What are National Parks?

National Parks are the areas of British countryside which are considered to be the most special and beautiful. They are protected so that people can enjoy them both now and in the future. In the UK there are 15 National Parks, 3 of which are in Wales:

- **Snowdonia National Park**
- **Brecon Beacons National Park**
- **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park**

The Welsh National Parks contain spectacular and beautiful scenery. Although they are relatively wild, they have been shaped through the centuries by the people who have lived and worked in them. They are rich in natural and cultural heritage, with a wealth of wildlife, geological, historical and archaeological sites.

Unlike in some other countries, the British National Parks are not publicly owned. People live and work in the National Parks. The farms, villages and towns are protected along with the landscape and wildlife. National Parks welcome visitors and provide opportunities for everyone to enjoy and learn about their special qualities.
Managing a National Park is challenging. It needs the right balance between environment and people. National Park Authorities need to conserve wildlife and habitats, but also encourage people to enjoy and learn from the countryside. This can cause conflicts.

National Park Authorities are also the local planning authorities for the area. In 2010-11, Brecon Beacons National Park decided on 523 planning applications, Snowdonia 477 and Pembrokeshire Coast 526.
A protected area is a location with a clear boundary. The landscape inside is protected. Some areas have international designations and others, including the National Parks, have national designations.

**International Designations**
Some sites are protected through European Union law, for example Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), while others have been designated by international organisations such as UNESCO e.g. Fforest Fawr Geopark in the Brecon Beacons National Park.

**National Designations**
Nationally protected areas include National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and Heritage Coasts, which are stretches of outstanding unspoilt coastline. Nearly half of Wales’ coastline is designated Heritage Coast. The National Parks are the highest level of nationally designated area. Within them there are other smaller sites of national importance such as:

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest**
which contain important wildlife or require a high degree of protection.

**National Nature Reserves**
which are very important sites where wildlife management and protection are considered vital.

**Marine Nature Reserves**
which are areas of coastal waters protected because of their marine life and habitats.

**Fforest Fawr Geopark**
Wales’ First European Geopark
Fforest Fawr Geopark coincides with the western half of the Brecon Beacons National Park and is a great place to start your exploration of the Earth’s remarkable history. Fforest Fawr Geopark is Wales’ first member of the European Geoparks Network and UNESCO Global Geoparks Networks.
Snowdonia National Park

Designated 18th October 1951
Size 2,176km² 823miles²

Landscape features
Highest point: Snowdon 1,085m
Lowest point: Beaches 0m
Longest beach: Morfa Dyffryn 7km
Largest lake: Llyn Tegid 10.24km² (1,024ha)
Largest reservoir: Trawsfynydd 4.8km² (480ha)
Largest deciduous woodland: Dyffryn Ffestiniog Woodland 2.49km² (249ha)
Largest coniferous woodland: Coed y Brenin, Dolgellau 20.58km² (2,057ha)
Largest moorland area: Migneint 142.35km² (14,235ha)

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<th>Miles</th>
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<th>Coast</th>
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© Crown copyright and database rights 2012 Ordnance Survey 10002503
Private Ownership               72.5%
Snowdonia National Park Authority    0.5%
National Trust                   10.0%
Natural Resources Wales          17.5%
Protected Areas

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**Y Migneint**
An area of moorland/blanket bog reaching a height of 479m and covering an area of 142.35km². The area is used for agriculture but provides us with many ecosystem services. It’s an important nesting ground for birds and also stores water and carbon and cleans the water for us. The area is under threat from lack of water, misuse (e.g. scrambler bikes) and fires. To help conserve the area, ditches created to drain the land in the past are being filled in and blocked to store water in the upland. This will help the plants store carbon for the future.

**Morfa Harlech**
An area of sand dunes at sea level, 6km² in size. The area is used for agriculture, leisure and a conifer plantation. The dunes are important as coastal protection for Harlech and as an important habitat for some rare plants and animals. The area is threatened by sea level rise, erosion of the dunes and rubbish from ships at sea. Rare sand lizards can be found here and the population was given a boost as some were reintroduced.

