

Section 4

Geodiversity Action Plan



Introduction

This Plan sets out actions for geodiversity in Northumberland National Park. It does not claim to be conclusive, but rather aims to be a stimulus for action. It is hoped that the plan will evolve as more people and organisations become involved in the process. The Action Plan is designed to be revised and updated.

The plan includes suggestions for lead partners to take forward each of the actions, but this is in no way intended to be exclusive. Interested groups and individuals are encouraged to get in touch if they would like to be involved or have ideas for actions.

The actions with the highest priority have been indicated with an asterisk.

Action plan

Objective	Action	Key organisations	Date	Priority
1. Contact and organise local interest in geology	1.1 Encourage the involvement of the Northumbria RIGS group in conserving and developing geodiversity in the district	RIGS, NWT, BGS, NNPA, interested individuals	2007	*
	1.2 Continue to identify partners, including companies and local groups who are interested in geology; keep an up-to-date database of contacts	All	2007 onwards	*
2. Designate and maintain data on important geological sites	2.1 Review procedures for designating geological sites and establish geodiversity steering group for NNP	NNPA, NWT, RIGS, BGS	2007 onwards	
	2.2 Revise SNCI sites using agreed criteria	NWT, RIGS, BGS,	2008	
	2.3 Identify sites as suitable RIGS sites and designate	RIGS, NWT, BGS, NNPA	2008 onwards	*
	2.4 Give information to site owners	RIGS, NNPA	Ongoing	
	2.5 Manage site data, incorporate in GIS and pass to Districts, County Councils, NWT etc.	BGS, NNPA, NE	Ongoing	*
3. Monitor condition of sites	3.1 Monitor the condition of geological SSSIs and ensure that all have a management plan or statement	NE	Ongoing	*
	3.2 Monitor the condition of other important sites	RIGS, BGS, NNPA,	Ongoing	
	3.3 Maintain a database of sites with condition	NE, NNPA, BGS	Ongoing	
	3.4 Work with local users and owners of sites to monitor condition, e.g. climbers	Local interest groups	Ongoing	
4. Ensure protection of sites through local and regional policies and strategies	4.1 Ensure that policies protecting geodiversity are included in the Local Development Framework and National Park Management Plan	NNPA	2007	*

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4. Ensure protection of sites through local and regional policies and strategies	4.2 Ensure that important sites are included on the LDF proposals map	NNPA	2007	*
	4.3 Consider making the Geodiversity Audit Supplementary Planning Guidance	NNPA	2008	
	4.4 Lobby to ensure that other district and regional plans include policies to protect geodiversity	NNPA, BGS, NWT, RIGS	Ongoing	
	4.5 Ensure that geodiversity is used as a base for the NNPA Landscape Character Assessment	NNPA, BGS	2007	*
	4.6 Ensure that geodiversity is incorporated into the NNPA Landscape Strategy	NNPA	2007	*
	4.7 Take geodiversity into account in Development Control decisions	NNPA, DCs	2007 onwards	*
	4.8 Ensure that geodiversity is included in the Otterburn Training Area ILMP review	NNPA, BGS, MoD	2009	
5. Practical conservation	5.1 Identify and prioritise sites in need of practical management.	BGS, NE, NNPA, RIGS	2007/08	*
	5.2 Identify groups to carry out the work	NNPA, NWT, NE	Ongoing	
	5.3 Ensure that protection and enhancement of important geological and geomorphological features and related historic features are included in Agri-environment schemes e.g. limekilns, quarries, tufa outcrops	NE, NNPA, Agents	2007 onwards	
	5.4 Consider deforesting crags within FC plantations during Forest Design Plan reviews	FC, NNPA	Each plan review	
6. Geodiversity of active quarries	6.1 Encourage Quarry Operators to prepare quarry specific Geodiversity Action Plans	NNPA, BGS, Quarry Operators	2007 onwards	
	6.2 Seek opportunities to report, record, conserve and enhance geodiversity in active quarries	NNPA, BGS, Quarry Operators, RIGS	2007 onwards	
7. Local use of stone	7.1 Establish which quarries were, and are, key to creating local character and distinctiveness.	NNPA, BGS, EH, Quarry Operators, Architects, Local history groups	2009	
	7.2 Investigate re-opening of small quarries (craft quarries) to provide locally distinctive stone for specific building projects	Quarry companies, architects, BGS, NNPA	Ongoing	

