

Kirkbride, Alistair (2021): National Parks access & transport: an optimum model for governance

Final report prepared as part of a fellowship with the Foundation for Integrated Transport, December 2021

This report has been prepared by Alistair Kirkbride using support from the Foundation for Integrated Transport’s Fellowship Scheme. The scope of the Fellowship was around governance of access and transport in national parks following proposal 19 in Glover’s 2019 review of Protected Landscapes for DEFRA¹.

Whilst the subsequent disruptions of the Covid pandemic created significant problems for national parks, they also led to useful progressive transport & access interventions and the imperative for different ways of working between national park authorities and their transport authorities.

Contents

Problems and opportunities 2

1. Introduction2

2. National Park access and transport3

 Problems and issues3

 Scope.....3

3. Current Governance5

 3.1 Powers & abilities5

 3.2 Governance & partners7

4. Alternative governance8

 4.1 Governance model options8

 4.2 The optimum model: A formal National Park Sustainable Access and Transport Partnership9

5. Conclusions and recommendations 11

¹ <https://integratedtransport.co.uk/project/alistair-kirkbride>

Problems and opportunities

Next to the many reports setting out problems related to national park access and transport are others suggesting how things could be, pointing to selected case studies of places around the world. In spite of this, nothing of significance seems to change.

Julian Glover's 2019 review of protected landscapes for DEFRA² puts together a case for why fundamental changes to how transport is governed in national parks would help to unlock the required transformation in how people access and travel around national parks. Given the changes in people's behaviour and experiences related to the Covid lockdowns and re-openings (localised active travel, staycations, collapse in commuting as a key rail market etc), key developments in national policy around required decarbonisation, active travel and bus services, the time is ripe to rethink how decisions are made regarding access and transport to and within national parks.

I. Introduction

Access and transport relating to national parks has long been considered problematic.

The Glover Review.

In 2019, DEFRA published a comprehensive review by Julian Glover of England's protected landscapes^{2,3}. Part of this focussed explicitly on access and transport, summarising many of the intractable problems relating to transport and access, suggesting that national parks represent a great opportunity to demonstrate modern access and mobility systems.

The Review's recommendation 19 calls for "A new approach to coordinating public transport piloted in the Lake District..." by providing the NPA with more strategic powers over its transport system because National Park Authorities "... are well placed to take on an active role in coordinating and promoting transport. They are the bodies best placed to communicate with visitors, and to have a single strategic vision".

Notably, the tone of Glover's appraisal was not just of the need to solve problems, but of opportunity – of National Parks to show progressive development of transport government in order to demonstrate the potential for viable access and transport in rural areas with significant visitor volumes.

It was beyond the scope of Glover's review to specify the detail of appropriate governance.

This document

- Summarises key problem areas relating to access and transport in national parks.
This is so that options for changing governance can be considered in terms of whether they would be result in helping to tackle these problems.
- Summarises how transport is currently governed in national parks
- Proposes an alternative optimised governance model

It refers to national parks generally, but focusses on the Lake District as a case study, and because the Glover proposal was explicitly focussed on the Lake District. Furthermore, the ongoing local

² Glover, J. (2019) *Landscapes Review*, Report commissioned by DEFRA.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

³ Kirkbride, A. 2019 "National Parks can do for rural transport what mayors are doing for travel in cities", *Local Transport Today* 784, October 19th 2019; <https://www.transportxtra.com/publications/local-transport-today/news/62453/national-parks-can-do-for-rural-transport-what-mayors-are-doing-for-travel-in-cities/>

government reorganisation in Cumbria will mean that the existing single Transport Authority will be replaced by two covering the Lake District; this provides an added imperative and urgency to set out an alternative transport governance arrangement for the national park.