**Llyn Tegid (Bala Lake)**
The largest natural lake in Wales lying at a height of 163m covers an area of 10.24km². The lake is 43 metres deep. Llyn Tegid is a SSSI and a Ramsar site as an important ‘wetland’. The lake is used for leisure (fishing, boating and canoeing) as well as helping to supply water to Cheshire. Two unique species, the gwyniad fish and glutinous snail live in the lake which is under threat from toxic algae. This is caused by nitrates and phosphates. Rescue boats are the only engine boats allowed on the lake to reduce the pollution levels and the Snowdonia National Park Authority (SNPA) works closely with the local farmers and Natural Resources Wales to monitor the quality of the water that enters the lake and to reduce the risk of pollution.
Under threat - *Lloydia serotina*

Known also as the Snowdon Lily it’s an arctic alpine plant that likes a cold environment with snow and ice on craggy slopes and poor soil where there are few nutrients. This is the only place in the world where you will find the Snowdon Lily. Climate change and mild winters are a real extinction threat. There’s been some respite in the two harsh winters of 2009 and 2010. The hope is that the plants will become stronger. However if we then have dry hot summers it will undo the benefits of the cold winters. On top of that, cold winters attract the winter mountaineers with their crampons and ice picks to walk on snow and ice climb, in the exact area where the Snowdon Lily grows. What’s the answer? Ban winter mountaineering? Transplant the plants to a fridge? Attempts have been made to grow these plants from seed and transplant them onto the slopes, but with limited success. The next step? Well that’s up to you and me. Walk, share lifts, switch off all those machines that have red light on them, and do whatever you can to reduce the emissions of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Extinction is a looming reality for these plants on our doorstep.

Threatening - *Rhododendron ponticum*

This alien species comes from the Himalayas and threatens the wildlife of Snowdonia. It was introduced as an evergreen plant with large flowers to estate gardens in the 18th century but has since spread and become a threat. As it is evergreen it produces a dense, dark canopy which stops any native species from growing underneath it. Hardly any insects or bees are attracted to it. With no insects, you won’t find any birds nearby. It has very light seeds which fly far with the wind and will grow anywhere. In some areas it has taken over with a vengeance. Snowdonia National Park Authority and landowners have declared war on the plant and plan to exterminate it. It’s either injected with poison or chopped down and burnt. Conservation sometimes means that you have to be cruel to be kind to other species which are supposed to grow here.
Facts and figures  about 4 million visitors, 10 million visitor days.

What do the visitors do here?  Most of the visitors to Snowdonia come for quiet peaceful recreation, to enjoy the views and walk the mountains.

Visitor spend per head  £40

Visitor advantages
Tourism is worth about £400 million to the local economy every year and sustains about 6,000 direct jobs.

Visitor disadvantages
Tourism is seasonal and some shops which rely on tourism alone close over winter. Snowdonia is a very busy place in the summer months, as the number of visitors increase dramatically. Visitors have an impact on the land, causing footpath erosion and, as the primary purpose of the National Park is to ‘conservate and enhance’, any erosion needs to be fixed. Footpaths cost about £100 per meter to maintain.

Sustainable tourism  - Sherpa bus service
The Sherpa bus is an integrated bus route for the North of Snowdonia. It links up the most popular walking areas by bus. At busy times it is less stressful to park in a Green Key Car Park and catch the Sherpa bus to your setting-out point than trying to park right next to it. This will not only mean less traffic in the Park but also provide a way of accessing popular honey-pot locations such as Ogwen Cottage and Pen-y-Pass when their car parks are full. It also provides more variety for walkers as you can go up one route, down another and get the bus back to your car/train station. To encourage its use, Sherpa adult bus fares are just £1 on the S1 (Llanberis - Pen y Pass), S2 (Llanberis - Bethesda/Betws/Llanwrst) and the S6 (Bangor/Bethesda - Betws). Two passengers up to the age of 16 can travel free with each fare paying adult. Sustainable for the environment and your pocket!
### Population

