoor leisure maps for the Dark Peak and White Peak, yet none for the South West Peak which is included in the main on the White Peak map.

Just over half of those surveyed visited regularly (at least monthly); in planning their visits 39% used previous knowledge of the area, while 19% used maps or GPS and 21% used the internet or social media. Walking was the most popular activity (57%) with cycling/mountain biking coming second (10%). Most visitors (75%) were day visitors and for those that stayed overnight, caravans were the most popular form of accommodation. 95% of visitors were white. A range of age groups visited from under 15s to over 65s, the least represented was the 16-24 year-old age group at only 5%.

Visitor Survey Sites and Origin of Visitors



© Crown Copyright and database rights 2011. 100005734.

Non-visitors

A survey of non-visitors to the Peak District National Park was conducted at various sites across Greater Manchester and Sheffield during 2015. Using ACORN¹ data to compare visitors (to the Dark Peak, White Peak and South West Peak) and non-visitors by analysing postcodes shows that two-thirds of visitors to the Peak District are in the 'affluent achievers' or 'comfortable communities' categories; whereas three-quarters of non-visitors come from the 'urban adversity' or 'financially stretched' categories. There is clearly a higher proportion of 'affluent achievers' and 'comfortable communities' in the visitors to the National Park than in the national profile whereas those in the 'financially stretched' and 'urban adversity' categories are over-represented amongst non-visitors.

These figures support Natural England's Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) report which found that those groups less likely to have taken a visit to the natural environment in the last seven days were those of Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) origin, those aged 65 and over, those with a long-term illness or disability and those in the lower social grades (Natural England, 2015).

Relationship with Heritage

There seems to be a fairly strong connection with heritage in this area; people we talked to at our community roadshows in the summer of 2015 were keen to engage with a mapping exercise which asked them to identify places or features of a) particular interest or with positive associations and b) negative associations or problems. There was a reasonable spread of comments across the area identifying both positives and negatives; on the whole people liked to see wildlife and commented on species-rich road verges and encounters with birds and animals; equally there was concern about the loss of these in some places and what might be the causes. Some people knew the area well, down to the names of individual fields and local historical finds.

Some of the personal things that people valued and wanted to tell us about included:

- A field called 'lark park' in Newtown where skylarks usually sing.
- Fantastic roadside verges in full flower from June through August.
- A barn owl flew across my path here last night.

¹ a consumer classification model that segments the UK population by analysing demographic data, social factors, population and consumer behaviour, to describe 5 main categories of 'consumer'

- A shrine built into the wall in the Goyt Valley just above Errwood Reservoir.
- A great village fete and fell race at Wincle.
- The old (and rather sinister) pub sign for the Eagle and Child pub at Gradbach and the Peg Inn where pegs were exchanged for ale.
- Shrigley Hall acquired by the Catholic religious order, the Salesians of Don Bosco, early in 1929 was excluded from the National Park when it was designated in 1951 on request from the Salesians to avoid distracting the trainee priests.
- The packhorse trails transporting copper from the mines at Ecton (just across the valley to the south-east) across to smelters at Whiston in the Staffordshire Moorlands some seven and a half miles away as the crow flies.

The South West Peak was fondly described by one participant as a 'timeless small-scale old-fashioned mosaic'.



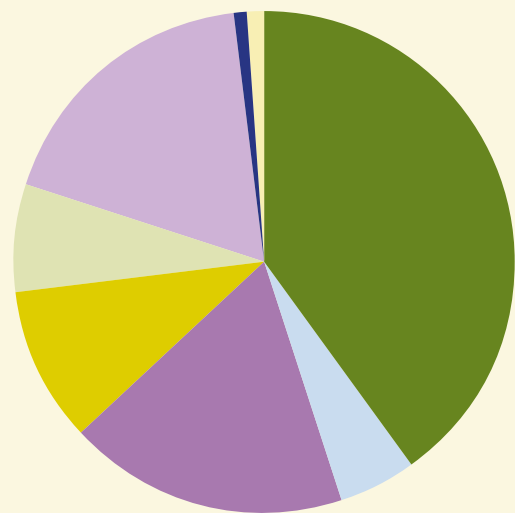
Eagle and Child pub © Mary Connaught

Overall there is a strong sense of connection to the landscape or scenery; respondents to an electronic community survey, when asked what they thought was the most important aspect of the landscape, talked about views; wildlife and the mix of habitats; traditional farming; the fabric of the landscape (walls and buildings) and accessibility. Their concerns were about inappropriate development; changes in farming and financial support which meant farms closing; young people moving away; conflicting demands of the need to provide employment and keep the countryside attractive; increase in tourism and pressure for renewable energy development. Two people thought the National Park Authority was the biggest threat to the landscape, while two others thought lack of funding for the National Park Authority was the biggest threat.

