



**Ymgyrch y PARCIAU CENEDLAETHOL**  
**Campaign for NATIONAL PARKS**

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Strategy for 2008 – 2013

# Campaign for National Parks (CNP)

## Strategic Plan 2008 – 2013

### Why National Parks are important

Our National Parks have been shaped by nature and humans for millennia. They are rich repositories of natural and cultural history. They give us a sense of our past because we can see how the landscape has been shaped over the years, and this helps us to understand what may happen in the future and the role we might play in shaping the environment.

Britain's National Parks were fought for by a generation of people who believed in the magic of the countryside to refresh and rejuvenate and in the right of everyone to enjoy these benefits. The vision for setting up National Parks in the immediate post-war years was clear: our finest landscapes needed protecting for current and future generations to enjoy, and they provided unparalleled opportunities for peaceful recreation and spiritual renewal.

This ideal has never been more relevant than today. While the nature of the threats to National Park landscapes has altered over the years, with climate change now at the top of the list, there is no doubt that pressures on the National Parks are as great as ever and are set to increase. At the same time, people need more than ever to take time out from their busy lives, to reconnect with family and friends, with the natural world and with themselves. National Parks provide the space in which to do that.

### 1. CNP's Vision for National Parks

CNP's vision of National Parks in 2040 is of beautiful landscapes where:

- Water, soil and air are pure
- Natural landforms are preserved
- Wildlife flourishes
- A range of distinctive cultures is expressed in the built heritage and the everyday lives of Parks residents
- Livelihoods derive from activities that the environment can sustain
- Erosion of the special qualities would not be contemplated unless society could find no other possible solution
- Everyone can find a source of spiritual renewal and opportunities for quiet enjoyment
- We can all gain a greater understanding of the whole environment and of National Park values

*(National Parks for Life, 1997)*

## **2. *CNP's mission statement***

CNP campaigns to protect and promote National Parks for the benefit and quiet enjoyment of all.

## **3. *Where we are***

### ***The challenges for National Parks***

National Parks face a number of challenges which threaten their future viability. The changing climate has serious consequences for the Parks, including through increased flood and fire risk, coastal changes and the effects on wildlife and landscape. National Parks will need to identify and articulate their response to these changes.

More traditional development threats include transport and energy infrastructure and the demand for natural resources. The needs of local communities in National Parks must be addressed but also present some development challenges for the Parks – for example, changing land use practices by farmers, and affordable housing provision for local people.

While some parts of government continue to give support to National Parks, others are at best ambivalent about the role and value of National Parks. This needs to be addressed.

National Parks continue to be enjoyed and understood by a relatively small proportion of the population. The danger of this is that National Parks are taken for granted by the public. The future of National Parks depends on the public caring about these areas.

### ***How CNP makes a difference***

CNP uses many delivery mechanisms to achieve its aims, including:

- Campaigning, lobbying, advocating for National Parks
- Enthusing others about the importance of National Parks and encouraging them to take an active role in the National Parks movement
- Promoting, sharing and publicising good and bad practice
- Innovating, suggesting and trying out new ideas to see what works
- Working in partnership to achieve more than we can do alone, using the unique skills of organisations and individuals – ANPA, individual NPAs, National Park Societies and other Campaign member organisations, Corporate Forum members, Friends, volunteers and others.

CNP's key organisational skill is communication – spreading messages about National Parks through a wider variety of methods and to a huge array of individuals and organisations in order to influence thinking and action. Underpinning all of CNP's work is a commitment to rigorous research and analysis, and an acute awareness of the need to make best use of the finite resources available to us.

#### **4. Overview of the strategy**

CNP is recognised by many as being a highly effective campaigning and policy actor and we want to ensure that this remains the case. This strategy builds on what we do well, recognising the new challenges for National Parks presented by a changing climate.

However, this strategy sees a change in emphasis in CNP's work, taking a more active role in raising awareness and increasing understanding about National Parks. During the plan period we will do more to promote National Parks, to encourage others to experience them and then to garner that experience to increase and broaden the National Park movement. We recognise the need to be extremely focused in this activity, and that we have an unparalleled network through CNP's members. We want to use that network to try to encourage more people to understand and care about National Parks.

CNP is taking on this role because it is uniquely placed to do so. As the original founders of the movement dwindle, future support for National Parks cannot be guaranteed. Neither CNP nor the broader National Parks movement can afford to become even more of a niche interest group as this will in time have an impact on the status National Parks hold in government's eyes, both in Westminster and Cardiff.