Population 2011: 25,702

Population by age:
- 0 - 15: 3,846
- 16 - 64: 15,362
- 65+: 6,494

% Welsh Speakers: 58.6%
% Economically active: 67.3%
% Vacant Properties: 21.9%

Largest town: Dolgellau (2,688)

Historical industry: Agriculture and quarrying

Main present employment:
- Accommodation & food services: 14.5%
- Retail: 12.7%
- Education, Health & Public Administration: 33.7%
Problems and opportunities in a rural area

Problems
We are losing our young people. They move away to be educated and for better job opportunities and no one’s sure yet whether they will return. Older people who have retired move in, changing the nature of the area. Without young people there will be no need for schools in the future and no workforce to look after the elderly.

Opportunities
An activity triangle of excellence was set up between Blaenau Ffestiniog, Coed y Brenin, near Dolgellau and Glanllyn near Bala. This will provide more opportunities for people to do adventurous activities such as mountain biking, sailing and canoeing and will increase the opportunities for locals to work in the leisure industry. With more local young people working within the industry the impact of the active visitor will be greater.

3 key messages
Take your litter home - Bins are really handy in towns and cities, but in the countryside they can be blown over by strong winds or pushed over by animals wanting to get at the crust of your sandwich. Mountains are no place to have bins so we ask people to take their rubbish home. Many don’t and this causes problems for wildlife and staff. Help us to look after the area by being considerate.

Keep your dog on a lead - Although we’re a National Park, we’re not like a park in town where your dog can be let off its lead to chase after a ball. There are animals here. Some dogs will chase after sheep. Some will maul them and kill them. A farmer has a right by law to shoot your dog if it’s worrying sheep. So to be on the safe side, and within the law, keep your dog on a lead in open countryside.

Take the bus and remember to park responsibly. Narrow lanes are a vital part of day-to-day life for people living and working in the Park. Inconsiderate parking which blocks verges, roads and gates is never popular. It might be you who needs the emergency services vehicle!

We have rare plants that will become extinct if the climate warms up. By reducing our use of resources – fuel in cars, electricity at home, you can help to save them for future generations.
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

Designated: 29th February 1952
Size: 612km²  225miles²

Landscape features
Highest point: Foel Cwmcerwyn 536m
Lowest point: Beaches 0m
Longest beach: Tenby South Beach 2km
Largest lake: Rosebush reservoir at 0.127km² (12.7ha)
Largest reservoir: Llys-y-Frân reservoir 0.55km² (55ha)
Largest deciduous woodland: The Allt Pontfaen - Coed Gelli-Fawr 0.73km² (73ha)
Largest coniferous woodland: Pantmaenog Forest at about 2.7km² (270ha)
Largest moorland area: The Mynydd Preseli SSSI 30km² (3,000ha)

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<tr>
<td>Miles</td>
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Land ownership

Private Ownership 80.4%
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority 1%
Common Land 7%
National Trust 6%
Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales 1%
Natural Resources Wales 0.6%
Ministry of Defence 4%
Protected Areas

National Nature Reserves   1073ha
Special Areas of Conservation   5565ha
Sites of Special Scientific Interest  9462ha
Special Protected Areas    2390ha

Ty Canol Woodland National Nature Reserve: This is part of the largest block of ancient woodland in West Wales and includes Pentre Ifan the famous Neolithic burial site. The woodland is home to more than 400 species of lichen, many of which are rare. These grow on rocks, low level crags and on the trunks of the oak tree. The woods are made up of ancient oak, ash and birch with hazel, holly, honeysuckle and bilberry growing underneath. It’s a good place to see bird species such as redstart, chiff-chaff and wood warbler and badgers, foxes, polecats and dormice. The lichens can be under threat from a lack of sunlight and increased visitor pressure. Pembrokshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA) runs a programme of cutting and felling trees to ensure that the lichens can thrive in sunlight.