2. National Park access and transport

Problems and issues

Access and transport to and within national parks is stubbornly dominated by car use, with over 90% journeys typically being made by car. Whilst easy car provides easy and cheap access for many people:

- The volume of cars leads to severe traffic and parking congestion, especially at peak times and in bottlenecks.
This leads to long and unreliable journey times for all, access problems for emergency services & buses and results in local road safety problems;
- Roads within national parks are generally narrow and winding
As a key part of the character of the protected landscape, there is no serious option – nor desire on landscape grounds - to widen or straighten roads. There is also a strong case against car park expansion on the grounds of landscape impact and inducing more traffic
- Car domination compromises quality of visitor experience, leads to landscape damage and visual & noise blight;
- Access and transport systems dominated by cars result in poor choices and limiting opportunities for visitors who do not have access to a car (an increasing proportion of younger adults⁴ and about 24% of UK households) or choose not to use one;
- Transport systems that cater for high volumes of visitors lead to poor choices and travelling conditions for local residents.
Public transport fares are high, ticketing is inappropriate for resident demands, services are seasonal and tend to focus on routes popular with visitors rather than residents resulting in transport deserts⁵
- Over 90% visitors travel to many national parks by car, and this alone is often the largest single contributor to a national park's carbon emissions.

Glover identifies existing governance – who has what powers relating to access and transport in national parks – as the main barrier or set of barriers that limit effective solutions to these problems. Indeed, the fact that most problems are long-standing and common across national parks strongly implies that structural problems are limiting them being solved, and hence restructuring governance has to be part of the solution.

Scope

The summary of problems and issues illustrates the need to define the scope of the overall problem for which we are considering governance.

Transport users & use

Whilst acute transport problems relate mainly to visitor travel (e.g. peak time congestion), the lack of affordable transport for residents who do not have access to a car is chronic and long-standing. Together, these lead to problems for businesses – from unreliable journey times to a lack of local workforce. As these are all linked, it is only right for the scope to include all three groups - visitors, residents and business travellers.

⁴ Marsden, G. et al. (2018) All Change? The future of travel demand, and the implications for policy and planning, First Report of the Commission on Travel Demand, <http://www.demand.ac.uk/commission-on-travel-demand/>

⁵ CPRE (2020), *Transport deserts: Why reconnecting rural England matters*, <https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/transport-deserts-report-a-summary/>

In the Lake District, visitors number are nearly double (193%) the resident population over the whole year⁶; in the peak months of July and August, there are about three times as many visitors as residents travelling around the Lake District. Nationally, leisure travel accounts for about 63% of personal miles travelled for journeys over 50 miles by all modes⁷.

However, the Lake District typifies the problem in national parks of transport services and fares being designed primarily for visitor markets and their demands, hence not encouraging use by residents⁸ and businesses; different governance needs to enable the development of different economic models for genuinely economically sustainable transport in national parks.

National Park boundary?

Whilst much focus lies on issues within the national park:

- From a transport perspective, the boundary is arbitrary
- From a carbon perspective, significant emissions are from visitor travel to/from national parks. 28% of Cumbria's total carbon budget is accounted for by visitor travel to/from⁹; in 2009, it was estimated¹⁰ that 53.6% of the Lake District's transport carbon was emitted from visitor travel to/from, with slightly under half of this (23.8%) being from car travel.

Which powers?

The scope of issues and problems suggest that the sorts of powers that are in-scope briefly include:

- Public transport services – especially buses in & to the national park, but also train services as appropriate and integration
- Highway access management and speed limits
- Active travel – infrastructure, facilities & services
- Taxis & private hire vehicles

Other related areas can be seen as being in scope but which

- Are not exclusively related to transport – such as destination marketing or any development of visitor levies
- Do not relate to existing areas of implementation - such as area-wide road user charging or emerging new mobility

These are taken into account when considering alternative models of governance that would be robust and future-proofed as best as possible.

Limits of the role of governance

It is accepted that changing governance alone cannot solve national park access and transport problems.

- Existing legislation – such as bus deregulation, difficulties in creating effective integration and the ability to raise levies – make modern sustainable transport networks difficult to deliver;
- Funding is not available for the widespread scale of changes required. However, shifting the economic model of how a transport system works opens different ways of not only attracting

⁶ 28.55m visitor days/365 = 78,219 annualised visitor population compared to a resident population of 40,478 = 193% (all data from <https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/learning/factsandfigures>)

⁷ NTS data, presented by Jillian Anable at FLD Rerouting Transport conference, 12th November 2019 <https://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=92b80a5d-e03f-4893-895d-7773a7ab12cc>

⁸ For example, a journey from Staveley village to the Windermere jetty museum is 5.4 miles; for two adults and two children, this costs a staggering £52.60 in return tickets or £32.70 for a North West Group Explorer ticket; at 45p/mile, the equivalent journey by private car costs £4.86.

