

Scoping Study on the socio-economic benefits of heritage in National Parks

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The 1995 Environment Act states the two statutory purposes of the National Parks are :

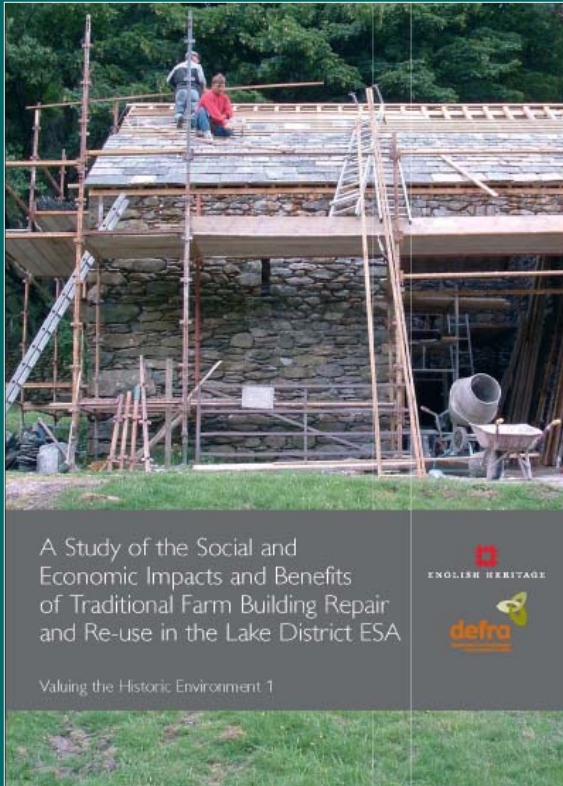
- To conserve and enhance the natural, beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage

and

- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of National Parks by the Public

- National Parks are internationally renowned for the quality of their cultural assets, providing a wide range of benefits for the economy, tourism, recreation and environmental conservation.
- The heritage of National Parks is fundamental to their unique present-day character and central to the sense of identity of local communities.
- It is also a key factor encouraging inward investment and tourism.





- English Heritage had previously undertaken work in the Lake District & Yorkshire Dales National Parks which examined the socio-economic value of repairs to traditional farm buildings and dry-stone walls to the local economy.
- However, the socio-economic benefits of heritage have yet to be fully defined to enable the full range of heritage benefits to be measured and evaluated in ways that can usefully inform policy formulation and management practice.



- In 2007 Cadw & English Heritage commissioned a scoping study to address this knowledge gap under the Historic Environment Joint Statement in National Parks Action Plan.
- The aim was to provide Government and its agencies at all spatial levels with a research programme to enable the socio-economic benefits of heritage in the National Parks to be recognised, measured and valued in an academically sound and rigorous way.

Aims of the scoping study:

The aims of the study were to:

- 1) Define the heritage resource in the context of National Parks.
- 2) Identify and examine the knowledge and research base relating to the socio-economic benefits of heritage within National Parks.
- 3) Identify any gaps in the knowledge and research base and provide a programme of work to fill such gaps.



The research comprised an extensive scoping study involving:

- a literature review
- various forms of stakeholder consultation, including email and telephone surveys, face-to-face interviews and participatory workshops

The research programme was therefore a product of the existing evidence base, consultation with stakeholders at varying levels of governance and management and a gap analysis undertaken by the research team.



The literature review revealed a wealth of relevant publications to help guide and inform further research but uncovered comparatively little material relating specifically to the socio-economic benefits of heritage and even less on the benefits of heritage in National Parks. As such, a number of research gaps were identified, as well as methodologies to help inform such gaps, which the research programme begins to address.



Summary headlines

- A number of research gaps were identified, as well as methodologies to help inform such gaps, which the research programme begins to address.
- Findings from the stakeholder consultation revealed a great deal of interest in, and need for, establishing a programme of social and economic research for heritage in National Parks spanning all spatial levels.
- At the heart of this was the need to recognise the specific importance and value of the historic environment in National Parks, as distinct from the wider natural environment, and that heritage conservation deserves comparable parity of support to that of nature conservation in these areas
- Total of 22 research projects (or groups of projects) are contained in the programme derived from the study, structured around four themes:
 - ~ Generic policy and management (4 projects);
 - ~ Social (5);
 - ~ Economic (8); and
 - ~ Tourism (5)

Theme	Project	Project aim
Policy and management	Cultural mapping	To produce a cultural map of heritage values, importance and understanding across the range of National Park stakeholders including park managers, policy makers, farmers, residents and visitors
Policy and management	Institutional values	To review and evaluate existing institutional arrangements and identify best practice in National Parks with regard to heritage, including: knowledge exchange activities heritage and management; and delivery of heritage benefits
Social	Sense of place	To identify the contribution that heritage specifically makes to the creation of a sense of place and to local distinctiveness in National Park communities
Social	Health and well being	To explore the extent to which heritage in National Parks contributes to health and wellbeing
Social	Social Capital	To identify the extent to which heritage contributes to the development of social capital in local communities, and vice-versa, in National Parks
Social	Intrinsic values	To develop methods and tools to measure the intrinsic value (historical, social, symbolic, aesthetic and spiritual) of heritage assets in National Parks
Economic	Market Stall	To examine consumer willingness to pay for heritage conservation and management in National Parks
Economic	Historic Environmental Accounting	To construct an environmental accounting framework to help measure, support and influence the sustainable development of National Parks which explicitly integrates the historic with the natural environment
Economic	Rural Development	To identify the various heritage-related activities in National Parks and measure the contributions of heritage activities to rural development relative to other sectors
Economic	Instrumental values	To investigate the local economic impacts of various forms of heritage management and funding, including community-based heritage assets, within, and beyond, National Parks
Tourism	Heritage tourism multiplier	To develop a tool to allow measurement of the impacts of heritage-related tourism to the local economy
Tourism	Shadow values of heritage	To estimate the shadow values (economic outcomes of positive non-market values) of heritage-related tourism in National Parks
Tourism	Tourism management	To explore the contribution of heritage to tourism management in National Parks; and to establish networks through action research links between tourism agencies and National Park Authorities with regard to heritage

So where next?

- summary publication for the research
- Project Group which will look at how best to take forward the work
- EH project examining the Sense of Place
- project being developed by the NT in Wales looking at the value of heritage



Conclusions