The sense of community is strong. When asked 'what aspect of the community you live in is most important to you?' the main responses referred to community spirit, support and friendship; the local facilities and services. However, there was a sense of discomfort between residents of several generations and 'incomers'. When asked 'what was the biggest threat to the community?', the focus was largely on lack of opportunities for young people.

Together with the strong sense of attachment to the place, 82% of community survey respondents said they were interested in learning more about the landscape and heritage of the area; natural heritage was the most popular topic, closely followed by the different kinds of cultural heritage (archaeology, industrial heritage, built heritage and customs), with several people being interested in all kinds of heritage.

What kind of Heritage most interests you?



- 40% Natural (e.g. meadows, moorland, woodland, birds etc)
- 5% Archaeological (e.g. burial sites, field systems etc)
- 18% Industrial (e.g. lime kilns, packhorse routes etc)
- 10% Built (e.g. field barns, dry stone walls etc)
- 7% Customs (e.g. wakes week, myths, legends, stories etc)
- 18% All or combination
- 1% Social history, family history
- 1% Field Boundaries

Of those who said they would like to get more involved in the Landscape Partnership, 35% were interested in habitat surveys, while 25% were interested in archaeology and local history and 12% would like to provide advice on farming issues.

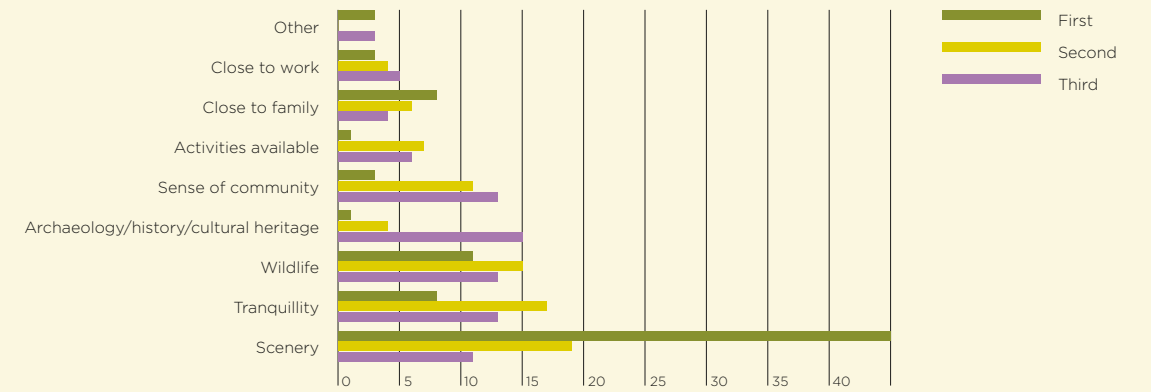
What would you like to get more involved in?



- 35% Habitat surveys
- 10% Archaeology surveys
- 15% Social media
- 15% Local history information
- 12% Providing advice on farming issues
- 13% Other

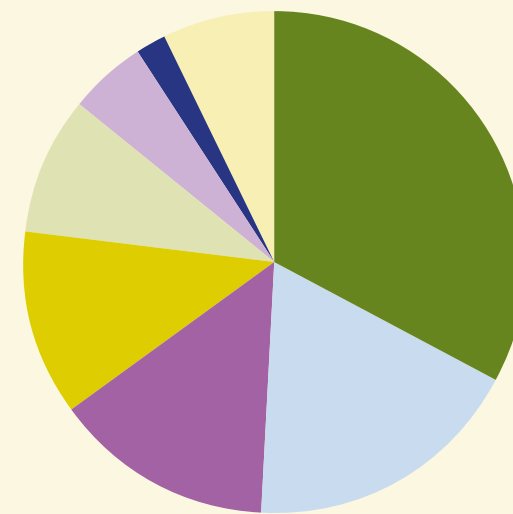
Visitors, too, find the landscape appealing; when visitors to six locations in the area during the summer of 2015 were asked 'what is special to you about the South West Peak?' 46% of the responses cited landscape, scenery or views; 15% accessibility or proximity to home and 13% tranquillity or quiet.