Bringing National Parks messages to new supporters will also support our campaigning work. It will give CNP a stronger mandate, more secure funding and will ensure the National Parks have broader support which will be critical in securing their future.

A further focus of this strategy is to consolidate the rich networks that enable CNP to be effective – its Campaign members, the Corporate Forum, Friends and volunteers. CNP will continue to bring together those with a passion for National Parks, to learn from others and to lead the National Park movement with energy and commitment.

#### **5. Monitoring its delivery**

This plan is for the five year period 2008 – 2013. The Trustees of CNP will review progress against the strategic aims on an annual basis, and there will be a fuller mid term review of the plan during 2010 – 2011.

## **CNP's Aims for 2008 – 2013**

### **1. To secure protection for National Parks and to demonstrate their importance**

This is essential because:

- National Parks face unprecedented challenges - a changing climate, widespread changes in agricultural practices, new demands for energy and housing-related development and major changes to the planning system. The pressures on National Parks will increase in the next few years
- The legislation, policies and management structures in place in the National Parks, are insufficient to protect them and are changing constantly. The interests of National Parks need to be championed in this evolution. This makes CNP's unique role as watchdog for the National Parks more important than ever
- National Parks are both areas to be conserved and places of possibility, where new ideas can be explored. They provide opportunities to test and demonstrate new ways of living which can then be spread more widely

We will achieve our aim by:

- Influencing the key policies and decisions affecting National Parks so that they protect and enhance these landscapes
- Undertaking innovative projects to find solutions to the challenges facing National Parks and to promote the opportunities they present
- Challenging bad practice and promoting good practice in how National Parks are managed and used
- Demonstrating that National Parks are crucial to the health and well being of society

Specifically this means:

- Helping to shape the planning framework at a national, regional and local level.
- Scrutinising policies and decisions made by National Park Authorities and other organisations whose decisions affect the National Parks
- Working in partnership with others to deliver a range of projects to demonstrate the role of National Parks and their potential to help us learn about issues such as: the use of natural resources; sustainable living in a changing climate
- Working constructively with companies with a commercial interest in the National Parks to minimise any adverse impacts on the National Parks and to promote good dialogue with National Park Societies and Authorities
- Fighting major threats to National Parks by taking on nationally important or precedent setting cases or those that raise novel planning issues

We will have succeeded if:

- We can show that CNP has positively influenced policies and decisions affecting National Parks
- The policy framework nationally, regionally and locally supports National Park purposes
- Our projects are seen to have been a success – well run, useful, of high quality and with wider lessons well disseminated and influencing decisions

- We have moved thinking forward through our project work and increased understanding about the importance of National Parks with our target audiences
- There is demonstrable sensitivity to National Parks by companies in the Corporate Forum for National Parks and effective engagement with organisations and individuals working on behalf of National Parks
- Major developments in National Parks have been rigorously challenged

## **2. To increase the number and range of people who know and care about National Parks**

This is essential because:

- National Parks were established to benefit everyone; they are a national asset which belongs to us all and of which we should all be proud
- Yet many people do not even know about National Parks, let alone have a sense of pride in them
- They are missing out on a fantastic opportunity and society suffers because the benefits to public health and well being are lost
- The future protection and enjoyment of these landscapes depends on public support and public action
- The founders of the National Park movement in the UK are dwindling; we must renew support in all parts of society, and nurture the passion for National Parks that is crucial in securing their future

We will achieve our aim by:

- Working with other organisations to encourage more people to experience the National Parks who might otherwise not have done so
- Building on the positive experience people have of National Parks to increase their understanding of National Parks and to encourage them to have a stake in the future of National Parks
- Undertaking targeted activity to raise the profile of National Parks in the media and with influential individuals and organisations so that National Parks sit higher in the public consciousness

Specifically this means:

- Encouraging more National Park experiences, delivered by or with the help of intermediary organisations, and focusing this work on Black and Minority Ethnic communities
- Using our networks (including Campaign members, Friends, Corporate Forum, volunteers) to spread messages about National Parks to people who are likely to support them, and bring more people in to the National Park movement
- Increasing our activity in the media and finding new influential supporters of National Parks who would encourage others to think and care about National Parks
- Developing our volunteer speaker service so that we have more speakers, from a wider range of backgrounds, talking to more local groups about the importance of National Parks and enlisting their support for National Parks

We will have succeeded if:

