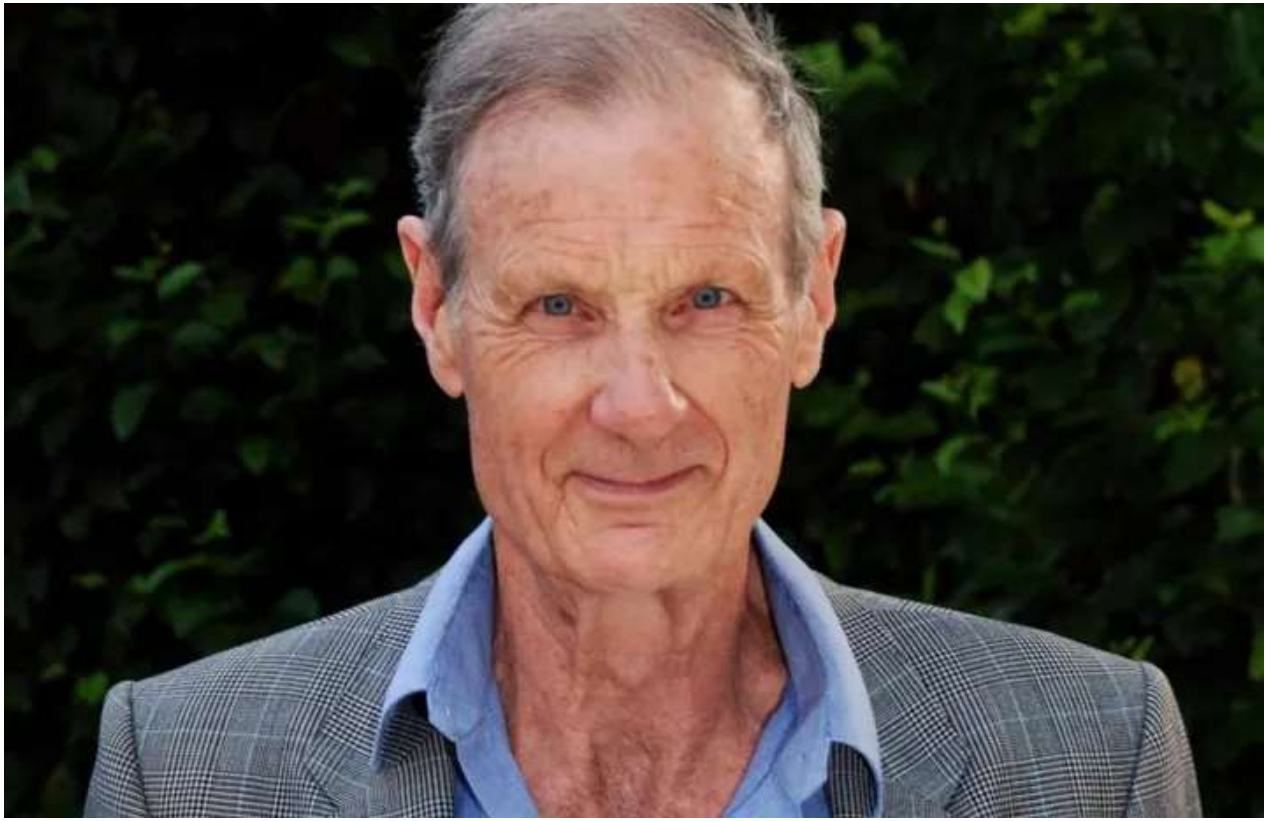
Protected Areas and Local Development

The Case of the UK

Jim Dixon

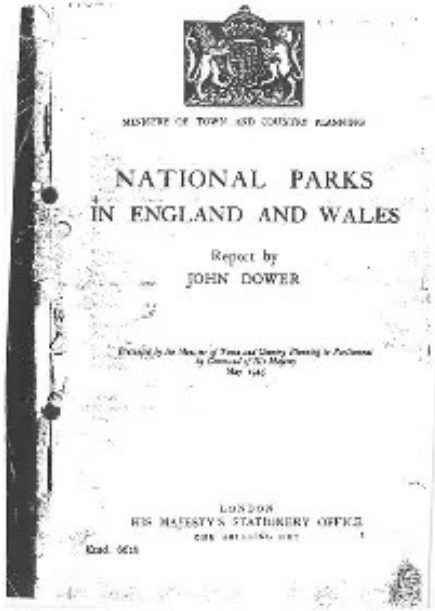


Professor Michael Dower
1933-2022









MINISTRY OF TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

NATIONAL PARKS
IN ENGLAND AND WALES

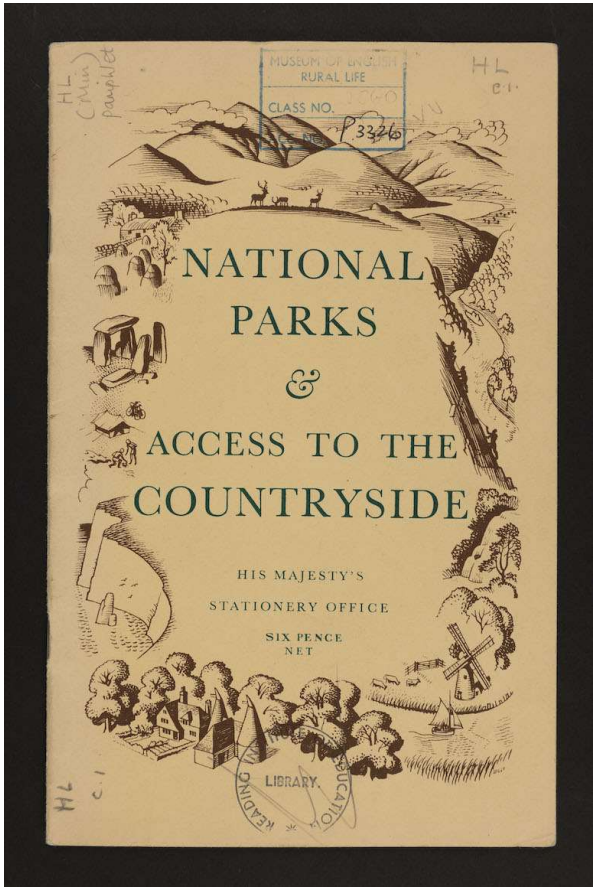
Report by
JOHN DOWER

Presented by the Minister of Town and Country Planning to Parliament
by Command of His Majesty
May 1945

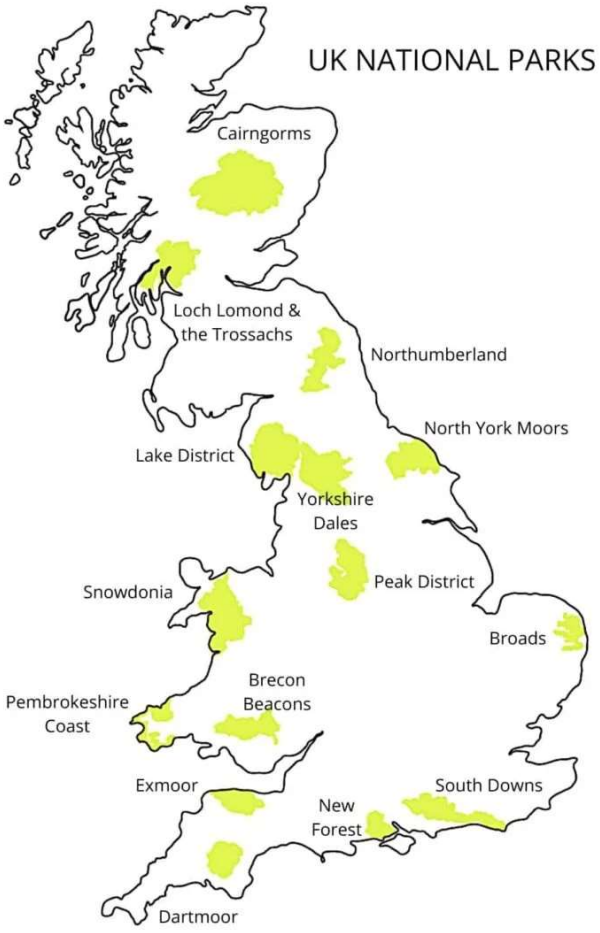
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MUSEUM OF ENGLISH RURAL LIFE
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P 3326
NATIONAL PARKS & ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE
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15 National Parks in the UK

3 in Wales

2 in Scotland

10 in England

None in Northern Ireland.

C 10% of the UK land surface

National Park's have their own statutory authority

The National Park Authority determines the planning policy, prepares the statutory plan and makes Development decisions within the parks







National Landscapes
(formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

England
33.5 National Landscapes

Wales
4.5 National Landscapes

Scotland
40 National Scenic Areas

Northern Ireland
8 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Most National Landscapes, AONB and National Scenic Areas are administered by local councils

Planning decisions about development must take into account the designation but the relevant local plan is led by the local authority


National
Landscapes
Association

UK National Nature Reserves
Protected UK sites with notable habitats and species

The UK has over 395 National Nature Reserves (NNRs), including

229 in England,
43 in Scotland,
76 in Wales, and
47 in Northern Ireland.

Overview
National Nature Reserves (NNRs) are protected areas designated for their exceptional wildlife, habitats, geology, and scientific value.

They are managed by national conservation bodies across the UK. Some are run by government agencies and others by Trusts such as the National Trust







Designation of National Parks

The provisions of this Part of this Act shall have effect for the purpose

(a)of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the areas specified in the next following subsection; and
(b)of promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public.