⁹ Small World Consulting (2020) *A Carbon Baseline for Cumbria*; <https://cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/536/671/4674/17217/17225/4414012219.PDF>

¹⁰ Kirkbride, A. 2009 *Where's the Carbon? Optimising the Lake District's Transport Framework to reduce carbon emissions*, unpublished; presentation available at <https://slideplayer.com/slide/6178045/>

investment but shifting demand – so that an increasing proportion of the revenues from private car use are re-directed to public transport use.

Well-conceived governance needs to be able to re-frame the approach to transport so that effort is focussed on opportunities within existing legislation and regulation; these include using the powers in the Bus Services Act¹¹ & Bus Back Better¹², maximising the role of social enterprise and realising opportunities for innovation.

3. Current Governance

3.1 Powers & abilities

Table 1 sets out

- The various powers that relate to formal legislation
- Where these powers currently reside
- What would be enabled - or be done better – if the powers were brought within the aegis of a national-park focussed governance structure

Power	Legislation & strategy	Who currently has powers?	What would it allow?
Bus service provision Control over integration	Bus Services Act 2017 ¹¹ Bus Back Better (2020) ¹² & Bus Service Improvement Planning	Transport Authorities <i>only with devolution deal</i> (currently); BBB provides opportunities for (expects?) TAs to take on extra powers that define bus service quality and integration	Design and control of a bus network & service quality (fares, frequency etc) that makes sense for a broader range of users within and relating to the national park; integration of buses with other relevant services; profitable services subsidising marginal services
Traffic regulation / highway access restrictions	Traffic Management Act 2004 ¹³	Transport Authority (CCC)	Access restrictions (permanent, seasonal, short-term or event based) Parking enforcement and traffic management
Speed limits	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (section 6)	Transport Authority; Highways Agency for motorways and trunk roads (M6, A66, A590)	Speed limits to be set with primary consideration for park functions.
Highway design	Manual for Streets ¹⁴ ; Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20) ¹⁵	Transport Authority; District Councils in some cases	More sensitive design of highways and streetscape in protected landscapes; better quality cycle / active travel routes.

¹¹ *The Bus Services Act 2017: new powers and opportunities*; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-services-act-2017-new-powers-and-opportunities>

¹² *Bus back better: A long-term strategy for buses in England, outside London* (2021);

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-back-better>

¹³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27/contents>

¹⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/341513/pdfmanforstreets.pdf

¹⁵ *Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20): Guidance for local authorities on designing high-quality, safe cycle infrastructure* (2020); <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20>

There are other areas and issues that relate to access and transport in national parks that are worthy of consideration:

- Taxi regulation and more flexible use of smaller vehicles
Taxis are currently controlled at district level. Current relevant issues involve (i) cross-district boundaries and (ii) (efficient) use of vehicles for more than one purpose^{16,17}
- Integrated management of car park charging across places, landowners and operators; integration of car parking charging into any Eco levy implementation.
- Different models for raising and capturing revenue
The common idea across the calls for road user charging¹⁸ and visitor levies¹⁹ in national parks is the ability to capture explicitly revenues from visitors. The idea of an Eco Levy²⁰ completes the idea by linking explicitly the capturing of revenues from more damaging transport to fund widespread packages of sustainable transport.
There is ongoing debate on the extent to which these ideas can be developed within existing legislation. Better place-focussed governance would provide a clearer context and mandate for these ideas to be considered as integral parts of re-designing access and transport.
- IT infrastructure
The shift to an increasing number of services being accessed online – and hence replacing the need to travel – leads to the imperative for widespread, fast broadband. “Notspots” and slow speeds are common and hence limiting in national parks and rural areas.
Whilst existing governance arrangements do not explicitly restrict development, a more focussed governance would ensure that the opportunities and problems are integrated into broader ambitions for access to services.

National parks do not have the ability to

- Have formal, meaningful dialogue with the Department for Transport or Transport for the North
- Apply directly for national DfT funding sources
- Have formal, meaningful influence in transport-related consultations such as with National Highways or National Rail.

