



Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape

Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape Partnership Executive Committee Meeting

2pm, 20th May 2026

Arnside Educational Institute, Joyce Nicholson Hall

DRAFT MINUTES

In Attendance

Cllr Keith Reed, Silverdale Parish Council (Chair)
Liz Cheslett-Davey, Environment Agency
Gary Marsh, Landscape Trust
Heather Bennett, RSPB
Jarrod Sneyd, RSPB
Jim Turner, Natural England
Darren Mason, National Trust
Lorayne Wall, Friends of the Lake District
Ann Kitchen, BCCIC – Business Rep
Julian Oston, Dallam Tower Estate – Landowner Rep
Brian Jones, Ramblers – User Group Rep

Damian Law, Westmorland and Furness Council – Officer Rep (Principal Planning Policy Officer)
Stephanie Peay, Lancaster City Council – Lancaster City Council Biodiversity Officer

Lucy Barron, National Landscape Manager
Calum Booth, National Landscape Officer
Dougie Watson, Countryside Officer
Caroline Howard, Funding & Communications Officer (mins)

Apologies

Claire Green, Natural England
Dan Taylor, National Trust
Steve Benner, Landscape Trust
Joan Jackson, NFU
Graham Jackson-Pitt, Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Simon Waller, CLA
Bridget Pickthall, Bridleways Association – User Group Rep
Cllr Helen Chaffey, Westmorland & Furness Council
Cllr Sue Tyldesley, Lancaster City Council & Yealands Parish Council
Cllr Graham Dalton, Lancashire County Council
Cllr Lindsey Simmonds, Warton Parish Council
Cllr Mick Simpson – Arnside Parish Council

Gemma Wren, Nature's Gems – Business Rep
Adam Briggs, NFU

Tony Lund, Lancashire County Council – Officer Rep
Diane Neville, Lancaster City Council – Officer Rep (Principal Planning Officer)

Belinda Barclay, Local Nature Reserve Warden
Helen Rawlinson, Countryside Officer
Richard Park, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer
Tonia Armer, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer
Isla Young, National Landscape Service Support
Grace Holland, Growing Station Manager
Ciaran Rowett, Nature Recovery Officer

Not In Attendance

Cllr Peter Greifenberg, Beetham Parish Council
Rachel Whaley, Westmorland and Furness Council – Officer Rep (Principal Planning Policy Officer)

1. Welcome, apologies and introductions

2. Minutes of meeting held on 6th November 2025

Minutes accepted.

3. Matters arising

Liz Cheslett-Davey will deliver a talk on water pollution at the next meeting.
Pollution response group still to be actioned.

Local parish councillors meeting was in relation to planning policy matters – this meeting will be postponed until there is greater clarity regarding way forward in terms of developing local planning policy. Likely to be autumn now.

Bittern Award – Awarded the Bittern Award to Roger Cartwright. Awarded the Bittern Youth Award to Arnside School Eco Group.

4. Brief updates from partners

Gary Marsh, Landscape Trust

Stations of Welcome bench has been installed at Coldwell Meadow – on the new tramper route.

New limestone wall to be installed at Coldwell Meadow thanks to a FiPL grant.

Liz Cheslett Davey, Environment Agency

Environment Agency updating River Basin Management Plans. Previously high level and strategic documents. Now looking at each water body. Working with Natural England on the Diffuse Water Pollution Plan for the area around Leighton Moss.

Brian Jones, Ramblers Association

England Coast Path is not yet open in this area; establishment is the next stage. Will have an impact on tourism. Has Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape been involved

in discussion about the revival of the Limestone Link path? Kendal Ramblers are liaising with the Local Authority on this.

ACTION: LB to contact Westmorland and Furness Council to discuss the Limestone Link path renewal plans.

Darren Mason, National Trust

NT reorganisation complete, one less ranger and more properties under the local NT team. Undertaking some visitor zoning work at Sandscale Haws for Natterjack Toads and increased area for waders. Wetland work being undertaken at Sizergh. The Post Office Lots access for all project is now completed with a wider range of users and some positive feedback from users. Bank House Farm in Silverdale will be open for an Open Farm Sunday on 7th June.