What are the top three things you enjoy about living in the South West Peak?



When asked what benefits they felt they got from visiting, 33% cited exercise or physical health benefits, 18% fresh air, 14% spending time with family or friends, 12% relaxation/tranquillity and 9% mental health and wellbeing (i.e. reduced stress).

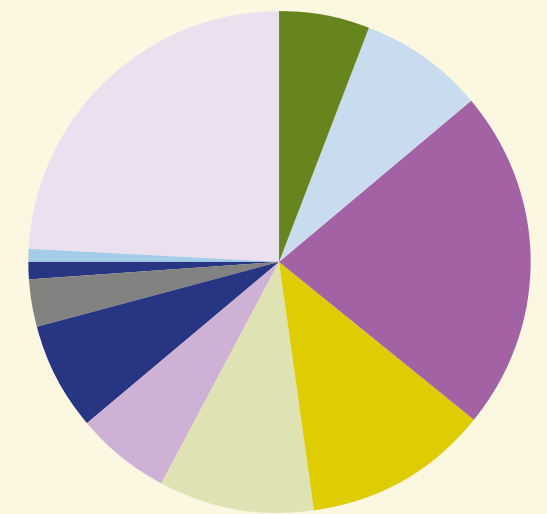
What benefits do you get from visiting?



- 33% Exercise/Physical health
- 18% Fresh air
- 14% Time with Family/friends
- 12% Relaxation/Tranquillity
- 9% Exploring
- 7% Wildlife/Countryside/Outside
- 5% Enjoyment
- 2% Education/Training

When asked what would improve their visit, the responses were quite variable from nothing (24%), to better visitor facilities - notably toilets (22%), improved signage (12%) and better weather! (10%)

What would improve your visit?



- 24% Nothing
- 22% Visitor Facilities
- 12% Signage
- 10% Weather
- 6% Transport/infrastructure
- 8% Parking
- 6% Dog mess/dog nuisance
- 7% Accessibility/better walks/better paths
- 3% Mobile Reception
- 1% Better online information
- 1% Less People

Infrastructure

The central part of South West Peak is well-connected by main road, four A-roads crossing the area: the A53 between Buxton and Leek; the A54 between Buxton and Congleton; the A537 which connects Macclesfield to Buxton and finally the A5004 between Buxton and Whaley Bridge.

Public transport

The Transpeak bus service connects Manchester with Buxton in just under 90 minutes, skirting the northern end of the South West Peak. For those who wish to venture into the landscape the High Peak bus service runs between Buxton and Macclesfield every hour via the Cat and Fiddle and Forest Cottage on the edge of Macclesfield Forest. Other routes run from Buxton via the Goyt Valley to Whaley Bridge and between Macclesfield, Rainow, Kettleshulme and Whaley Bridge.

In the Staffordshire Moorlands, the County Council provides the Moorlands Connect service which operates two buses. One offers a 'dial a ride' service which offers a more or less door-to-door service; the other is timetabled, operating between Ilam and Leek via Wetton, Butterton, Warslow, Longnor and Thorncliffe on Mondays and Wednesdays and between Ilam and Buxton via Alstonefield, Wetton, Butterton, Warslow, Sheen and Longnor on Fridays.

Walking routes

An extensive network of Public Rights of Way (PROW) criss-crosses the area, predominantly footpaths with relatively few bridleways and byways. Much of the high moorland core is open access land designated under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act, giving access to a total of 72 square kilometres of the landscape.

There are three waymarked long distance walking routes crossing the South West Peak, plus a series of other long distance paths promoted on the Long Distance Walkers Association website.

The Gritstone Trail stretches 35 miles through the Cheshire Peak District between Disley railway station, to the south east of Manchester following the Pennine edge southwards to finish at Kidsgrove railway station near Stoke-on-Trent. The trail winds in and out of the South West Peak around Bollington, Macclesfield Forest and Wincle offering a hilly and in places challenging hike with some short steep ascents and descents, stiles, ladder stiles and boggy, slippery ground.



Gritstone Trail © Karen Shelley-Jones

The Dane Valley Way connects Buxton to Middlewich in Cheshire, a distance of 41 miles, following the course of the Dane as much as possible, passing Three Shires Heads where the three counties of Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Cheshire meet.