- People have had had a National Park experience who would not have otherwise (especially people from BME communities)
- We have increased the number of Friends of National Parks
- We have talked to new people and more people about National Parks
- There has been a stronger presence of National Parks in the media
- There are more champions for National Parks in different parts of our society

### **3. To secure the best possible new National Park for the South Downs and to campaign for other areas to be included in National Parks**

This is essential because:

- The South Downs is the only area recommended for National Park status in the Hobhouse Report of 1947 not yet designated as such; it is one of CNP's longest running campaigns
- The area fully deserves National Park status and the new National Park will be enormously valuable to all those living in the crowded South East of England, as well as nationally
- When a new National Park is confirmed its future success will depend on the right structures being put in place, including an effective National Park Authority
- Several areas near to the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District National Parks are worthy of National Park status but were excluded from their boundaries when they were first designated; this too is "unfinished business" (for example, the northern Howgills, Mallerstang, Borrowdale, Bretherdale)
- The Cambrian Mountains Society has launched a campaign for the area to be designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which has all but ended the prospect of National Park status being awarded

We will achieve our aim by:

- Campaigning nationally, regionally and locally for the confirmation of the South Downs as a new National Park
- Influencing the establishment of an effective National Park Authority for the South Downs National Park
- Working with other organisations to secure extensions to other National Parks, namely, the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales
- Maintaining a watching brief on the designation of the Cambrian Mountains AONB
- Formulating a clear idea about which, if any, additional areas merit National Park status

Specifically this means:

- Contributing to and supporting the South Downs Campaign to secure the South Downs National Park by providing advice, a national voice and publicity assistance (including through CNP's President)
- Influencing the policies and practices of the new National Park Authority before and after its establishment and helping to build the skills of the new members of the Authority by sharing CNP's experience and skills
- Supporting local organisations in the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales in their work to extend the boundaries of both National Parks and providing a national voice on this issue to government and the media
- Consulting with key partners to identify other areas in need of National Park status

We will have succeeded if:

- The new South Downs National Park is established with the widest boundary and with an Authority that is adequately resourced, that chooses not to delegate its development control powers and that prepares key strategies on a park-wide basis

- Effective working relationships are established between CNP and the interim/new National Park Authority
- CNP has been able to facilitate the sharing of experience and skills between the new South Downs National Park Authority and the rest of the National Park movement
- We can show that CNP has contributed to ensuring that the land between the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales is finally given the status it deserves

#### **4. To lead and strengthen the National Park movement**

This is essential because:

- National Parks rely on people acting to safeguard and promote them
- A wide range of organisations and individuals share a passion for National Parks; this community is crucial in ensuring the future of our National Parks
- The disparate nature of the National Park movement is both a challenge and a strength; the movement will be most effective if people and organisations share experience and work together for National Parks

We will achieve our aim by:

- Facilitating the sharing of information and experience between organisations and individuals to benefit National Parks
- Acting as the voice of the nation on National Park issues, learning from local experience and advising on action
- Encouraging organisations and individuals (including ourselves) to develop new skills and approaches to make us all more effective actors for National Parks

Specifically this means:

- Learning about National Park issues from local organisations, such as National Park Societies, consolidating this understanding and acting as the national voluntary sector voice for National Parks
- Facilitating the sharing of information and skills between different parts of the National Park movement, for example, by making links between National Park Societies and national charities through the Campaign network
- Running events, meetings and seminars to develop ideas about issues related to National Parks
- Using our networks to bring together people with different perspectives on National Parks (for example, members of the Corporate Forum for National Parks and National Park Societies) to encourage greater mutual understanding
- Acting as the umbrella body for the National Park Societies, and helping them to develop their capacity by increasing their numbers and building their expertise

We will have succeeded if:

- National Park Societies feel they have benefited from their association with CNP
- CNP has continued to learn from the National Park Societies' local knowledge and understanding to work more widely for the National Parks
- We can demonstrate examples of where working together has achieved more than if we had worked alone
- We have brought together organisations and/or individuals who otherwise would not have met, for the benefit of National Parks
- The National Park Societies are stronger and more effective

## Delivery issues

### Friends of National Parks

- Our individual members, or Friends, are crucial to CNP's future. They give us a popular mandate for our work, provide vital volunteer support and valuable income. We need to look after our Friends
- We will develop our Friends of National Parks scheme over the plan period and our aim is that income from Friends will represent 20% of CNP's core income by 2013. This doubling in income from Friends will be achieved through recruiting new Friends, and by increasing the support we receive from some of our existing Friends
- We will use the lessons we learn from building our own individual members to help the National Park Societies to build their membership

