

Recreation, enjoyment and understanding of upland landscapes

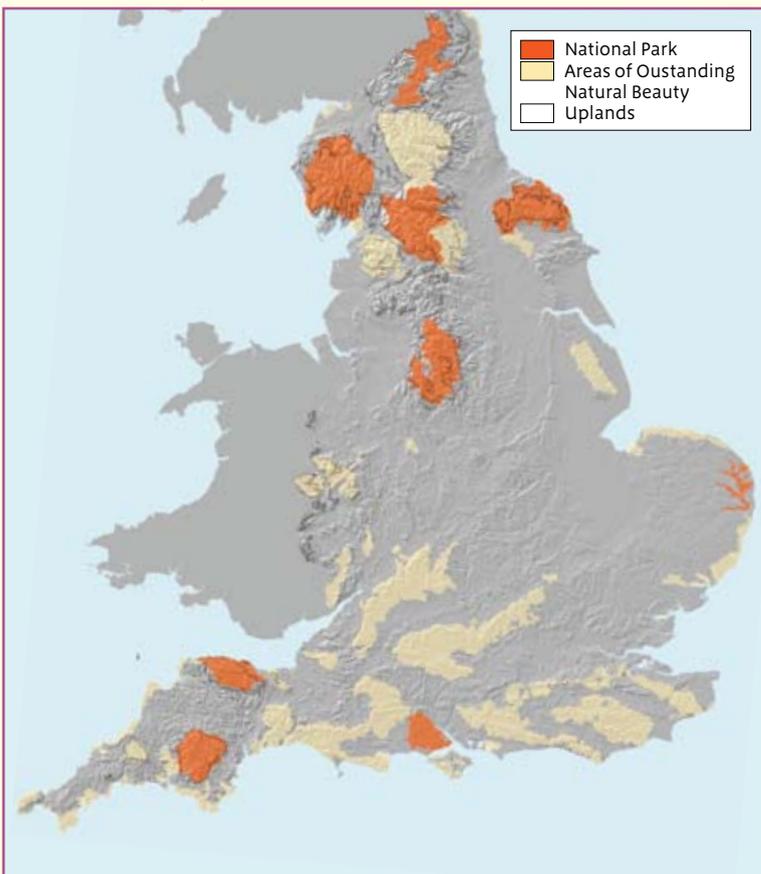
How important are our uplands for recreation and access?

- The uplands are breathing places for escape and recharge.
- 75% of the uplands have been designated as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Most Open Access land is in the uplands.
- Tourism underpins much of the upland economy.