The majority of relevant powers lie with existing Transport Authorities. Glover’s proposal – rightly – implied that a call for different governance is not an explicit criticism of the existing Authorities, but an acknowledgement that they have a much broader – and different - range of priorities for use of (limited) funds. National park populations are a small proportion of most Transport Authorities; The Lake District’s

¹⁶ Commission for Integrated Transport (2002) *A New Approach to Rural Public Transport*, <https://www.transportforqualityoflife.com/u/files/A%20New%20Approach%20to%20Rural%20Public%20Transport.pdf>
This work considered the benefits of more flexible “Taxiplus” services, calling for changes to regulation to enable more efficient and effective use of small vehicles for rural accessibility

¹⁷ The idea of a “Chameleon Car” project has been floated in recent years in the rural transport sector – where small vehicles can operate as required as taxis, demand responsive semi-scheduled “bus” services, scheduled services (e.g.at commute times) and pay-as-you-drive car clubs, the idea being to maximise the use of the vehicle asset to maximise economic efficiency and hence service viability. This would require variation in existing legislation; though progressive governance for a national park would provide a fertile context for this to be conceivable.

¹⁸ *Is a congestion charge for the Lake District a good idea?* News & Star, April 13th 2021.

<https://www.newsandstar.co.uk/news/19227584.views-charging-cars-entering-lakes/>

¹⁹ *A tourist levy: what, where and how*, Local Government Association briefing, 10th September 2020

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/tourist-levy-what-where-and-how>

²⁰ <https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/insight/eco-levy-driving-cut-carbon-clean-toxic-air-and-make-our-towns-and-cities-liveable>

resident population represents 8.5% of that of the whole transport authority (Cumbria County Council) area, rising to 19.1% when all visitors are added. Separating responsibility for national park transport – the issues of which are predominantly related to discretionary visitor travel, mainly for people from out of the transport authority area – would allow the transport authority to focus more clearly on its core resident and business transport priorities.

At present, there is no requirement for Transport Authorities to make any provision for the specific needs of national parks – including visitor travel - in Local Transport Plans nor Bus Service Improvement Plans²¹.

3.2 Governance & partners

The management of transport in national parks currently falls into three loose categories:

- a. A constituted partnership that focusses on transport.
For illustration, national park partnerships in the Lake District, Peak District and Snowdonia each have groups dedicated to focussing on transport²². These partnerships comprise key organisations from the public, private and third sectors with a smaller set of representatives on the transport groups.
The formality of this model normally extends only as far as terms of reference that set out intentions rather than being binding. Whilst the groups provide useful opportunities for joint working on research, strategy and delivery^{23,24}, the transport authorities retain powers, (in effect) a veto on any strategic decision making that comes within their formal aegis and decision making over use of core transport funding. Whilst these partnerships have endured, it is only by the ongoing agreement of the partners.
- b. A transport working group
These are more loosely constituted and are mainly focussed on sharing information, discussing ideas, priorities and planned interventions. Some of these are focussed on a specific issue or project²⁵.
- c. Informal or occasional contact among relevant bodies around issues of access and transport

Whilst Table 1 shows that the majority of powers lie with the transport authority, significant delivery involving access & transport takes place that is led by other organisations. Table 2 provides an illustration of this using examples from the Lake District.

Initiative	Partners	
Integrated tourism travel tickets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagecoach and Windermere Lake Cruises offer a Central Lakes “Bus & Boat” ticket²⁶ 	Commercial

²¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-service-improvement-plan>

²² For illustration, the Lake District National Park Partnership²⁹ comprises 25 key organisation from the public, private and community sectors. Established in 2006, the Partnership jointly “owns” the Lake District’s Management Plan. A smaller transport subgroup reports back to the whole Partnership.

²³ In 2011, the Lake District National Park Partnership developed the success bid to the DfT Local Sustainable Transport Fund leading to the 2011-2015 GoLakes Travel visitor travel behaviour change programme. Whilst Cumbria County Council – as transport authority - was the accountable body, delivery was steered and managed by a formally constituted programme board with joint decision making powers across partners.

²⁴ Snowdonia’s transport partnership jointly commissioned 2019’s transport and parking review that led to the development of a 10-year “sustainable tourism” vision for visitor access and transport (www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-54544046). Delivery of this vision is determined by funding and staff capacity, but the vision provides a framework for the identification of priority interventions to be developed jointly or by individual partners.

²⁵ In the Brecon Beacons in 2019, a broader partnership was developed out of the *Wales Way* project group that commissioned work looking at more strategic visitor access & transport relating to the main honeypot sites that provide access to Pen Y Fan.