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7. Local use of stone	7.3 Ensure that local planning policies allow for this small scale quarrying	NNPA, NCC, DCs	Next review	
	7.4 Consider including more information in the NNPA Building Design Guide review to encourage awareness and use of local materials for repair and new-build	NNPA, BGS, EH	Next review	
8. Interpretation and public awareness	8.1 Commission a Geodiversity Interpretive Master Plan to provide ideas and approach for communicating themes at appropriate sites using a variety of media, incorporating proposals in 8.2 to 8.10 below	NNPA, BGS	2007/08	*
	8.2 Investigate the possibility of producing a book, or map and guide, on the geology of the Cheviots. Look into funding options and links with the Cheviot Hills Project	NNPA, BGS, Borders Council	2008	*
	8.3 Ensure that geodiversity and landscape are key elements of any further development at Once Brewed Visitor Centre	NNPA	Ongoing	*
	8.4 Develop more interest in geotourism – e.g. investigate European INTERREG project. Link to North Pennines AONB initiative and Scottish Borders. May include leaflets for self-guided walks and cycle trails	NNPA, NPAP, BGS	Ongoing	*
	8.5 Encourage guided walks and events especially linking to current events such as Berwick and Haltwhistle Walking Festivals	Programme providers, NNPA, BGS, RIGS	2007 onwards	
	8.6 Investigate opportunities for promoting geodiversity within the Otterburn Training Area	NNPA, MoD, BGS	2007 onwards	
	8.7 Hold workshops in central and northern areas of the National Park highlighting importance of these areas and how people can get involved	NNPA, BGS	2007/08	*
	8.8 Investigate setting up 'Rockwatch' or other events for younger children outside formal education	RIGS, NWT, NNPA	2008/09	
	8.9 Approach groups with related interests e.g. local history, natural history and archaeology	NNPA, BGS	Ongoing	
	8.10 Ensure that a comprehensive amount of information is available on web sites including details of sites with public access	NNPA, BGS, NWT, RIGS	2007 onwards	*

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9. Education and training	9.1 Encourage formal education opportunities, by providing information for local schools and suggesting suitable site visits. Facilitate these visits and study where possible	NNPA, BGS, RIGS, Schools	Ongoing	
	9.2 Provide information for Higher Education courses (Open University and local universities). Produce a guide for courses and study indicating good sites in the district to view and study features	NNPA, BGS, OUGS	2008	
	9.3 Provide training for builders and architects to encourage use of local stone	BGS, NNPA	2008/09	
	9.4 Provide training for NNP staff on geodiversity in each of the NNP areas	BGS	2007	
	9.5 Train local guides e.g. tourist providers	BGS, NNPA	2008	
	9.6 Provide training for local groups carrying out conservation work on sites	BGS, NE, RIGS	2008	
10. Research	10.1 Work with universities to identify suitable research topics within the area e.g. aspects of the Cheviot Granite and Quaternary studies	NNPA, BGS, Universities	2008/09	
	10.2 Identify all the items within the archaeological research agenda that link to geodiversity e.g. provenance of axe stones, millstones, locations of quarries	NNPA, BGS	2007	
	10.3 Identify any research topics investigating biological and geological links e.g. whin specific lichens	NNPA, Universities, NE, BGS	2008	
11. Funding	11.1 Investigate future funds for each of the actions above	All	Ongoing	*

Abbreviations used in the key organisations column of the action plan:

BGS	British Geological Survey
DCs	District Councils
EH	English Heritage
FC	Forestry Commission
MoD	Ministry of Defence, Otterburn Training Area
NCC	Northumberland County Council
NE	Natural England
NNPA	Northumberland National Park Authority
NPAP	North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership
NWT	Northumberland Wildlife Trust
OUGS	Open University Geological Society
RIGS	Regionally Important Geomorphological and Geological Sites groups