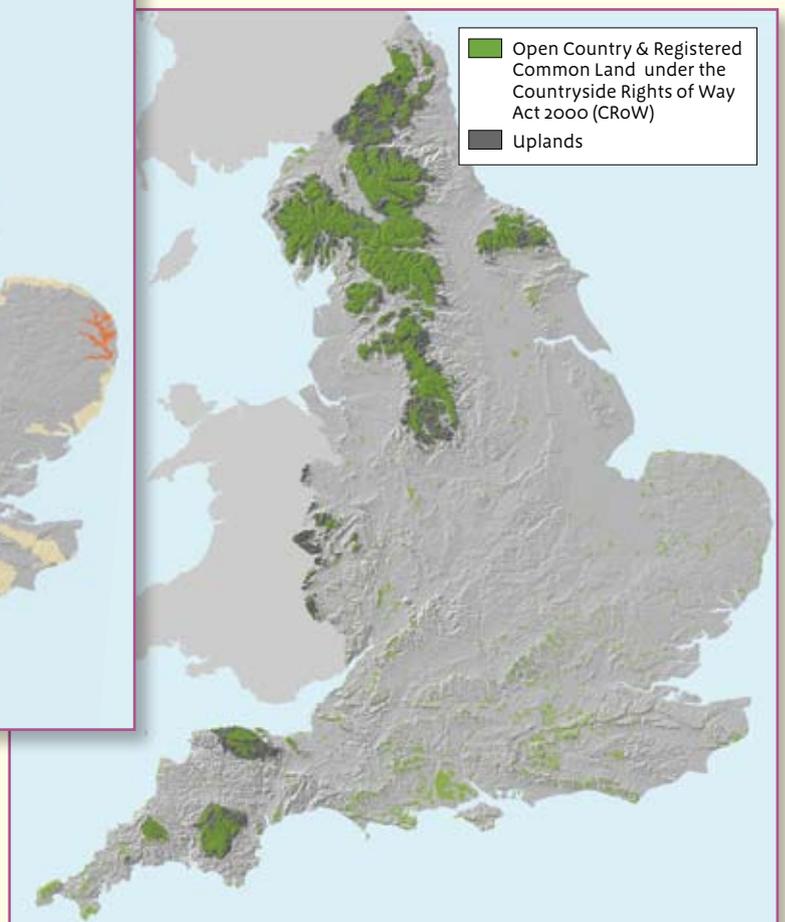


Tranquillity on Derwent Water, Lake District

National Parks & Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty



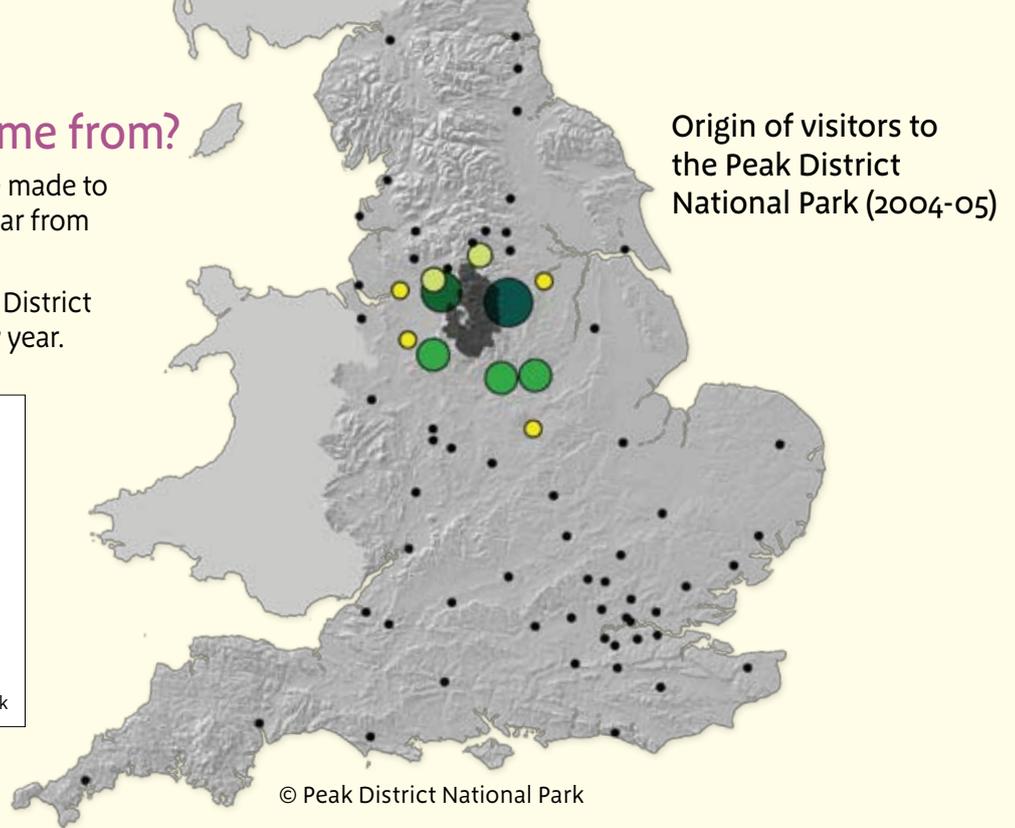
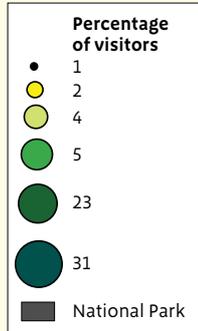
Open Country & Registered Common Land



© Natural England, Defra 2007

Where do visitors come from?

- Nearly 70 million day visits are made to upland National Parks each year from across the country.
- The Peak District and the Lake District receive the most visitors every year.



Why do people come to the uplands?