Skomer is a small island wilderness that's home to many marine birds and animals. The waters around the island are the only Marine Nature Reserve in Wales and the landscape below the surface is rich with sea life. During the spring and summer the island is home to breeding colonies of guillemot, razorbill, puffin and Manx shearwater. The island is a breeding colony for up to half the world's population of Manx shearwater, a bird which migrates from South America each year. Atlantic grey seal breed on its beaches and in its caves in the autumn and during the summer porpoise, dolphin, whales and basking shark can be seen offshore. Skomer is also home to the unique Skomer vole, a sub-species of the bank vole. Managed by the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales, access to this island is restricted, with the protection of the wildlife taking precedence over the interests of visitors. Visitors are requested to stick to footpaths in order to protect the vulnerable burrows of the puffins and Manx shearwaters.

The Castlemartin Range is a coastal heathland cleared by the military in 1938. It’s a unique example of a grassland habitat rich in wildflower species as it’s never been intensively farmed. These have disappeared from the rest of the UK. PCNPA, the Ministry of Defence and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust have actively worked to extend this habitat and join it up to other pockets of similar grassland. The work has been done to increase the populations of the shrill carder bee and also the marsh fritillary butterfly. The future of the heathland depends on the future military use of the base.
**Under threat - Skylarks**
and other ground nesting birds have suffered huge declines over the past 50 years as hay meadow management has given way to silage production. Twelve years ago when the Park Authority purchased a former military airfield in St Davids, there were just 30 pairs of skylarks recorded. Since then, recent surveys have found numbers have more than doubled to 65 pairs - all thanks to the restoration of traditional grassland management which benefits the skylarks. Our work has shown how more traditional farming practices can benefit wildlife greatly, and our challenge is to find ways for farmers to return to this kind of management without compromising their incomes.

**Threatening - Sea buckthorn**
Sea buckthorn, a thorny, densely growing bush is kept under control by wardens from the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. This species was introduced into gardens by local people returning from Mediterranean holidays. The plant thrives in the dune environment smothering the sand in a dense carpet. Local species which provide cover and food for insects are crowded out. The roots of the sea buckthorn bind the sand and prevent common lizards and adders from burrowing to lay their eggs. National Park wardens treat the sea buckthorn with weed killer twice a year and cut the dead growth back to clear areas of sand for colonisation by native species.
Facts and figures
4.2 million visitors a year, 13 million visitor days.

What do the visitors do here?
Most visitors come for the Coast Path walk, stunning beaches and activities.

Visitor spend per head
£25

Visitor advantages
Increased money and an increase in jobs for locals. Conservation of the natural and built environment, improvements in infrastructure, greater choice of shopping and recreational facilities for local residents.

Visitor disadvantages
Increase in house prices with services and shops shut in winter. Local services (e.g. sewage works) can’t cope in peak times, pollution, traffic problems, erosion and trampling.

Climbing at St. Govan’s
The magnificent limestone cliffs in South-West Pembrokeshire are an attraction to all kinds of users. Rare species of bird such as the chough and peregrine falcon find them ideal nest sites, and several species of seabird return to them each year to raise their young. The clefts, hollows and caves are a suitable habitat for bats, especially during the summer months. The cliffs are also appealing to holiday makers and walkers, giving spectacular views. But the cliffs are especially attractive to climbers, attracting visitors from around the world.

When the Coast Path was created in the early 1970s access to the cliffs at St. Govan’s was restricted. The land was owned by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), and the National Park Authority (NPA) among other groups, was concerned that any activity would be damaging to the birdlife of the area. The MoD, NPA, West Wales Wildlife Trust and British Mountaineering Council (BMC), got together as a Recording and Advisory Group in 1978. The group produced a leaflet of ‘Agreed Climbing Restrictions’. This leaflet didn’t prohibit climbing activity, but restricted it from certain areas during certain times of the year when birds were nesting.