### Corporate Forum for National Parks

- The Corporate Forum is an essential part of CNP's portfolio of work. It provides not only valuable income but a unique channel of communication between voluntary and private sector interests in National Parks. Since its inception in 1992 there have been many examples of this working to the benefit of National Parks. Through the Corporate Forum CNP is able to influence the operations of major companies which work in the National Parks, and our members can gain valuable insight into member companies
- The Corporate Forum has its own agreed business plan for 2007 – 2010 and CNP will support the delivery of this
- An important part of the plan is to increase the number and range of members of the Forum, and this will be a focus of our work
- We will, in addition, look for opportunities to work with Corporate Forum members as project partners in CNP's work

### CNP in Wales

- CNP is an England and Wales organisation with staff, trustees, and expertise in both countries
- We are aware that our work in Wales needs strengthening, including building new relationships and raising the profile of CNP and of National Parks
- We will continue to work through all of our strategic aims to deliver benefits for National Parks in Wales, recognising that, whilst the context of the two countries differs, the values of National Parks are shared

### CNP's members

- Our membership is the heart of CNP. Over the last few years we have endeavoured to improve its operation but we know that there is more to do
- We aim to involve our members more in our work, by establishing new partnerships to deliver more for National Parks (for example, through joint working and projects)
- We will also continue to improve the way the Campaign's members operate when they meet, taking opportunities to make them more interactive and to help representatives fulfil their role more effectively
- Our new strategy presents opportunities to recruit new members to the Campaign, and we aim to increase the membership by welcoming organisations which might share an interest in increasing understanding about National Parks as part of a broader environmental remit

### Speaker Service

- CNP's speaker service is run entirely by volunteers, with minimal support provided by the staff. It is of enormous value and is the main vehicle through which CNP talks directly to the public about National Parks
- The service has huge potential to help us to increase the awareness of National Parks and to encourage people to join the National Parks movement
- However, the service needs investment if it is to reach a wider range of people and be more effective (for example, speakers are provided with outdated technology and images)
- We will find the funding to build the speaker service, to increase the number and range of speakers available, to assist them in marketing the service, to update the images and presentation technology they use and to help them recruit new Friends

### Costing our work

- During the development of this plan CNP's staff and trustees considered and rejected a radical change to CNP's business model, for example, by setting up a consultancy or training service to sell our expertise
- However, we do need to cost our work accurately, reflecting the time as well as money used in delivering our work. After all, staff time makes up the bulk of CNP's costs. We also need to reflect a proportion of overheads in all of our work
- We have improved our ability to predict and record our true costs and we will continue to improve on this, making these costs transparent to our funders and supporters

### Our income

- We are keen to maintain a broad range of income sources and have been careful over many years not to become too dependent on any one source
- This approach does, however, present a fundraising challenge as it requires us to spread our fundraising capability across many areas
- In order to maintain the level of our campaigning work for National Parks, and to increase the work we do to build understanding of and support for National Parks, we need to increase our income over and above inflation by a modest amount over the next 5 years
- Over the next plan period we aim to increase the proportion of our income from:
  - Campaign members, from 25% to 27% of core income (through a slight increase in the size of the membership and from any growth in the National Park Societies' membership)
  - Friends, from 11% to 20% of core income (through a development programme)
  - the Corporate Forum, from 13% to 20% of core income (through a modest increase in membership, in line with the Forum's business plan)

### ***What CNP will not be doing***

CNP cannot do all that it is asked to do and aims to do what it can effectively and with the best use of the limited resources at its disposal.

There are therefore issues that CNP is unable to prioritise and will only work on selectively or not at all. This is usually because others are working already in those areas and CNP would not add value. For example:

- Scottish National Parks, although we will continue to liaise with our sister organisation, the Scottish Council for National Parks, on issues of mutual interest
- Providing an education service to schools: although the web site is a good resource for schools and should be maintained with that in mind
- Agriculture: CNP does not plan to engage in the mainstream debate on the future of agriculture, particularly at the European level. There are other organisations much better able to do this, including ANPA
- Mountains of Mourne, other than maintaining a watching brief on its possible designation
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, other than maintaining a watching brief on the Cambrian Mountains





The Campaign for National Parks is a Registered Charity number 295336,  
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