Jarrold Sneyd, RSPB

Shared Prosperity Fund work (building relationships with Lancaster City Council) is now complete, this facilitated hide repairs etc. Accessible gates at Warton Mires with the National Landscape Access for All Funds. Visit England assessment at RSPB Leighton Moss gave a score of 95%, meaning they will be put forward for another gold accolade. RSPB hoping to install an in-ditch predator fence at Warton Mires this autumn. There is also an aspiration to improve the public right of way in this area. There are up to 11 booming bitterns this year – one of the satellite sites only started relatively recently has 4 bitterns on it already. Still progressing Evolving Leighton Moss, hopefully with funding through Landscape Connections bid. The RSPB needs to make a strong business case for this to secure funding.

Julian Oston, Dallam Tower Estate

A proposal for drainage work at Black Dyke, which is affecting land at Arnside Tower Farm, is being taken forward with Lynster Farmers Group.

Calum Booth has written a brief for a feasibility study to look at some management work at Sandside Marsh; looking to progress this.

Stephanie Peay, Lancaster City Council

Local Plan work is ongoing – the Call for Sites process has produced a long list of potential development sites across the district, and these are being assessed for biodiversity impacts, along with other colleagues considering different aspects. Sites can still be proposed at any time. The next step will be a scoping consultation which will run from 8th June to 20th July. This will expand on the previous consultations and invite comments on a wider range of topics. Engagement in this consultation process is encouraged.

Swift boxes up on Morecambe Town Hall and City Lab in Dalton Square in Lancaster, put up with the RSPB. Visitor surveys have been commissioned in the Morecambe Bay area looking at where people are visiting from, what they are using the space for etc. This should feed into work on the mitigation of recreational impacts – there were two sites within the National Landscape (Silverdale Shore and Arnside Promenade) included in these surveys.

Jim Turner, Natural England

Gait Barrows has seen a meadow enhancement project at Moss Lane Pastures, supported by the National Landscape capital funding to upgrade infrastructure to enable light grazing. There is a new bench at Hawes Water funded through the National Landscape Access for All funds. 3 new coppice coops have been cut, and bramble control on the limestone pavements is being undertaken. The wood ant population has been surveyed at Gait Barrows – this is a 40-year survey and the results are eagerly awaited; results will be shared when they come through. They found two nest hosting shining guest ants – these are a protected species. Birds Eye Primrose count scheduled for 21st May in the marl area at Hawes Water and a juniper survey is planned working with Helen Rawlinson.

Ann Kitchen, BCCIC

BCCIC have been organising meetings between the sustainability groups in the area. Tool Share set up for the National Landscape, led by Sarah Hymas. Still working with primary schools, and for the first time we have Bleasdale School willing to work with us. Species Recovery Programme with the National Landscape is going well – surveying 56 species, 4th year of surveys. This can help identify management. BCCIC put in a planning objection for the first time. Caroline Howard has stepped down as Chair – Steve Porter is the new Chair, Peter Haine is the new Finance Director and Caroline Howard will temporarily act as Secretary (non-shareholding).

Damian Law, Westmorland and Furness Council

Reviewing the Local Plan, based on the new legislation. Undertaking a scoping consultation in the summer, with details to be confirmed. Two summers ago, there was an early conversations engagement activity, this time there will be feedback invited in the National Landscape. In the two previous calls for sites in 2024 and 2025, there were two sites in the Westmorland and Furness part of the National Landscape proposed – both in Arnside. There is also a Design Code supplement document available for Westmorland and Furness – there is a pdf version at present; this is a district-wide code, but it does recognise that different design is required in different local areas.