Since then, climbing has been extended further westwards into the Castlemartin Ranges. Monitoring of where and when birds were nesting has made it possible to adapt and refine restrictions as birds changed locations. A ranger monitors the ranges with the MoD and NPA and works closely with climbers. The communication is two-way. Climbers can learn about restrictions, and how their movement can affect the birdlife but can also inform the ranger about where species are nesting, and about potential hazards on the cliffs. A cliff top marker scheme shows where climbing is restricted. The BMC have funded the replacement of markers, working with the MoD and adapted for belay points, making it clear where restrictions apply, as climbers could not see the markers from the beach. Thirty years on, and the successes can be celebrated. They are the result of good communication, and trust. With an eye on the future, it is now recognised that the growing number of different recreational users at St. Govan’s Head needs to be monitored, and the model established by the climbing community, the NPA and the MoD may be an effective starting point.
Population

Population 2011  22,644

Population by age:
0 - 15       15.1%
16 - 64      58.5%
65 +         26.5%

% Welsh Speakers  23.0%
% Economically active  65.4%
% Vacant Properties  27.7%

Largest town  Tenby (4,550)
Historical industry  Agriculture, fishing and coal mining.

Main present employment:
Accommodation & food services  17.2%
Retail          13.5%
Education, Health & Public Administration  30.7%
Problems
Rural villages in Pembrokeshire tend to be very small and isolated with poor transport links, lack of services and ageing populations. Young people are moving out to look for work opportunities, leaving the elderly behind without a support network.

Opportunities
The landscapes of the rural areas are often their greatest asset and many shop / B&B owners and tourism providers are using this to sell the area to holiday makers.

3 key messages
The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park is the UK’s only coastal National Park with many stunning and quiet beaches. These must be looked after and respected. Take home all your rubbish and leave the environment as you find it.

The Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail covers 186 miles of the coastline and passes close to many farms. Please ensure that you respect farmland by leaving gates as you find them and keeping dogs on leads near farm animals. Pay special attention during lambing and calving times.

Many of our most spectacular locations are accessed by narrow lanes. Please find out more about the sustainable transport schemes that run in Pembrokeshire and use these where possible to reduce congestion, pollution and parking problems.
Brecon Beacons National Park

Designated: 17th April 1957
Size: 1,347km², 520 miles²

Landscape features

Highest point: Pen y Fan 886m
Lowest point: Geulan Goch 23.7m (near Llandeilo)
Longest beach: None
Largest lake: Llangorse Lake 1.53km² (153ha)
Largest reservoir: Talybont Reservoir 1.33km² (133ha)
Largest deciduous woodland: Llanymddyfri 2.48km² (248ha)
Largest coniferous woodland: Mynydd Du Forest 10.17km² (1,017ha)
Largest moorland area: Near Fforest Fawr 31.82km² (3,182ha)

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Land ownership

Private Ownership: 65.0%
Brecon Beacon National Park Authority: 14.7%
Natural Resources Wales: 12.7%
Welsh Water: 3.9%
National Trust: 3.7%
Y Migneint

Ardal o weundir/gorgors yn cyrraedd uchder o 479m gyda arwynebedd o 142.35km². Mae'r ardal yn cael ei ddefnyddio i amaethyddiaeth, ond hefyd yn cyflenwi llawer mwy o wasanaethau ecosystem, mae'n dir nythu pwysig i adar, yn storio dŵr a charbon ac yn glanhau y dŵr i ni. Mae yr ardal o dan fygythiad o brinder dŵr, camddefnydd (beiciau sgramblo) a thannau. Fel math o gadwraeth, mae ffosydd a agorwyd yn y gorffennol i ddraenio y tir, yn cael eu llenwi a'u blocio i storio y dŵr yn yr ucheldir, i geisio helpu y planhigion i storio y carbon at y dyfodol.

