

Northern Uplands

A national landscape nature recovery pilot

Key themes: Championing nature's recovery, climate change adaptation and mitigation, land management, diversity and inclusion.

The Northern Uplands stretches from East Lancashire to the Scottish border. It includes five national landscapes and an area three times the size of Leeds that is designated for its national and international importance for wildlife.

Despite these designations, nature in the Northern Uplands still faces challenges. Valuable peatland blanket bog is still degraded in places. Suitable habitat for the UK's core populations of red-listed and iconic species, such as Curlew, Hen Harrier, Merlin, Black Grouse, Ring Ouzel and Red Squirrel, needs to be conserved, restored and extended. Native broadleaved woodland is fragmented and covers only a small percentage of the land. Following the principle of 'the right tree in the right place', significant woodland creation can create a more diverse and connected ecological network.

Vision: A diverse, nature-rich landscape; where blanket bog, heather moorland, in-bye pastures, hay meadows, pristine aquatic ecosystems and wooded valleys and dales form a resilient and flourishing mosaic of habitats. Priority habitats are well managed, extended and better connected; whilst threatened species are on a clear path to recovery. Land management practices allow opportunity for natural processes to re-establish and evolve; whilst also helping to address climate change adaptation and mitigation.



Bowland Fells by Steven Kidd

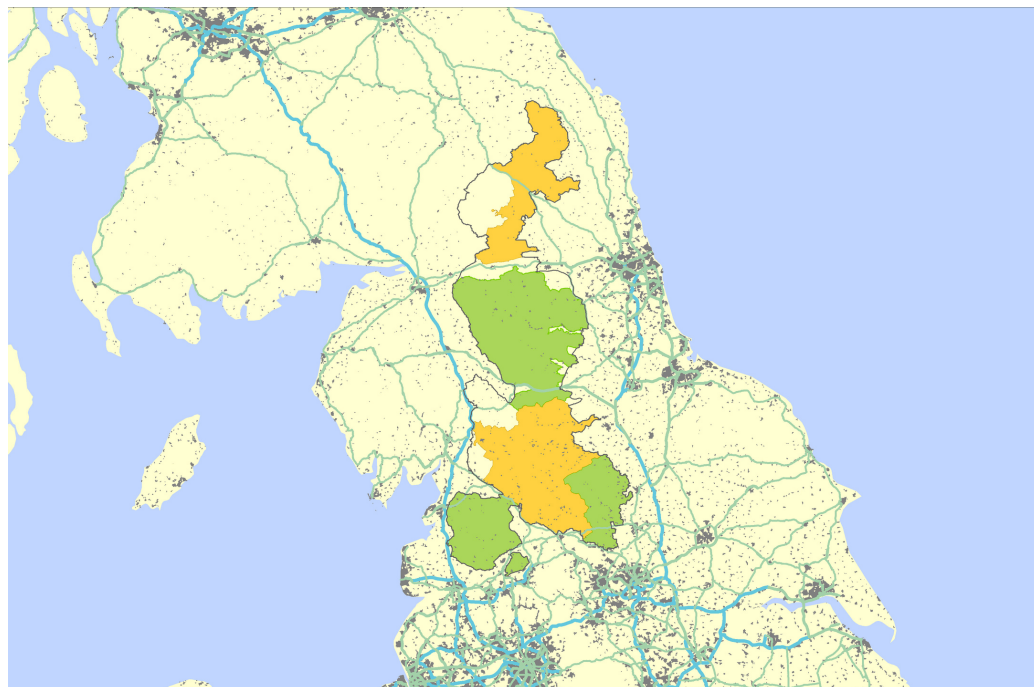


Yellow rattle and red clover introduced for healthy hay meadows

The landscape's natural capital is valued for the range of services and benefits it provides for society – flood reduction, clean air and water – and land managers are properly rewarded for their stewardship of these assets. Farmers are engaged and involved in a movement towards farming with nature, whilst remaining resilient and profitable.

These special landscapes are welcoming and accessible for everyone to enjoy, and visiting them may improve their health and wellbeing.

Partnership: The Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership (LNP) is focused on the five national landscapes of the northern Pennine chain. It brings together more than 50 organisations with an interest in nature recovery across these special landscapes. The LNP's work is overseen by a board drawn from the land management, business and environmental sectors. The LNP has worked on number of initiatives including:



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promotion of high nature value farming and the establishment of the Northern Hill Farmer Panel; habitat network mapping; collaborative work for nature recovery, such as the Tees Swale programme; and sharing of good practice on species-rich upland grassland management and restoration.

Benefits to society: The Northern Uplands nature recovery network will do more than help nature's recovery. It will bring a range of other services and benefits to people living in and around these landscapes:

1. Traditional livestock farming systems, particularly hardier breeds of sheep such as Cheviots and Swaledales that form the backbone of the UK sheep industry.
2. A welcoming destination for millions of visitors each year, supporting vibrant and growing visitor economies and providing substantial health and well-being benefits to society.
3. 6,000 km of footpaths and bridleways, including three National Trails – the Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway and Hadrian's Wall Path; and over 300,000 hectares of land with open access.
4. The headwaters of river catchments that provide a clean water supply for millions of households and thousands of businesses across the north of England.
5. Nature-based solutions to help manage and reduce flood risk for communities across northern England.
6. Millions of tonnes of carbon stored and sequestered through peatland restoration, woodland creation and better management of grassland soils for carbon storage.

Implementing the vision: The five national landscape teams are working together closely on a number of headline programmes, projects and initiatives focused on nature recovery:

- Great North Bog – LNP partners have been at the heart of this developing peatland restoration initiative
- Species recovery – development of programmes and projects to expand populations of iconic species like Curlew, Black Grouse and Red Squirrel
- 'What the Hills are Worth' – creating a set of natural capital accounts for the Northern Uplands
- Hay meadow restoration – in Yorkshire Dales, Nidderdale, Forest of Bowland and parts of Cumbria, including Plantlife's Meadow Makers project and the proposed Magnificent Meadows II programme
- Tees Swale programme – working with hundreds of High Nature Value farmers to create the most biodiverse landscape in the English uplands
- National landscape nature recovery plans – producing plans that fit together to be more than the sum of their parts; sharing good practice and working together to support the Northern Uplands vision.