

Appendix 3: The Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership Draft Communication Strategy – the first six months

May 2012

PURPOSE

This draft communication strategy identifies opportunities to guide the communications output of the proposed Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership (LNP) for the first six months of operation.

The strategy and associated 12 month action plan therefore:

- Raises awareness of the LNP and builds support amongst target audiences for the implementation of its programme
- Highlights key messages of the Partnership, including its vision and objectives
- Identifies opportunities / landmarks for communicating the Partnership's key messages and early successes
- Ensures that partners are engaged in, and/or updated on, projects/activities being undertaken in the name of the Partnership
- Encourages synergies between the key message of the Partnership, its constituent members, and wider stakeholders
- Identifies the media we propose to use

This draft strategy will be reviewed by a task and finish group during the first six months and longer term strategic approach to communications will be developed.

For this communications work to be successful, key messages need to amplify those of partners operating in the area but also to draw out how this new collaborative approach will add value to what has gone before.

KEY MESSAGES

The partners have agreed the following key messages for the LNP:

- The high quality of the natural environment of the Northern Upland Chain is intrinsically linked to the economic, social and spiritual well-being of its communities
- The NUC is home to some of Britain's most rare and charismatic upland wildlife
- The NUC LNP area has a strong 'ecological logic' to its boundaries. In this large swathe of the northern uplands we find a common suite of species and habitats, a common portfolio of ecosystem goods and services, a similar set of upland agricultural and land management issues, similar economies and communities with much in common in terms of their access to facilities and services
- Our LNP is focused on adding value to existing activity, and 'collaboration-by-design' across the four protected areas and adjacent countryside will lead to better outcomes for people and nature.

Our four Objectives are part of our suite of Key Messages:

The LNP will work at a strategic level to help organisations collaborate to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural heritage of the Northern Upland Chain, through the development of integrated landscape scale projects ensuring they can meet future challenges
- Support initiatives that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty demonstrating the importance of the economic and social well-being of our upland communities
- Value, sustain and promote the Health and well-being benefits that the Northern Upland Chain provides for society, including clean air and water, food, carbon storage and other services vital to the nation
- Promote public understanding and enjoyment of the nature and culture of the Northern Upland Chain and encourage people to take action for their conservation

COMMUNICATION ROLES

Officer support for the functioning of the LNP will be provided by the four Protected Landscape partners, who will provide an LNP secretariat on a rolling annual basis. Based on the Communications Strategy, the secretariat will be empowered by the Board to establish the structures necessary to deliver our communications objectives.

The Chair will have a key role in championing the vision of the LNP and in building support for the aims and priorities of the partnership. They will represent the LNP at appropriate event, meetings of functions, advocating the partnership's vision and acting as a spokesperson for the LNP where appropriate.

Members of the LNP Board, both collectively and individually, will have a responsibility to communicate the key messages of the LNP, both in their collective actions and in those of their own organisations.

The wider Partnership is also encouraged to adopt and share the key messages of the LNP. This will be part of the LNP 'membership pledge' which members will be encouraged to sign up to in support of the NUC once established.

Audiences

A wide range of audiences will need to be reached to deliver the objectives identified by the LNP.

Internal Communications

- Members of the LNP Partnership Board
- Wider LNP partnership members and Task and Finish Group members

External Communications

- National Government departments and Members of Parliament
- Local government (including planners, community strategy officers, local strategic partnerships, elected members)
- Town and parish councils
- Farmers and Landowners
- Developers

- Businesses
- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Health and Wellbeing Boards
- Funding bodies
- Educational institutions
- Local community partnerships/forums/groups – *primarily through constituent Protected Landscape bodies.*
- Other Local Nature Partnerships
- General public

Delivery Mechanisms

Several different delivery mechanisms will be utilised by the LNP to communicate key messages and actions to the audiences listed above. These will include:

- LNP website
- The websites of partner organisations
- Partnership events, notably an annual Public Forum
- E-bulletins
- Social media, including, Facebook and Twitter

In delivering the strategy, it will be important to recognise the work done collaboratively and directly in the name of the Partnership, and activity delivered by individual partners that has been carried out irrespective of the LNP.

However, the key message of the LNP should be incorporated into the work of the partners so that its ethos is promoted widely, and opportunities for collaboration should be sought in all potentially relevant projects and programmes.

Communication Action Plan for the FIRST 6 MONTHS of the Northern Upland Chain LNP

	Action	Lead / supported by	Mechanism	Audience
Months 1-4	Establish LNP website content post-official recognition and keep updated with progress on collaborative projects and opportunities.	Secretariat / Board / membership	Website	All
	Establish a Basecamp presence for internal communications	Secretariat	Website	Membership
	Encourage partners to add a link to the LNP website from their own organisations' website	Secretariat	Website	Membership
	Produce an e-newsletter in the style already established during the development phase to promote progress and invite further input.	Secretariat	Website	All
	Establish an NUC twitter feed and ensure a regular flow of tweets and re-tweets of relevant items.	Secretariat / Board / membership	Website	All
	Establish an NUC Facebook page and update it with relevant items	Secretariat / Board / membership	Website	All
	Ensure communications action plans and materials are shared with neighbouring LNPs and that opportunities for joint action are maximised.	Secretariat	Scheduled meetings, email	Neighbouring LNPs
	Identify and deliver opportunities for news items based on an agreed programme of Partnership actions for the first 12 months (e.g . proposals for a joint funding bid for peatland restoration, proposals for a joint woodland creation initiative)	Board Comms sub-group / Secretariat	Press / Radio / Television	All
5	Hold a first Annual Forum for the whole partnership in autumn 2012.	Secretariat / Board	Event	All
M 6	Undertake 6 month and 12 month reviews of the strategy and action plan	Board / Comms Sub-group	Review through sub-group	Membership
Ongoing	Submit articles to regional and national publications on the ground breaking concept behind the LNP and what it will deliver	Board via Secretariat	Print and online magazines and publications	All
	Make meeting papers and minutes available to download from the website	Board Comms sub-group / Secretariat	Email	
	Raise the profile of the LNP and champion support for its vision at community events and meetings including local forums and strategic partnerships	Protected Landscape bodies	Events	Community Groups
	Identify opportunities to 'piggyback' on the consultation processes of others to give and receive messages in relation to the LNP	Secretariat / membership	Email communication or simple online survey	Membership and wider community groups