Morfa Harelch

Ardal o dwyni tywod ar lefel y môr, 6km² mewn maint. Defnyddir yr ardal ar gyfer amaethyddiaeth, hamddena a phlanhigfa gonwydd. Mae y twyni yn bwysig i amddiffyn Harlech rhag y môr, ac yn gynefin i anifeiliaid a phlanhigion prin. Mae yr ardal o dan fygythiad gan godiad yn lefel y môr, erydiad o'r twyni, ac ysbwriel oddi ar longau ar y môr, ac oddi ar y tir. Darganfyddir madfall y tywod prin yma, a cynyddwyd eu poblogaeth gan fod rhai wedi eu ail gyflwyno.

Llyn Tegid

Y llyn naturiol mwyaf yng Nghymru ar uchder o 163m, maint o 10.24km² a 43 metr o ddyfn. Mae Llyn Tegid yn safle SoDdGA ag Ramsar ac yn gorsdir pwysig. Defnyddir y llyn ar gyfer hamddena – pysgota, hwylio a chanwio ac mae’n helpu i gyflenwi dŵr i swydd Gaer. Mae y Gwyniad a'r falwen gludiog yn ddau rywiogaeth unigryw i'r llyn sydd dan fygythiad gan algau gwenwynig, a achosir gan nitredau and ffosffedau. Dim ond cychod achub gaiff fynd ar y llyn ermwyn ceisio lleihau lefelau y lygredd. Mae y Parc Cenedlaethol yn gweithio yn agos gyda'r ffermwyr lleol ag Asiantaeth yr Amgylchedd i fonitro safon y dŵr sy’n mynd i'r llyn i geisio lleihau y risg.

Protected Areas

| National Nature Reserves | 1,036ha |
| Special Areas of Conservation | 3,212ha |
| Sites of Special Scientific Interest | 24,942ha |
| Special Protected Areas | 0.0ha |

The Waterfalls Country in the upper reaches of the River Neath is a remarkable area of waterfalls with an amazing biodiversity of over 600 plant species. There are many rare lichens and mosses that thrive on the moisture within the wooded valleys. The beautiful scenery and waterfalls make the area very popular for visitors. Some people just come to walk in the area while others go gorge walking. Both can have an impact on the biodiversity. Footpath erosion damages vegetation and soil while gorge walking can destroy some of the rarer plants in the river. Repairs have been carried out to many of the footpaths and some gorge walking rules and regulations have been created to try and reduce the problem in the future.

The River Usk rises in the Black Mountain and flows through the Park to Abergavenny and finally enters the Severn Estuary at Newport. The whole river is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The main reason it was created a SAC is because of the migratory fish, salmon, bullheads, lampreys and twait (a type of herring). The fish spawn their eggs in the upper parts of the river so having clean water in the river is very important. Otters also live along the river, feeding on the fish. Threats to the fish can come from pollution from the land and low water levels in dry summers.

The Black Mountains SSSI covers nearly 8,000 hectares of heather moorland between the River Monnow and River Usk. The area is under threat from recreational pressure and overgrazing. The moorland is also prone to fires in the spring if the weather is particularly dry. A partnership has been set up to help the area; farmers whose animals graze the mountain, the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA), Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Welsh Government are all working together to control bracken, manage heather and work on the paths to reduce erosion. Ditches are being dammed to stop water from flowing and causing erosion while soil has been covered with a material called geojute to help plants grow in the peat again. So far the work done has really helped the area.
**Under threat - Lapwings** have a lovely shiny green colouring on their backs, a round wing shape in flight and a crest on their heads. These ground nesting birds are very fussy during the nesting period of late February to early May. They need bare to nearly bare ground that is damp or dry with easy access to lots of insects. They also need areas of shallow water to find insects when the chicks are young. The number of lapwings has declined over the years. Farmers draining fields and grazing more animals has meant that their nesting sites are being lost. There are also fewer worms and insects because of chemicals that are used on the land. Llangorse Lake is one of the best places to see lapwings in the National Park. Even here there are only about 6 nesting pairs although up to 100 can be seen on a winter's day. The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority owns some of the land around the lake and has managed the area in a way to help the lapwing. Visitors are kept out of certain parts while some trees have been felled to reduce perches for birds of prey. Farm animals are also kept off during the nesting season.