The Midshires Way, which is designed for multi-use, links the Ridgeway National Trail with the Trans Pennine Trail across the shires of central England for a distance of 225 miles. The route joins the South West Peak at Buxton where it crosses the Goyt Valley on the way to Whaley Bridge.

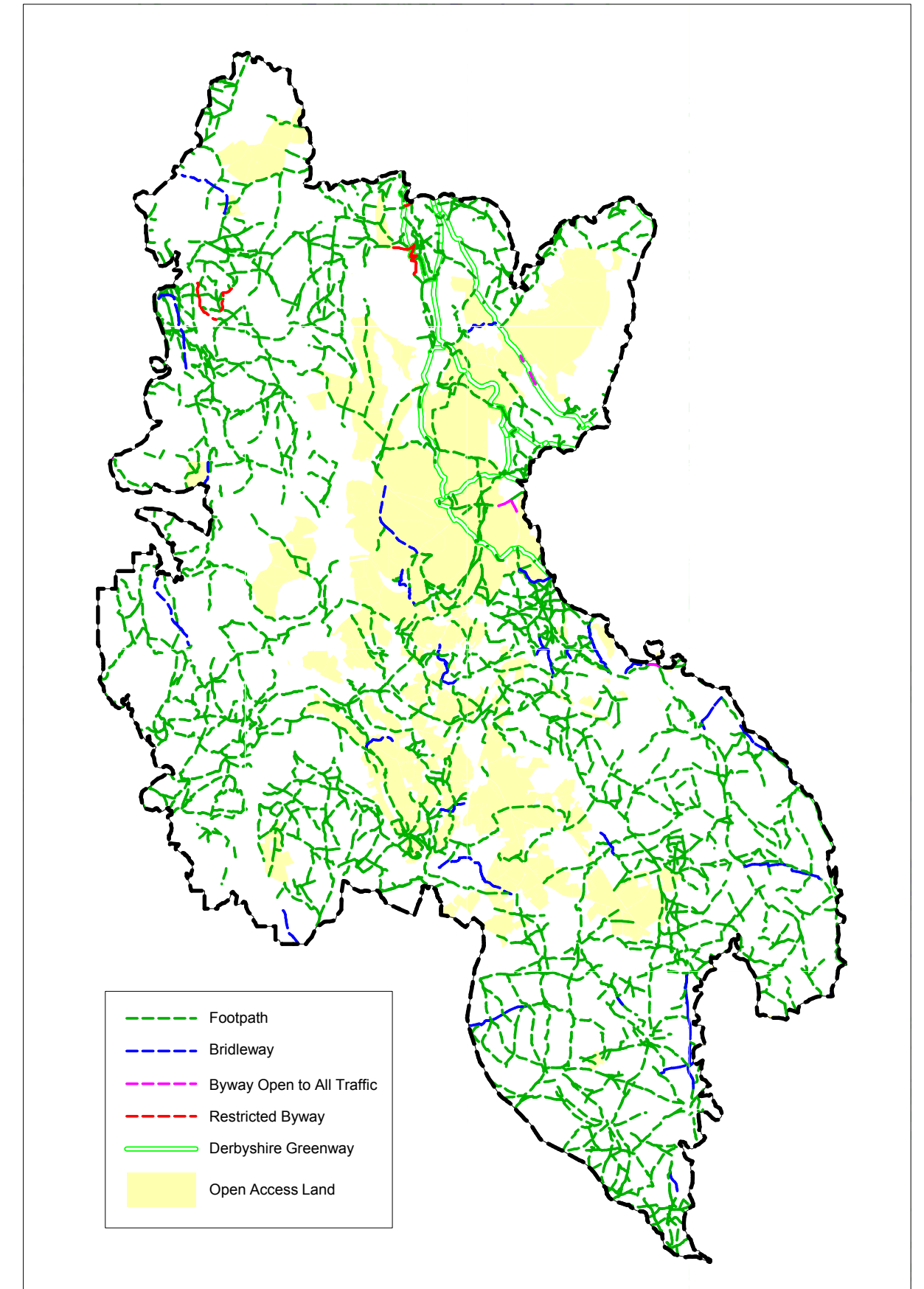
Non-waymarked long distance routes are: 'Three Counties Challenge Walk', a tough 28 mile moorland route straddling the borders of Cheshire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire running via The Roaches, Shutlingsloe, Tegg's Nose, Shining Edge and Three Shire Heads.

