



Press Release

For immediate release

31st January 2023

Environmental Improvement Plan: National Parks are primed to make a difference, resources are needed to deliver it

Responding to the publication of the Environmental Improvement Plan, Andrew McCloy, chair of National Parks England said:

“Today’s publication provides an important opportunity to reinforce government’s ambitions for the environment and the role that National Parks can play in delivering them.”

“National Parks account for almost 10% of England’s land area and we have an ambition to manage and restore a minimum of 120,000 ha of nature-rich areas by 2030. We have the statutory designation, commitment and passion to make a significant contribution to the targets set out today for habitats and species recovery.”

“What’s more, many National Parks are already on the doorstep of millions of people supporting government’s ambition that no-one should live more than 15 minutes from green space.”

“While we’re delighted to see that the fantastic Farming in Protected Landscapes programme will be extended, success will depend on having the tools and resources in place. Funding cuts to National Park Authorities have seen many of our organisations stripped to the bone. So it’s vital that today’s announcement is backed up by the long-term resources needed to achieve a step change for nature, climate and public access”

“We’ll study the full EIP in more detail and look forward to playing our part in achieving ambitious plans for the environment”.

ENDS

Notes to editors

For further information please contact:

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About National Parks England

National Parks England brings together English National Park Authorities to provide a strong, collective and expert voice at a national level. We shape policy by drawing on our extensive experience, facilitating discussion, sharing knowledge, cultivating partnerships, and testing innovative solutions to some of the biggest challenges facing society.

For more information and case studies about some of the projects which have benefited from Farming in Protected Landscapes funding across National Parks and AONBs, see our report: [Farming in Protected Landscapes](#).

For details about some of the innovative nature recovery and climate change projects across the

National Parks, see our report: [National Parks – supporting people, places, climate and nature](#)

National Parks - nature facts:

- almost 30% of the land in England, which is recognised as internationally important for wildlife, is in National Parks
- 86% of threatened bird species in England call our National Parks home
- English National Parks contain:
 - o 80% of upland chalk grassland;
 - o 41% of upland hay meadows;
 - o 60% of the country's upland heath, and;
 - o 99% of Europe's lowland heath
- over 520,500 ha of peat soils are found in our National Parks

For more information on National Parks England's work, visit: www.nationalparksengland.org.uk

For more information on the UK's fifteen National Parks, visit: www.nationalparks.uk