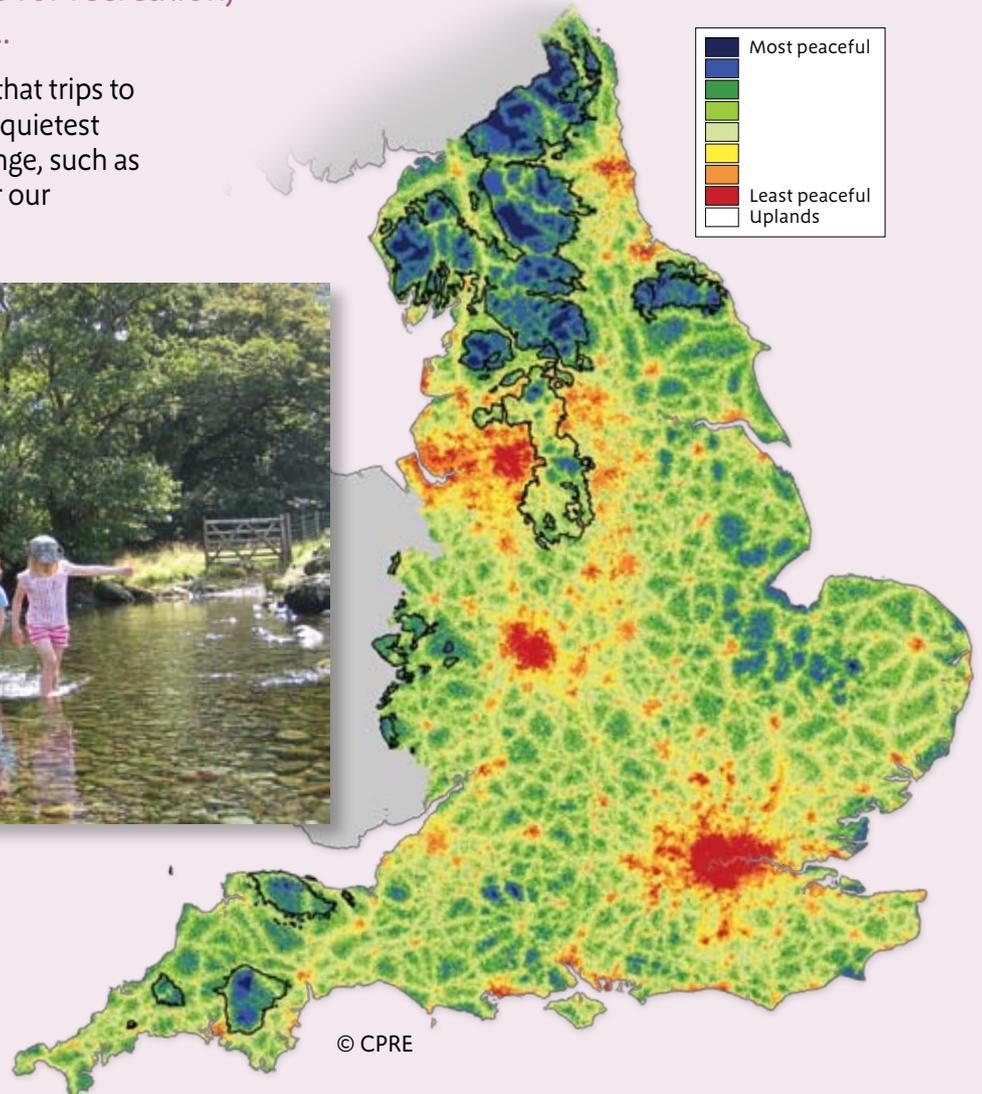
Inspirational surroundings for recreation, recharge, and adventure....

There is good evidence to show that trips to the countryside, particularly the quietest places and those offering challenge, such as the mountains, are very good for our physical and mental wellbeing.