Lorayne Wall, Friends of the Lake District

The Friends of the Lake District CEO is leaving at the end of the month; a new CEO will be incoming in around 3-4 months. Data gathering undertaken on holiday homes, second homes etc. This informed the current campaign 'Fairer Housing, Stronger Communities' for which the National Landscape partnership has signed a petition. Blueprint for Cumbria's new Mayor has been published. Tranquillity research undertaken at the end of 2025, this could be rolled out outside the National Park. FoLD have also recently launched a planning outreach project to work with Parish Councils, this is open to other community groups and may be of interest to other groups within the National Landscape.

Keith Reed, Silverdale Parish Council

The Parish Council has now revealed that the potential housing site is the land around The Woodlands Hotel in Silverdale; they are working with a company who specialises in affordable housing. Various stakeholder engagement will be undertaken, and a masterplan should be available in the middle of July. The public toilet should have one of the two cubicles open within the next two weeks. The County Council have now made some money available for parking at Bleasdale School which should help address the parking issues in the village linked to increased staffing. The play area will have a working group set up soon to plan retention, repair or replacement of the play equipment. The Zero Carbon working group has been refreshed into Community Action for Sustainable Silverdale.

5. National Landscape Partnership team - work programme update

Lucy Barron gave an update on the team's recent activities:

The National Landscape Management Plan for 2026-2031 has now been adopted by Lancaster City Council and Westmorland and Furness Council. Special thanks to Calum Booth for his work on the Plan. The Management Plan can be downloaded from the National Landscape website.

Drawing to the end of the Westmorland and Furness Climate and Nature project. This has allowed the team to prepare and submit the NLHF bid with Morecambe Bay Partnership, it has enabled us to continue the work at the Growing Station, hire a Nature Recovery Officer and fund a range of engagement work. This included the Bittern Sustainability Conference, which has seen further community engagement in sustainability projects in the area. Due to some revenue uplift from Defra this year we will be able to continue some of those posts and this good work.

Farming in Protected Landscapes continues – there were 21 applications approved up until the end of February 2026. The amount of grant we were able to approve was lower than the amount available due to weather preventing completion of some projects. The programme has been extended for a further 3 years. Last year we had applications from farmers who had not previously engaged with the team or the programme before.

We continue to run the National Landscape volunteer programme, this resulted in over 5,000 hours of volunteer time donated in the last year, across 136 events. We have around 132 active volunteers in the area across our programmes.

The Walks for All programme is continuing – this has received Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme funding again for 2026/7.

There have been a range of Capital Projects funded through the Access for All Removing Barriers and the 30 by 30 / Invest to Save Capital funds. This funding has been continued for 3 years, so there are further opportunities to use this funding for the benefit of the area and to deliver the Management Plan.

As part of the Waymarking the Landscape Programme we refurbished 4 installed 9 waymarker posts.

The team continue to manage the Local Nature Reserves at Warton Crag and Trowbarrow. This takes considerable partnership work to manage recreational use, including with partners such as the BMC.

6. Funding update

Lucy Barron gave an overview of the National Landscape funding situation. Defra have given a 3-year funding settlement from April 2026. The funding agreement is Core Revenue, Capital for 30 by 30 Nature Recovery, Innovation or Invest to Save projects and the Access Removing Barriers Programme. The Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme has also been approved for 3 years. There is also a one-year Revenue uplift for 2026/7.

The National Landscape team have submitted two significant funding applications which are being considered. The Species Recovery Programme has been submitted to Natural England – this is for 5 key species, field gentian, birds eye primrose, green winged orchids, autumn ladies' tresses and juniper. We expect a response in May for this bid. The Landscape Connections bid has been put in by Morecambe Bay Partnership and is a National Lottery Heritage Fund bid – we should hear the result at the end of June. If successful this would cover a 2-year development phase, to then submit a bid for an 8-year delivery phase.

7. Budget 2025/26 and 2026/27

Caroline Howard gave a budget update (printed report tabled for review).

Ann Kitchen asked if the National Landscape team might prompt more engagement with the Parish Councils – including requests for funding.

If the NLHF bid is successful that will be managed through a separate budget code.