'Salter's Way' follows 27 miles of an old salt track across lowland Cheshire from the salt area around Northwich to the moors above Macclesfield. It passes still-working brine pumps, as well as such varied features as Jodrell Bank Observatory and the raised lowland bog of Danes Moss.

'Cloud 7 Circuit' is a 33 mile challenge walk named after the seven Cloud hills; this strenuous route with 5400ft of ascent covers the area between Leek, Buxton, Macclesfield and Congleton.

'The Four Trigs Traipse' is a 27 mile circular walk with about 4700ft ascent that involves traipsing round the four trigs of the Cloud (to the west of the SWP), Shutlingsloe, the Roaches, and the Gun.

Access and Public Rights of Way



© Crown Copyright and database rights 2011. 100005734.

'Head in the Clouds' is a 21 mile walk which takes in Hen Cloud on the Roaches and the Cloud, starting from Tittesworth Reservoir.

'Staffordshire Gritstone Walk' is a 35 mile high level circuit of 14 tops of over 400 metres linking the villages of the Manifold, Hamps, Churnet and Dane.

'Moorlands and Mermaids' follows a 30 mile circular walk from Buxton passing through Axe Edge moor, the Roaches, Deep Dale and beyond, visiting a hidden church and an inland Mermaid.

Opportunities for access for all routes are limited somewhat by the terrain in the area; the South West Peak is not blessed with a network of former railway lines like the White Peak where these have been opened up to form a set of multi-user trails. The former High Peak railway line ran 33 miles from Cromford south of the National Park to Peak Forest canal in Whaley Bridge; following the closure of the railway line Derbyshire County Council and the Peak District National Park Authority bought the line in 1971 and turned part of it (17 miles) into a traffic free route. Following the recent Pedal Peak project this route now links with Buxton and is part of Derbyshire County Council's vision for a 60 mile White Peak Loop. Remnants of the line still exist at Goyts Lane - which was surfaced some years back for wheelchair and pushchair users - and along the eastern side of Fernilee Reservoir.

The Manifold Trail to the south similarly stops just short of the South West Peak culminating at Hulme End where a small visitor centre and café attracts walkers and cyclists.

Derbyshire County Council has produced Greenway strategies for the county, which identify a network of Greenways including traffic-free pathways that connect Derbyshire's towns and villages to both dramatic and gentle countryside and are suitable for walking, cycling and horse riding. All of the existing and potential routes, including two in our area, identified in the strategies are surfaced and many are built on flat routes for easy access.

The Greenway strategies identify routes that meet the goals of Natural England and create a user-friendly network to link communities and places of interest across Derbyshire and through the Peak District National Park. While the strategies identify the potential for developing a network of Greenways across Derbyshire, no dedicated funding has been approved to implement them (Derbyshire County Council, 2016).

Cycling

Sections of the Sustrans National Cycle Network run across the South West Peak, notably National Route 68 which links Buxton to Whaley Bridge, forming part of the 327 mile Pennine Cycleway. Regional Route 70, also known as the Cheshire Cycleway, is a 176 mile circular route of which approximately 17 miles fall within the area.

Stage 6 of the 2015 Tour of Britain took scores of cyclists through the South West Peak on 11 September as they rode along beside Gun Hill and through Meerbrook before joining the A53 for a long climb up to Buxton, then through the Goyt Valley to Whaley Bridge.

Pedal Peak 2 was a £7.5m project (2013-2016) to improve cycling for leisure and day-to-day journeys. Four new cycle routes were created to take cyclists and walkers into and through the Peak District National Park from the surrounding urban areas.

Pedal Peak 2 included four main schemes:

- the White Peak Loop connecting the Monsal and High Peak Trails into Matlock and Buxton;
- the Little Don Link skirting the edge of the Peak District from Sheffield along a disused railway to join the Trans Pennine Trail in Barnsley;
- the Staffordshire Moorlands Link using the Caldron Canal towpath and signed on road routes to link Stoke-on-Trent with the Manifold Trail and the Roaches;
- the Hope Valley Link complements the Little John Route, a Sustrans signed Sheffield to Manchester route across the National Park by providing a new off road section along the Hope Valley.

Other cycling opportunities in and around the Peak District are promoted by the National Park Authority as 'Journeys of Discovery by Bike'. In the South West Peak these include the 'Roaches and Reservoirs' figure of eight route mostly on quiet lanes; and the 'High Moors and Gritstone Tors' circular route between Buxton, Whaley Bridge and Chapel-en-le-Frith.