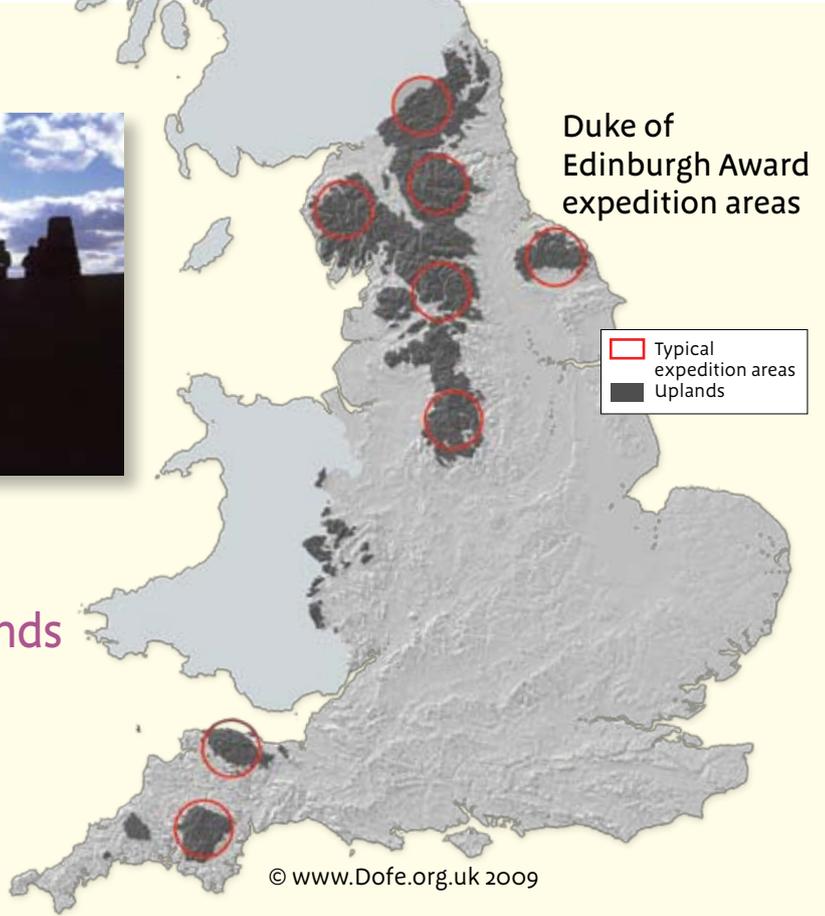
Crossing an upland stream

Tranquillity





A hike in the Peak District



Walking – the most popular recreational activity in the uplands

- Hill-walking for pleasure, fitness, education or challenge remains the most popular outdoor activity in the uplands today.
- For example, The Duke of Edinburgh Award encourages hundreds of young people to challenge themselves in upland landscapes each year.

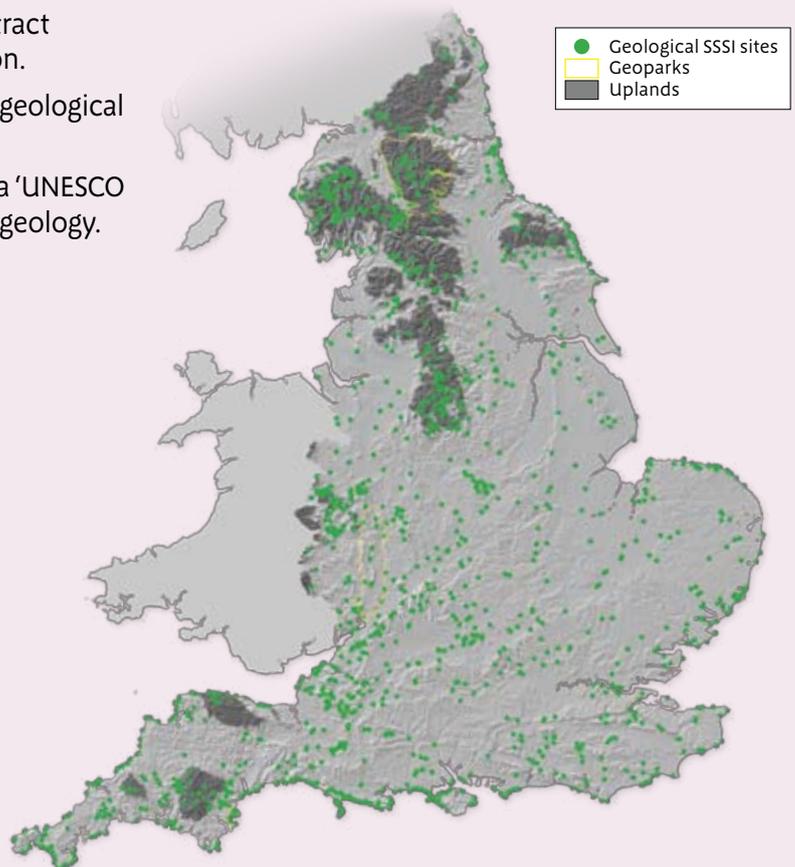
Geology

- The geology and natural features are one of the uplands major attractions for people.
- Spectacular mountains, limestone pavement and caves, glaciated valleys, and waterfalls, attract people for study, adventure and inspiration.
- A large proportion of SSSIs designated for geological features lie within the uplands.
- The North Pennines has been designated a 'UNESCO Geopark' for its internationally significant geology.