Ann Kitchen proposed, Julian Oston seconded. Proposed budget 2026/27 was approved.

8. Planning work programme update (report circulated)

Calum Booth gave a review of planning matters – the team reviewed 103 applications, and submitted 24 formal responses. Notable planning matters; the Council planning officer has accepted a 15% affordable housing provision at the Sand Lane in Warton – the National Landscape have maintained objections throughout on the basis of this not meeting the 50% policy requirement.

Site at AS22 in Warton of 8 houses, to be 50% affordable housing. Some comments on materials etc. sent in, but generally compliant with policy.

Sandside and Quarry Lane development is under officer consideration – the National Landscape put in a substantial objection.

9. Group discussion: Access for All and Capital Projects

Lucy Barron asked the Committee for suggestions for Capital projects over the next 3 years.

Suggestions proposed:

- Ann Kitchen: grants for landowners to make their footpaths walkable – potentially making this an online page. Lucy Barron clarified that the grant can't cover general maintenance – it has to be a substantial improvement or upgrade. Please do send in suggestions for footpaths where access improvement works could be undertaken.
- Gary Marsh suggested re-approaching the landowner for The Three Brothers.
- RSPB looking at potential for additional tramper passing places and disabled access for parking at the saltmarsh. Also, improvements for accessibility at Warton Mires.
- Rest stops etc. particularly on tramper paths and other paths.
- Interpretation project for signage for sites such as Coldwell Horseshoe and Silverdale Wells.
- Dark sky friendly lighting scheme, replacing existing poor lighting with dark-skies friendly lighting in accordance with the [Cumbria Good Lighting Technical Advice Note](#) (we could potentially help to identify these or otherwise be involved in such a project). This would save money as it would likely reduce the amount of lighting overall and what was remaining would be more efficient and cheaper to run.
- Hedges and walling projects – whilst there may be some cases where only a fence will do, replacing fences with hedges and walls saves money in the long run as they are more resilient and last longer and create far more added value (providing habitat, shade, slow the flow functionality, protection from soil erosion, maintaining cultural heritage and creating jobs through traditional rural craft, and in the case of hedges, carbon sequestration, pollination opportunities, natural food source and self-medication source for livestock etc etc) than fences (which really only serve as a boundary) as well as avoiding the high carbon footprint of manufacturing the metal etc. Again, it would be great to look at opportunities for working together on hedges/walls in the future.

Further suggestions are welcomed.

ACTION: ALL to send further suggestions to Lucy Barron.

10. Group discussion: Format of future meetings

Lucy Barron invited attendees to consider the format of meetings and whether amendments could be made to make the meetings as useful and relevant to attendees as possible.

Suggestions:

- The inclusion of an additional meeting with a site visit.
- Stephanie Peay noted that Forest of Bowland have a morning site visit and an afternoon with the formal business.

- Pre-circulated written updates, highlighting discussion points. Updates sent – reminder 2 weeks in advance, circulated with the papers.
- Meeting theming.
- Discussion of planning is helpful.
- Spotlight on key areas of work / projects

Further suggestions are welcomed.

ACTION: ALL to send further suggestions to Lucy Barron.

11. National update

Lucy Barron gave an update on the National Landscapes Association. This organisation does a huge amount of work in advocacy for National Landscapes; this results in outputs such as funding uplifts from Defra and the Nature Calling project. They host the annual conference and have staff that support the teams in National Landscapes. All Executive Committee members are encouraged to review the National Landscapes website to look at the work they are involved in.

12. Any Other Business

None.

13. Dates for your diary and dates of future meetings

5th November 2026, 2pm, Arnside Educational Institute

Table of Actions

Action	Allocated to	Deadline
Contact Westmorland and Furness Council to discuss the Limestone Link path renewal plans.	Lucy Barron	Next Meeting
Send further suggestions for Capital 30 by 30, Invest to Save, Innovation or Access projects to Lucy Barron.	All	ASAP
Send further suggestions on meeting format improvements to Lucy Barron.	All	ASAP