²⁶ <https://www.windermere-lakecruises.co.uk/cruises-fares/bus-boat-ticket-central-lakes-zone>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern rail & Stagecoach offer a “Lakes Day Ranger” ticket²⁷ providing “unlimited bus and rail travel in the Lake District in Cumbria and also includes a cruise on Lake Windermere” for visitors starting from nearby towns. 	
Electric Bicycle Network	The EBC was a CIC established to provide a network of turn-up-and-go ebike rental from accommodation providers across the central Lake District.	Commercial / not-for-profit with initial support from the LDNPA
Development of off-road cycle & active travel routes	The LDNPA lead on route development & landowner negotiations for a series of new cycle routes. Funding is mainly public sector grant funding.	Public sector
GoLakes Travel destination marketing	Cumbria Tourism PLC develop and manage access & travel related information & marketing ²⁸ , mainly in close partnership with local organisations.	Private sector led with broad partner cooperation

4. Alternative governance

The primary purpose of changed governance is to provide better mechanisms for decision making that tackle meaningfully the recognised access and transport problems relating to national parks and create fertile conditions for innovation and the development of opportunities.

Secondly, national parks are well placed as demonstrators of alternative models of transport governance beyond metropolitan areas. Whilst user volumes, seasonality and prioritisation of desirable outcomes are different to cities, similarities include the need for coordination across boundaries and tiers of local government and the need to manage movement to/from and around a coherent core area³.

The Vision for the Lake District is for it to be *an inspirational example of sustainable development in action*²⁹. This is not possible with the current governance arrangement for access and transport, and an ambition for changed governance would be to enable this to be realised.

4.1 Governance model options

a. Business as usual

This involves existing partners voluntarily collaborating with occasional operational agreements to share or delegate responsibilities between organisations. Powers are retained by the partner organisations. Any shared decisions on finance or investment are fairly modest.

This model has led to the existing limits that led to Glover’s recommendation for change. It is included here to emphasise the implication of not moving to an alternative model.

b. National Park Authority takes on key transport powers.

This approach is that implied by Glover in his proposal #19.

It would involve creating in NPAs

- An appropriate scale of dedicated staff resource with appropriate expertise
- Systems to manage the implementation of the powers

²⁷ <https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/tickets/explore-cumbria-lake-district>

²⁸ <https://www.visitlakedistrict.com/explore/travel>

²⁹ <https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/caringfor/lake-district-national-park-partnership>

There is a sense that this model is not seen as being practicable or desirable among national parks authorities or their associated Transport Authorities.

It would be difficult to justify the required dedicated staff resource, in-house expertise and systems required to manage the powers effectively. Put another way, the sharing of staff and expertise across NPAs and their associated Transport Authorities is more efficient.

Furthermore, NPAs and their associated Transport Authorities work together across a variety of sectors (such as housing, rights of way, aspects of spatial planning etc); separating the desirable transport powers from the existing Transport Authorities would create imbalance and potentially sour existing working relationships between the Authorities.

National Park Local Sustainable Transport Fund projects

Local Sustainable Transport Fund projects were delivered in three national parks and several other visitor areas such as the Isle of Wight between 2011-2015³⁰. These £multi-million programmes focussed on changing behaviour of visitors for the key outcomes of carbon reduction and local economic prosperity; the Lake District LSTF programme led to a 14% voluntary shift away from car use for visitors travelling around the project area in three years.

The programmes demonstrated effective delivery-focussed formal partnership working between the national park authorities, transport authorities and other key bodies. One of the main legacies – that helped in visitor access management during covid - is the lasting trust stemming from the LSTF era.

4.2 The optimum model: A formal *National Park Sustainable Access and Transport Partnership*

This model translates and simplifies the Combined Authority model to the smaller scale and simpler circumstances of a national park.

a. *Status and powers*

The Partnership would have an equivalent status to a Transport Authority regarding its dealings with the DfT. This means that it would

- Use the Local Transport Plan framework³¹ to set out
 - A baseline regarding transport, accessibility and emissions
 - A vision with clear outcomes
 - A multi-year (5-10 year) delivery programme
 - Costed projects seeking DfT funding
- Have the abilities to design bus service networks including coverage, service specifications and integration. Currently, this would be through enhanced partnerships or franchising using the powers in the Bus Services Act 2017, translated into a national park Bus Service Improvement Plan
- Highways
 - Access restrictions (through the Traffic Management Act 2004)
 - Speed limits (Road Traffic Regulation Act 2004)
 - Highways design (Manual for Streets 2007¹⁴. Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20)¹⁵)
 - Implement Traffic Regulation Orders