Visitor facilities

There are three visitor centres in or on the edge of the South West Peak which provide facilities and information for visitors; at the southern end is Tittesworth Water, its northern tip just extending into the South West Peak which is where the visitor centre sits. There is a large pay and display car park and the centre, built by Severn Trent Water in 1998, houses a restaurant, shop and

toilets; outside is a children's play area and there are two trails around the reservoir - one short all-access route and one longer route.

Macclesfield Forest on the west side of the South West Peak is managed by United Utilities; the visitor facilities are run by the National Park Authority ranger service who provide information and activities for visitors and school groups. There is pay and display car parking and toilets with disabled access.

The Manifold Valley Visitor Centre is housed in the ticket office of the former Hulme End railway station situated at the northern end of the Manifold Track, which runs from Waterhouses beside the River Hamps, then joining the River Manifold up to Hulme End on the edge of the South West Peak. The visitor centre offers car parking, toilets, a café and information.

Interpretation

An assessment of existing interpretation and interpretation activity in 2015/16 (Telltale, 2016) revealed that interpretation is scarce in the South West Peak; indeed little investment has been made in the last 15 years. Interpretation panels can be found at the Roaches, Wildboarclough, in the Goyt Valley, at Pym's Chair, in Longnor, Warslow and the Mermaid Inn layby. Many of the panels are out of date and in poor condition which creates an impression of lack of interest. Some exhibit poor and outdated interpretative practices. These include poor design and lack of text hierarchy which renders interesting stories difficult to read and hard to scan. Most of the panels are not clearly themed, they attempt to communicate too much and as a result have little impact. This is often exacerbated by timid design although the geological panel at Windgather Rocks is a notable exception.

The panel at Pym's Chair in the Goyt is poorly located in the landscape (from two directions you approach it from below, so that it dominates the view) and in an inappropriate material for this environment. Interestingly, a similar panel located at the other end of the Goyt, which was also sited overlooking a popular view of the valley, outraged local opinion. It lasted only a few months before someone cut it down with a chainsaw.

Very few interpretive leaflets can be found at information centres. Most of the leaflets were primarily promotional, with a few notable exceptions:

- The 'Goyt Valley Visitor Guide' which is well-written and illustrated, contains a good map,

information on a range of walk routes and good interpretive information. However it is not easy to find, it is not available in the Goyt Valley (except from rangers who have a few to give out) nor in the Buxton Information Centre (where they have a single copy 'to show people').

- A leaflet on 'Great Little Walks in the Roaches'.
- Two routes in 'Pedal the Peak District' are in the South West Peak, one around the Roaches and the other around the Goyt Valley. These are mainly directional but have some information highlighting points of interest and natural and human heritage features to look out for.
- Eight out of the ten interpreted walks on landscape archaeology in the beautifully produced 'In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors: Heritage Walks' are in the Warslow Moors or very close to the South West Peak (Hartington and Wetton).

Online interpretation

The online presence of the South West Peak is largely limited to the LPS' own website, the National Park Authority website and Natural England's National Character Area profile information. Websites promoting walks or outdoor activities invariably refer to the area as the White Peak, even when they acknowledge its gritstone geology.

An internet search found the two most highly ranked sites for the Goyt Valley and the top site for the Roaches to be privately run, well-produced and maintained websites. This is maybe indicative of strong attachment and enthusiasm for these locations.

Past events and activities

The 2004 Interpretation Plan for the South West Peak identified the local community arts activities as a particular strength of the area with great potential for interpretation engaging people, especially local people, with the landscape. Although the scale of activity is now probably less, there are still a number of community groups who run activities that are relevant to the landscape.

Flash Arts run the Flash Teapot Parade - an on-going historic event based in Quarnford, now past its 100th year. The larger projects in the history of the Parade have included landscape flags, reminiscence work and a community play version of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight performed with puppets.

Borderland Voices runs art and writing groups, their many projects including Voice of the Moorlands, Landscapes of the Mind and Rivers of Life.