(2)The said areas are those extensive tracts of country in England F7 . . . as to which it appears to Natural England that by reason of

(a)their natural beauty, and
(b)the opportunities they afford for open-air recreation, having regard both to their character and to their position in relation to centres of population,
it is especially desirable that the necessary measures shall be taken for the purposes mentioned in the last foregoing subsection.

(3)The said areas, as for the time being designated by order made by Natural England and submitted to and confirmed by the Minister, shall be as known as, and are hereinafter referred to as, National Parks

Designation of National Landscapes – formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Where it appears to Natural England that an area which is in England but not in a National Park is of such outstanding natural beauty that it is desirable that the provisions of this Part relating to areas designated under this section should apply to it, Natural England may, for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area, by order designate the area for the purposes of this Part as an area of outstanding natural beauty (national landscape).

There are currently no plans for new national parks or national landscapes in the UK

Purposes and Duties

National Parks

Purpose 1: To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area

Purpose 2: To promote the opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public

Duty: To seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park in pursuit of its purposes

National Landscapes

Purpose: 'to conserve and enhance the beauty of the area'

There are two secondary aims:

1. Meeting the need for quiet enjoyment of the countryside and

2. Having regard for the interests of those who live and work there

Duty on other bodies, eg local authorities, highways bodies, utilities etc.

The Protected Landscapes Duty requires relevant authorities to actively seek to further the statutory purposes of National Parks, National Landscapes, and the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads in all decisions affecting these areas.

Protected Landscapes and Rural Development

- The duty
- The obligations to citizens – 2.5 million people live in UK protected areas
- Statutory plans
- Rural Economic Development
- Product brands and local product and tourism marketing
- Economic benefits to neighbouring areas and cities
- Working with farmers and landowners –Farming in Protected Landscapes





Michael Dower and the Introduction of the Peak District National Park Farming Schemes c 1980

Farming in Protected Landscapes

A short history

- Protected Landscapes established in land use planning law, separate from farming
- Few ‘farm schemes’ in National Parks
- Agri-environment Schemes 1984-Present
- The Glover Review of Protected Landscapes
- Farming in Protected Landscapes 2021-2029
- Over 3000 projects in all of England’s National Parks and National Landscapes
- Ministers have committed to extend the programme to 2029



farming in protected landscapes | National Landscapes - Farming in | Final-FiPL-Report-2025.pdf
https://national-landscapes.files.svdcdn.com/production/assets/images/Documents/Reports/Final-FiPL-Report-2025.pdf?dm=1741183604
Draw | Ask Copilot | 2 of 7 | Edit with Acrobat

What is Farming in Protected Landscapes?

The Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme – or FiPL as it is commonly called - was introduced in June 2021 by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The programme provides grant funding for farmers and land managers in our treasured National Parks and National Landscapes (previously named Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

Our precious National Parks and National Landscapes cover almost a quarter of England, supporting biodiversity and local communities, and have a significant role in helping the government to meet its climate and nature targets. It is crucial that we nurture them. Farming in these areas plays a vital role in doing this. FiPL projects must deliver on at least one of the following themes:

- helping to tackle the impacts of CLIMATE change
- helping NATURE recovery
- providing opportunities for PEOPLE to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage
- protecting or improving the quality and character of a PLACE.

Projects must be part of the solutions needed in local areas so they have to help deliver the priorities identified in the National Park or National Landscape Management Plans - strategic documents that outline policies and actions to conserve, enhance, and sustainably manage the natural, cultural, and recreational values of a designated landscape.

How does FiPL work?

FiPL officers based in National Parks and National Landscapes advise farmers and land managers on developing projects to make sure they deliver on the themes and reflect local interests and needs.

Applications for under £10,000 are assessed by a senior Protected Landscapes Officer. Applications over £10,000 are assessed by an independent Local Assessment Panel made up of local farmers, experts and decision makers.



FiPL achievements up to the end of March 2024

82 new and 107 existing **farm clusters** supporting farmers to work together

422 ponds created or restored

£59million **funding** spent so far

15 miles of **stone walling** restored

3,700+ projects awarded funding

840 projects supported that **reduce flood risk**

3,400+ educational visits paid for and over **600** schools engaged

95 **new permissive paths** (50 miles added)

engaged with over **7,000 farmers and land managers**

11,000+ **volunteers** engaged

150 **monuments** deemed at risk have been **supported**

204,000 **trees planted**

184 miles **of new hedgerows planted** (approx 297km)

Rainy days ahead 21°C
Search
13:38 13/09/2026

Final Thoughts

- The UK has a history stretching back 100 years on protected landscapes
- Important UK figures such as Michael Dower influenced policies in the UK and internationally
- Protected landscapes must have clear statutory protection
- Protected landscapes can only be successful if local people are involved in their governance, planning and programmes
- FIPL was the result of an idea in the minds of visionaries 40 years ago and skilled administrators today.

Jim Dixon

Writer, Champion of Protected Areas, Nature and Heritage

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