³⁰ LSTF evaluation: visitor travel and sustainable transport (2018); <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lstf-evaluation-visitor-travel-and-sustainable-transport>

³¹ New guidance is currently being drafted for 2022 that may require Transport Authorities to submit plans that would deliver the required scale and rate of carbon reduction; <http://www.transport-network.co.uk/New-Local-Transport-Plan-guidance-scheduled-for-2022/17427>

- Manage highways and car parking violations through enforcement
- Integrate car parking charging via area-wide strategies across landowners and operators

Abilities & influence

The Partnership would have equivalence to transport authorities in terms of

- Eligibility to access DfT funding programmes such as Local Sustainable Transport Fund and other funding programmes open to transport authorities.
- Involvement and influence in its Local Enterprise Partnership(s)
- Influence in relevant consultations such as a with Highways England and Network Rail

b. *Who would be involved?*

The core Partnership would comprise

- i. The Local Transport Authority.
For national parks that cover more than one TA, it may be appropriate to include all TAs or for a single TA to be the lead Authority
- ii. The National Park Authority.

Board

The National Park Authority would become the accountable body. Its membership would need to be adjusted to explicitly include members of the partner Transport Authority

Officers

Expertise and staff capacity would be shared between the Partner organisations. This would be to make sure that staff resource was used efficiently across organisations and maximise access to relevant expertise.

Wider partnership

The core partnership would liaise with a wider partnership of relevant bodies, especially those involved in the tourism, community, business and landscape protection sectors. In the Lake District, this would comprise the existing Partnership²⁹ through a re-configured transport group.

Link to a Combined Authority?

Depending on local geography, there may be benefits of including a formal link to a relevant local Metropolitan Combined Authority. This would:

- provide a link to the expertise, contacts and debates that take place in larger metropolitan CAs;
- expose the national park transport partnership to ideas and opportunities for innovation
- provide opportunities to develop more effective access and transport links between the urban area with the national park; this could involve joint programmes that deliberately blur the urban/rural utility/leisure boundaries
- help the national park transport partnership to learn from the CA regarding effective governance

It is recognised that it is possible for progressive strategy and delivery separate to metropolitan Authorities. For example, Cornwall's simplified governance of a unitary authority contiguous with its Local Enterprise Partnership has helped in it starting to realise ambitious plans for widespread integration and development of its transport services.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Glover's proposal 19 in the DEFRA landscape review set out a compelling case for inappropriate existing governance being a key barrier to tackling long-standing problems of access and transport that are endemic across national parks in the UK. The proposal did not set out any details.

This study has considered how governance might be different so that it is not only more effective at tackling the recognised transport and access problems, but enables National Park Authorities to more fully realise their core duties of providing access for all to the nation's protected landscapes. It would also enable the transport authorities that currently cover national parks to focus more clearly on their non-national park areas.

Recommendation 1: *Allow National Parks to create Transport Partnerships that are contiguous with National Park boundaries*

- The link to the National Park areas means that strategy, policies, and delivery can focus explicitly on the priorities of the national parks themselves.
- The Partnerships would comprise the National Park Authority and existing Transport Authority at both member and officer level.
- Ideally, these would emerge from any existing National Park partnership.
The core partnership would link to a wider group of partner organisations representative of key sectors, including visitor economy, community and landscape.
- There may be benefits in creating a formal link to a relevant nearby Combined Authority.

Recommendation 2: *The National Park Transport Partnerships have powers and abilities similar to existing Transport Authorities*

These would include:

- Their own Local Transport Plan and Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- Powers over speed limits, access management, highway design and active travel route development and maintenance.
- Ability to have meaningful dialogue with the DfT and other transport related bodies.
- Ability to apply for other transport funding that is not currently available independent of a Transport Authority.

Recommendation 3: *Pilot with one or two existing national parks*

- The depth of development of existing partnership arrangements and the nature of the relationship between the National Park Authorities and their Transport Authorities varies considerably across national parks.
- A shift to the governance arrangements outlined here would require a careful process of transition, evaluation and review.

Together, these suggest that piloting different governance arrangements in one or two national parks in the first instance would be preferable.