REAP (Rural Education and Art Project), now dissolved, was a very active and significant organisation in its day, initiating and managing a wide range of projects from their base in Longnor over a 10-year period. REAP projects included:

- Personal Expressions – part of the Derbyshire Community response to the Foot and Mouth Disease crisis of 2001, this project encouraged and supported young farmers to express their concerns, worries and hopes for the future through the medium of photography.
- Rural Crafts Revival - a project to promote traditional rural crafts to local young people, providing taster days and week-long courses in crafts such as drystone walling and hedgelaying.
- Pathways to Pilsbury
- Enchanted Gardens
- Wellsprings of the Imagination

The Curlew Country project was run by the Curlew Country group, a constituted group whose members lived in and around Longnor, Sheen and Flash as a celebration of the curlew, the emblem of the Staffordshire Moorlands. The project included a 'curlew community day' at Longnor School; community artists working in five schools to produce large scale pieces of curlew-inspired art; a digital music project with Sheen youth club, which involved recording curlew song and then using the recordings as a basis for soundscapes and poetry; guided curlew walks, reminiscence about ground nesting birds and the production of an illustrated leaflet, including a route for a "Walk in Curlew Country."

Stone and Water is a community environmental arts organisation based in Buxton and operating across the Peak District, including the South West Peak. Their projects include:

- People, Plants and the Peaks: a series of events over two years to build plant identification skills through community events with participants making their own habitat books at different events and in different habitats;
- Ancient Landscapes: working along the limestone border of the South West Peak combining an understanding of geology and palaeontology with exploration of modern landscape and artworks to create impressions of marine environments of the Carboniferous era;

- Exploring with stories: public events encouraging people to get outdoors, finding new places to visit and simple activities to try to get to know landscape and wildlife better.

Dove Valley Centre is an important event venue for the central area of South West Peak; their events include:

- Apple Day (first of these events in the area) in October;
- Biodiversity Day (more recently 'Big Bird, Bug and Butterfly Hunt');
- Award-winning Tudor Farming project;
- Peeling Back the Layers, community archaeology project.

We now have an interpretation plan for the South West Peak which identifies target audiences, key messages, the types of media which are appropriate and suggests a range of interpretation activities at three different locations: the Roaches, the Warslow Moors Estate and the Goyt Valley.

Definition of the Landscape Area



Definition of the Landscape Area

The boundary of the South West Peak Landscape Partnership Scheme area is defined by the local Landscape Character Assessment (PDNPA, 2008) which describes the physical, ecological and human influences and the sense of place. Extensive fieldwork and consultation during 2007 described the landscape and divided it into nine distinct Landscape Character Types: open moors, moorland hills and ridges, enclosed gritstone upland, densely enclosed gritstone upland, slopes and valleys with woodland, upland pastures, upper valley pastures, reservoir valleys with woodland and riverside meadows as outlined on page 26.