Exploring limestone pavement, Malham Cove, Yorkshire Dales

Distribution of Geological SSSIs



Why is the historic environment of the uplands important?

- The historic record and cultural artefacts in upland landscapes have been much better preserved than in the lowlands because uplands have been less cultivated, and far less developed with roads and housing.
- The historic environment is a source of identity, culture and learning. It helps us better understand our past and consequently prepare us for the future.

This historic environment is rich and varied and includes:

- spectacular monuments, like Hadrian's Wall and the 4,000 year old Castle Rigg stone circle;
- evidence of previous agricultural systems;
- old mineral workings and other upland industry;
- the pollen record held within the peat soils.



Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland



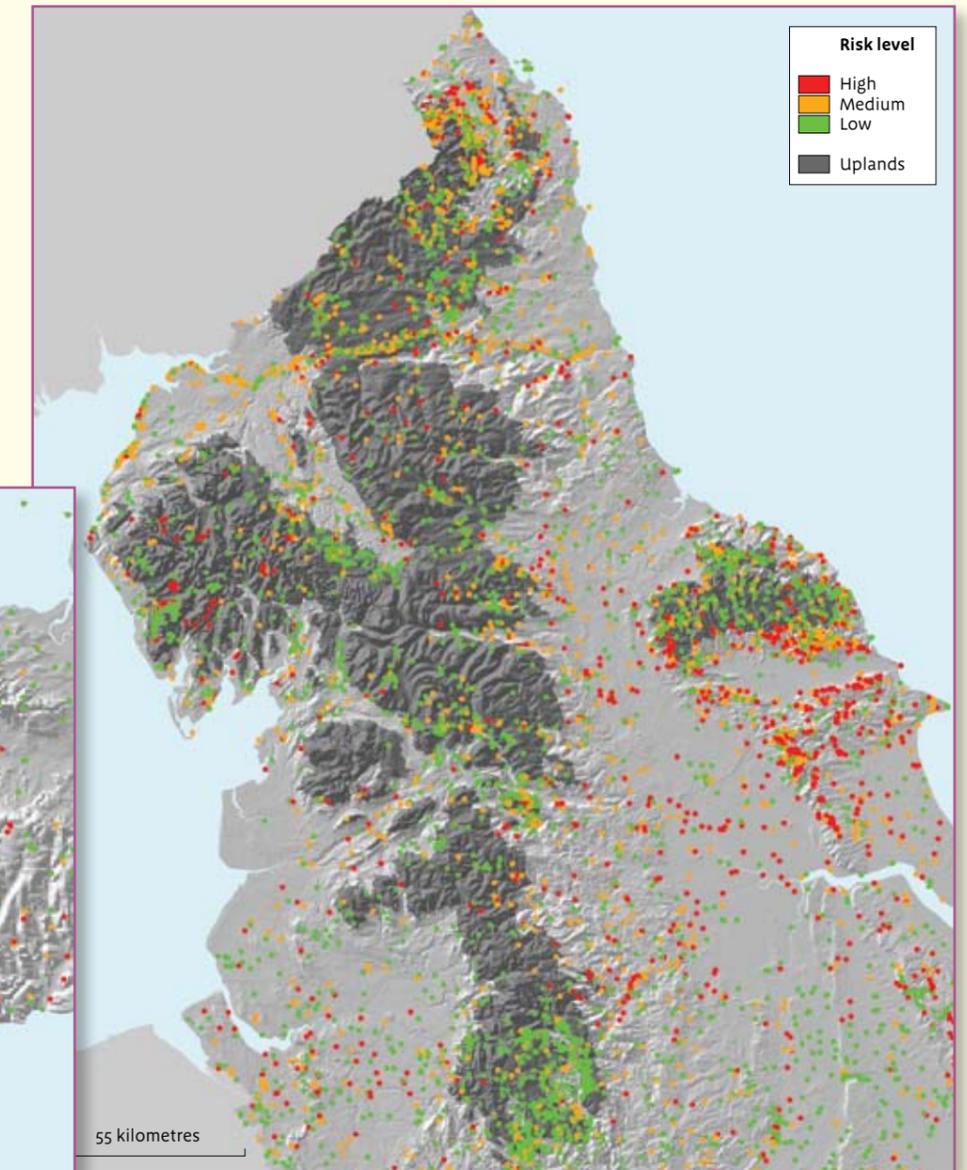
Enjoying Castle Rigg stone circle, Lake District

What risks does the historic environment face?

