

**National Parks Review**  
Report by Chief Executive

**1. Purpose of this Report**

- 1.1. The 2018 Environment Plan published by the Government contained the commitment to:

*“Conserve and enhance the natural beauty of our landscapes by reviewing National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) for the 21st century, including assessing whether more may be needed.”*

This Plan included the following statement:

*The UK's first National Parks were created by an Act of Parliament in 1949 following the government's 1947 Hobhouse Report, which remains the basis for most protected landscape designation in England today.*

*Now, 70 years on, the Government will commission a review for the 21st Century. This will consider coverage of designations, how designated areas deliver their responsibilities, how designated areas are financed, and whether there is scope for expansion. It will also consider opportunities to enhance the environment in existing designations, and expand on the existing eight-point plan for National Parks to connect more people with the natural environment.*

- 1.2. The Hobhouse Report of 1947 you will recall identified 12 areas in England and Wales, including the Broads, for designation as national parks. It is not surprising therefore that the media has focussed on the potential for designating new national parks. Three AONBs have been cited as ‘potentials’ in the newspapers: the Chilterns, South Devon and the Jurassic Coast of Dorset.
- 1.3. The Review is to be led by Julian Glover, supported by an expert panel, the details of which can be found in Appendix 1 and include Sarah Mukherjee, until recently a member of the Authority.
- 1.4. The Review has been asked to consider 8 areas:
- the existing statutory purposes for National Parks and AONBs and how effectively they are being met
  - the alignment of these purposes with the goals set out in the 25-Year Plan for the Environment
  - the case for extension or creation of new designated areas
  - how to improve individual and collective governance of National Parks and AONBs, and how that governance interacts with other national assets
  - the financing of National Parks and AONBs
  - how to enhance the environment and biodiversity in existing designations

- how to build on the existing eight-point plan for National Parks and to connect more people with the natural environment from all sections of society and improve health and wellbeing
- how well National Parks and AONBs support communities

1.5. The review is due to report next year.

1.6. The purpose of this report is to provide members with an opportunity for a discussion about issues that the Authority might want officers to investigate which might form the basis for a response to the call for evidence from the Review Team, which is expected in the next few months.

Background papers: None  
Author: John Packman  
Date of report: 15 September 2018

Broads Plan Objectives: Multiple  
Appendices: National Park Review - biographies

### National Park Review - biographies

#### **Julian Glover**

Associate editor at the London Evening Standard and author of the biography Man of Iron: Thomas Telford and the Building of Britain. He has worked as leader writer and columnist at the Guardian and as a Special Adviser in Number 10 and the Department for Transport. He will be supported by an advisory panel bringing a vast breadth of experience in landscape, biodiversity, heritage, farming and rural issues.

The panel will be comprised of:

#### **Nicola Blackwood**

Former Conservative MP for Oxford West and Abingdon. She was Chair of the Science and Technology Committee from July 2015 to May 2016 and Minister for Public Health and Innovation from 2016 to 2017.

#### **Lord Cameron of Dillington**

Cross-bench peer, farmer and landowner. As the former Chair of the Countryside Agency, he is a strong advocate for rural affairs. He is currently the chair of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 Committee and the Advisory Council for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. He is also on the Steering Board of the Government's Global Food Security Programme.

#### **Jim Dixon**

Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park Authority for 12 years, before stepping down in 2014. He is currently a writer on countryside issues, including for the Times, and a trustee of the Heritage Lottery Fund.

#### **Sarah Mukherjee**

Former BBC environment and rural affairs correspondent and previous Director of Environment at Water UK. She is currently Chief Executive of the Crop Protection Association. She is a trustee and advisory group member for several charities, supporting both environmental stewardship and education in farming.

#### **Dame Fiona Reynolds**

Formerly the Director-General of the National Trust and current Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge and Chair of the Green Alliance. She is the author of The Fight for Beauty (2016), a history of thought and public policy on landscapes and environment in Britain.

#### **Jake Fiennes**

Estate Manager of the Raveningham Estate for the last 24 years, promoting nature conservation alongside arable farming. He will be joining the 25,000 acre Holkham Estate in autumn 2018 as their General Manager for Conservation. He is also a trustee and advisory group member of several organisations including the National Farmers' Union's Environmental Forum and the Norfolk Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group.