**Threatening - Mink**
Our native wildlife lives in a balanced way within a habitat that has developed over a long period of time. When a new species like the American mink is introduced this balance can be upset. The mink is a small but agile and adaptable predator and since its escape into the wild it has adapted well to living in Britain. It can swim, run and climb and will eat a variety of other animals such as waterfowl, fish, amphibians, small mammals and reptiles. The mink is one of the main reasons for the decline in the number of water voles. Water voles evade predators by swimming but, as the mink can swim as well, the water vole becomes an easy meal! The mink has no predator to control its numbers.
## Visitors

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<th>Facts and figures</th>
<th>4.1 million visitors per year, about 5 million visitor days.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do the visitors do here?</td>
<td>Most of the visitors to the Brecon Beacons come for the scenery and the peace and quiet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor spend per head</td>
<td>£27.95</td>
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### Visitor advantages
Tourism is worth about £206 million to the local economy. It can work well with agriculture, another important industry of the area. Activities such as pony trekking, walking, fishing and bed and breakfast can all be carried out on a farm and earn the farmer useful income.

### Visitor disadvantages
Large numbers of visitors using cars can cause congestion of roads especially narrow country lanes. Popular places for walkers can become damaged by erosion which can be expensive to repair.

### Sustainable tourism
One of the most successful examples of sustainable tourism has been the Beacons Bus. The scheme which was funded by a number of organisations and local authorities ran from 1998 to 2013. It encouraged people to use public transport rather than their cars.
The Beacons buses ran from major cities surrounding the Park on summer Sundays and Bank Holidays from late May to the end of September. The buses arrived in Brecon at about 11:00am and then passengers chose from a number of routes to visit different areas in the Park or spend the day in Brecon. The bus from Cardiff had a bike trailer which allowed people to bring their bikes up to the Brecon Beacons for a days cycling. The buses left Brecon for the return journey at 5:30pm. Around 6,723 passengers used the bus in 2013. Assuming three people in a car, that would be 2,285 fewer cars on the road making the visit much more sustainable!
Population 2011 33,344

Population by age:
0 - 15 5,444
16 - 64 20,221
65 + 7,679

% Welsh Speakers 13.9%
% Economically active 68.7%
% Vacant Properties 8.7%

Largest town Brecon (8,031)

Historical industry Agriculture, coal mining, quarrying, iron works, silica mining, gunpowder works

Main present employment:
Accommodation & food services 10.0%
Retail 13.4%
Education, Health & Public Administration 39.1%
Opportunities
One of the greatest opportunities of a rural area is in the landscape itself which, as well as being farmland, also provides an ideal setting for tourism. The landscape can provide activities such as sightseeing, walking, fishing, caving, rock climbing and canoeing which then in turn generates custom for services such as cafes and bed and breakfast.

Problems
One problem is a relatively poor transport system which means people have to use their own vehicles. Large areas with a scattered population can also lead to difficulties in meeting up with other people while a lack of job opportunities can also be a problem. As many rural areas are particularly desirable to live in, some of the housing is being taken up by people for holiday homes. This can weaken the local community as they only live there for a part of the year.

3 key messages
The National Park is a very special place – one of Britain’s breathing spaces. We must look after it so that people will be able to enjoy it in the future.

The Park has so much to offer, so make sure you take the opportunity to enjoy it. Learn about this wonderful area and tell other people why it is so special.

The Park is here for everyone. Lots of people visit to enjoy it but people live and work in it as well. It is important to help maintain the jobs, culture and the way of life of the local communities.
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Ile i enaid gael llonydd

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