- Key risks to upland historic features come from overgrazing and soil compaction; and conversely, in other places, from undergrazing and scrub and bracken encroachment.
- Getting the management right for the historic environment and for biodiversity and other ecosystem services can be a challenging balance.

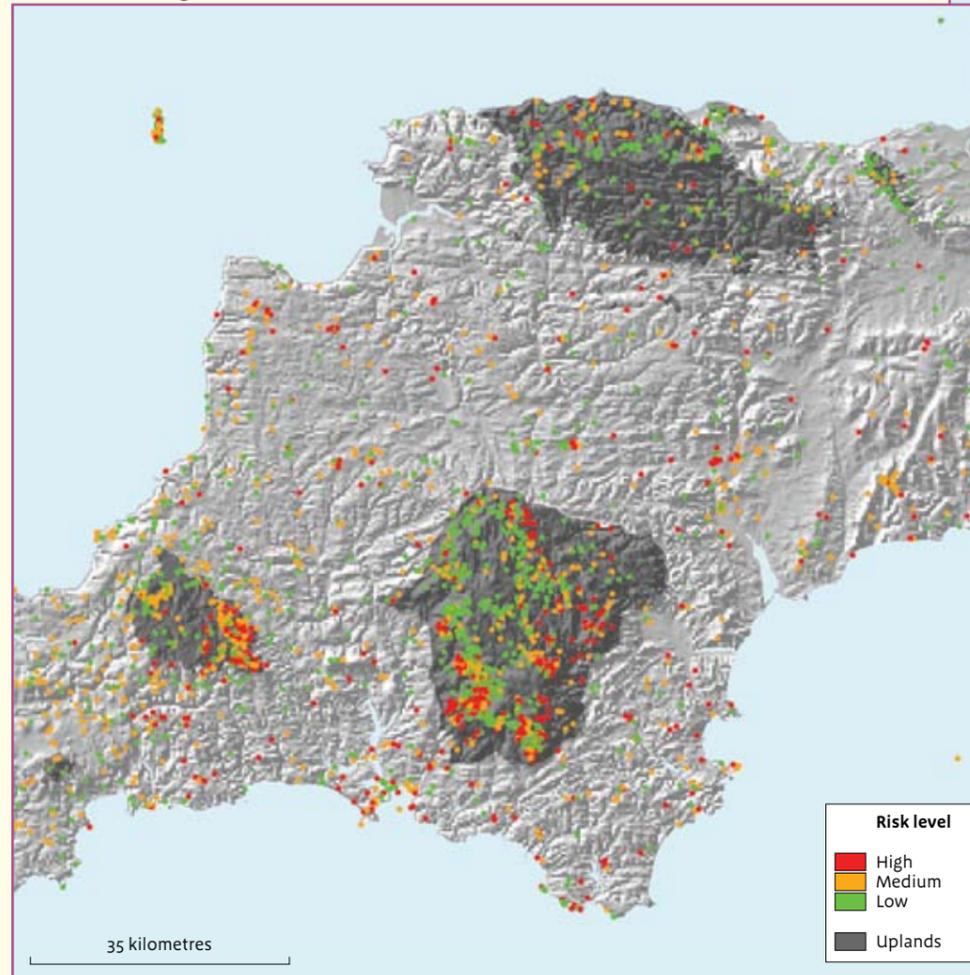
Distribution of Scheduled Monuments, showing their status

Northern England



© English Heritage

South West England



© English Heritage

What environmental impacts do access and recreation have?

- Very little, considering the number of visitors, but a few issues will need careful management, especially as the climate changes, eg
 - Most wild fires in the Peak District start close to access points;
 - Stormier weather and less winter snow cover are increasing footpath erosion;
 - 93% of all visitors to the Lake District travel by car.