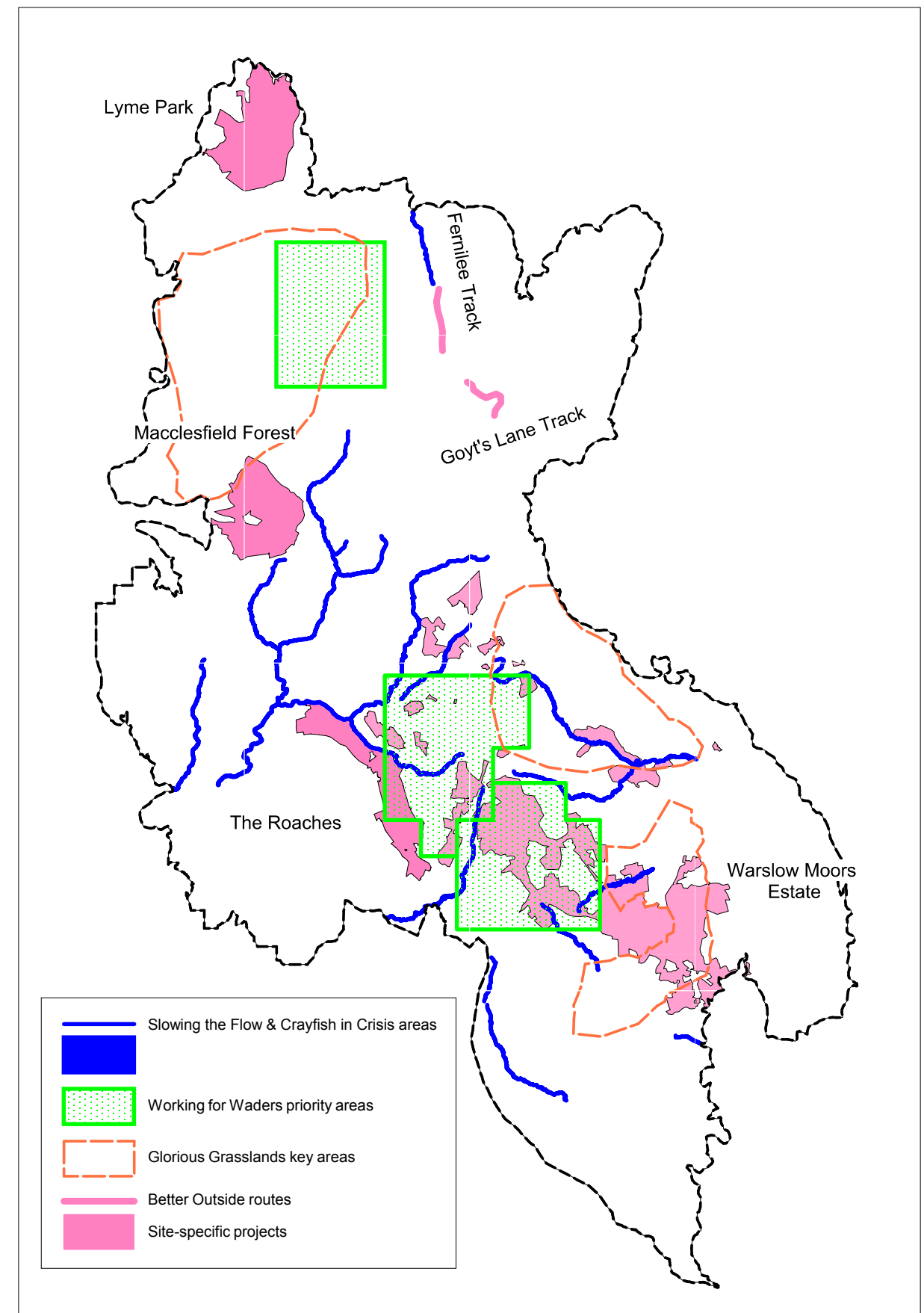
This gives us a sinuous LPS boundary which follows the underlying geology and the components of the landscape, ignoring administrative boundaries. The only exception to this is where the Churnet Valley Living Landscape Partnership boundary meets the National Park boundary, cutting into the South West Peak at the southern end. The three local authority areas of Staffordshire Moorlands, Cheshire East and High Peak comprise 170km², 115km² and 69km² respectively.

During our development phase we looked at options for changing or reducing the size of the area, including using water catchment boundaries or administrative boundaries; however, we felt that this gave us a very artificial division of the landscape and would have excluded key areas for breeding waders and for species-rich grasslands in particular. Suggestions were made to alter the boundary to include Ecton Hill and the Manifold Trail to the south-east; and the remainder of Buxton to the east. With strong guidance from the HLF not to increase the size of our already substantial LPS area, and keen to ensure we remained true to the principles of the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, 2000), which underpinned the definition of the South West Peak LCA, the Board decided not to alter the boundary.

At 354km² the LPS area is large, but we feel that this is justified in a number of ways:

- Given the highly dispersed nature of human settlement across the area, our resident audience for engagement is sparse. In terms of the ecosystem services delivered by the landscape, the beneficiaries are often those who live outside the area yet tend not to fully understand and appreciate the landscape and how it is managed. The South West Peak is currently poorly recognised as a landscape unit and as a result has long been overlooked compared with the rest of the Peak District. The Landscape Partnership is now in a strong position to encourage a stronger sense of ownership and appreciation of the South West Peak amongst both residents and neighbours.
- The species and habitats of the area do not conform to administrative boundaries, and our key species group of concern, the upland waders, is concentrated in population hotspots which are located across the landscape in parts of all three counties. The interaction between these population hotspots is poorly understood, they may act as important reservoirs of individuals moving from one to another.
- The development work for our natural heritage projects - Glorious Grasslands, Slowing the Flow, Crayfish in Crisis and Working for Waders has focused in on key geographical locations where the greatest impact can be demonstrated.
- In order to involve our resident communities in the delivery of our projects, the locations of some, notably the cultural heritage projects, will be determined by those communities who will have the opportunity through survey and assessment to decide where we focus our efforts. This will increase the sense of true involvement as enshrined in the ecosystem approach.

Project Locations



© Crown Copyright and database rights 2011. 100005734.