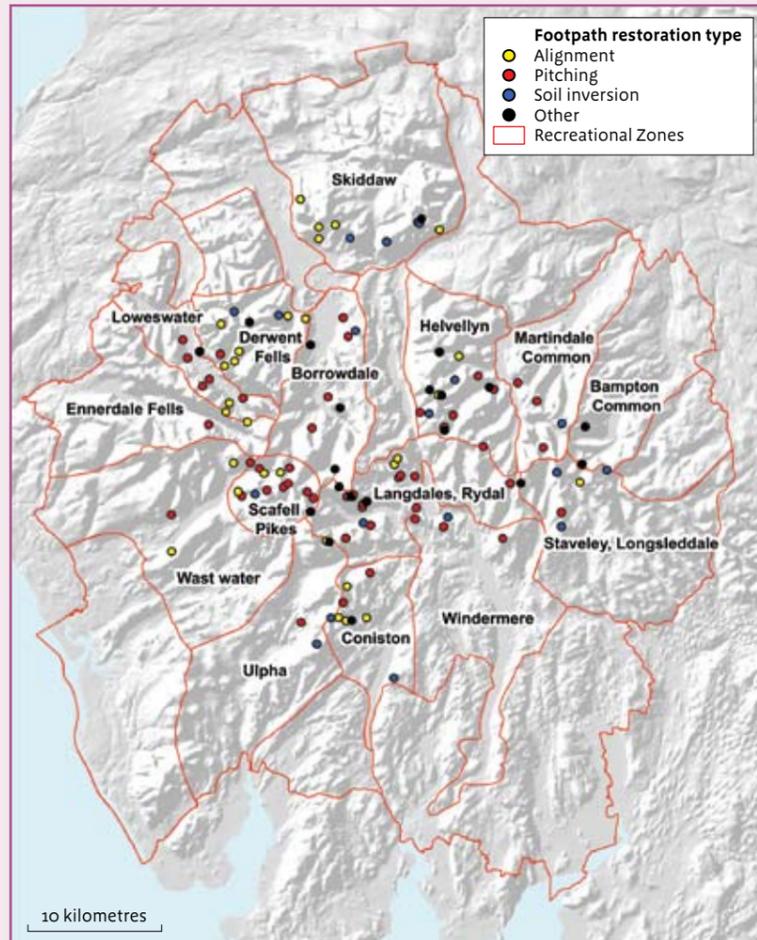


Serious footpath erosion in the Lake District



Volunteers fixing a footpath in the Lake District

Footpath restoration in the Lake District – ‘Fix the Fells’ Project



© LDNP

Fixing the Fells

Work to restore eroded footpaths in the Lake District is underway through a partnership project which relies on volunteer path layers. Reducing soil erosion also reduces carbon loss from soil and avoids unsightly scarring of hillsides.



Controlled moor burning to encourage fresh heather shoots for grouse

How important are the uplands for field sports?

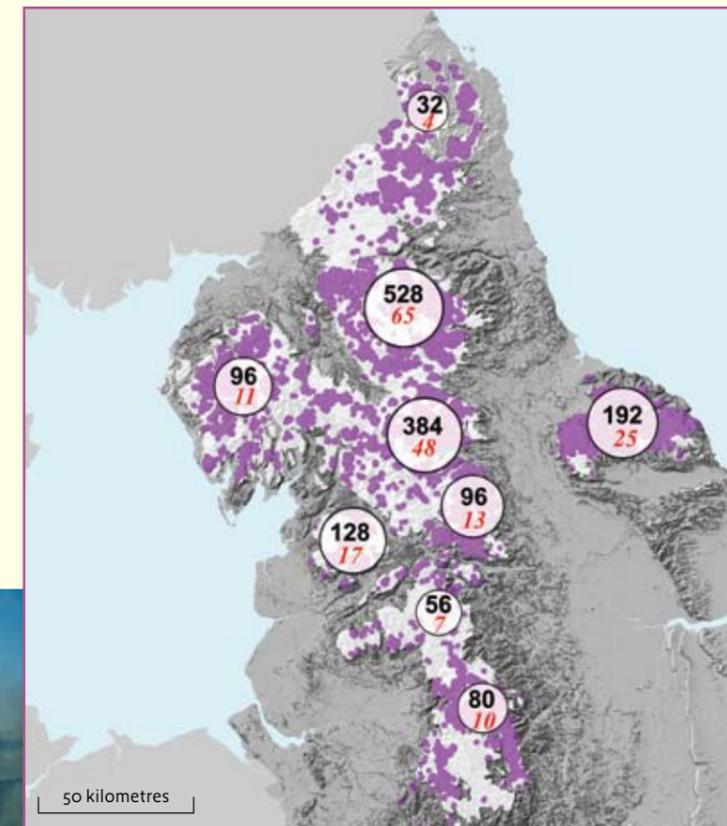
- Grouse shooting has been a recreational activity in the Northern uplands for over 150 years.
- It is a major land use with 16% of the uplands being managed as grouse moor through vegetation burning and grouse-predator control.
- An estimated 47,000 people in the UK take part in grouse shooting.
- Millions of people enjoy these heather moorland landscapes for walking and cycling each year.



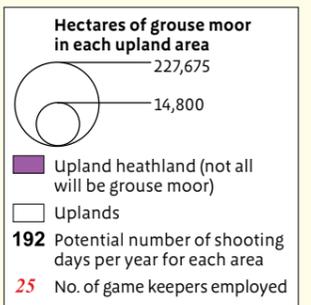
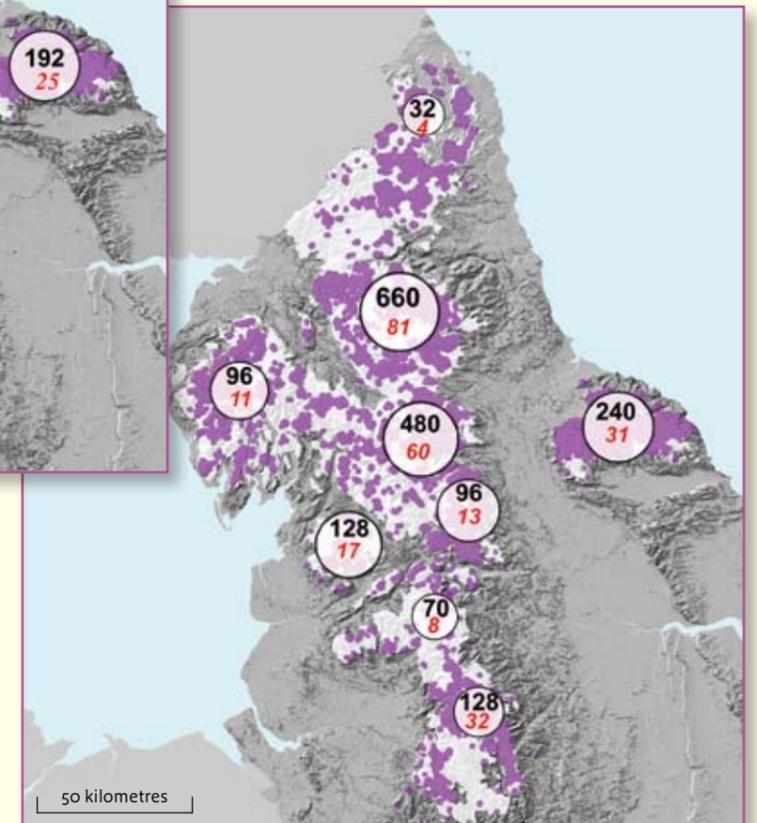
Red grouse – a popular game species

Changes in grouse shooting activity in the English uplands over an 8 year period

2001



2009



© Moorland Association

How has grouse moor management shaped the uplands?

- Moorland management has maintained open moorland across large parts of the Northern uplands – valued as iconic landscapes.
- Management favours those species like ground nesting birds, with similar requirements to grouse. Other habitats and species can be squeezed out, depending on the intensity of management. For example, breeding hen harrier populations should be higher than they currently are.
- There is evidence to suggest that burning intensity is increasing, which may impact on vegetation diversity including peat forming species, carbon storage capacity of peat soils, and on water colour.



© YDNPA

Barden Fell looking up the Wharfe Valley towards Barden Moor

Grouse moor management on Barden Moor offers opportunities and benefits

Barden Moor and Barden Fell form part of the Bolton Abbey Estate (5,500 hectares) in North Yorkshire. Since 1808, these heather moors have been extensively managed on a low input system with grazing and rotational burning for red grouse shooting. In addition to the sporting value, the moors produce the following benefits:

- food from red grouse, heather fed lamb and heather honey;
- sustainable wood from the ancient woodlands below the moorland;
- beautiful walking country which attracts thousands of visitors each year;
- educational trips to re-engage people with their natural and cultural heritage;
- biodiversity –
 - the area is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (and European Special Protection Area for birds) for its moorland breeding birds, like merlin, golden plover, snipe, curlew, redshank, teal and short-eared owl;
 - the area is a European Special Area of Conservation for its diverse upland plant communities on dry heath and active blanket bog;
- climate regulation by absorbing carbon from the atmosphere and locking it in the peat soils.