Fountains Abbey & Studley Royal

World Heritage Site Management Plan 2015–2021
Contents

Foreword 4
Introduction 7
Vision 9

Chapter 1 World Heritage Site status and Statement of Outstanding Universal Value 11
Chapter 2 Managing the World Heritage Site 19
Chapter 3 Current issues affecting the World Heritage Site 23
Chapter 4 Themes, objectives and actions 29
Chapter 5 Action plan 54
Chapter 6 Implementation and monitoring 63

Maps
Map 1 World Heritage Site boundary 64
Map 2 Buffer zone 65

Appendices
Appendix 1 Facts and figures about the World Heritage Site 69
Appendix 2 A short history of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal 70
Appendix 3 Planning and policy framework for the World Heritage Site 73
Appendix 4 List of World Heritage Site stakeholders 77
Appendix 5 Outcomes of public consultation 79
Appendix 6 Evaluation of delivery of objectives and actions in WHS Management Plan 2009-2014 96
Appendix 7 English Heritage and National Trust Conservation Principles 101
Appendix 8 Conservation Action Plan 2015-2021 102
Appendix 9 Geodiversity Audit 127
Appendix 10 Landscape Character Assessments 135
Foreword

It is an honour and a privilege to be asked to write the foreword to the Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey World Heritage Site Management Plan. The development of the City of Ripon and Fountains Abbey share the common inheritance left by John and William Aislabie. Both were members of parliament for Ripon, sitting between them for a total of more than 60 years throughout much of the 18th century. John had Nicholas Hawksmoor erect the country’s tallest freestanding obelisk in Ripon Market Place in 1702 and he began the water garden in 1716. Better known as Fountains Abbey, the World Heritage Site is inscribed as a masterpiece of human genius and an outstanding designed landscape. The genius was John Aislabie who in the second decade of the 18th century had the vision to transform the deep post-glacial valley of the River Skell into the superb water gardens that we see today.

His son William inherited in 1742 when the garden was complete and was another visionary, continuing the work started by his father. He extended the garden further north down the Skell valley, and bought the Fountains estate in 1767 to ensure the backdrop of the ruined abbey became part of the water garden. He ‘improved’ the ruins and created more vistas across the estate, and connected his ‘natural’ garden at Hackfall a few miles away with a carriage drive to Studley Royal. The combined estate remained in private hands until 1966 when purchased by West Riding County Council and has been managed by the National Trust since 1983 and designated a World Heritage Site in 1986.

I first visited this special place in the early 1990s, and since moving to Ripon in 2000 have been a regular walker down the Spanish chestnut lined avenue back to Ripon, one of the best walks in Yorkshire. The natural setting, the underlying geology and the ‘S’ shaped topography of the Skell valley were critical in the development of the water garden, helping to describe where the ponds, canals and follies were located and providing vistas at every turn in the valley.

Long-term planning and evaluation of the management plan is key to the future of this and every World Heritage Site, and partnership is the crucial element in that plan. Without partners no single organisation can bring the necessary expertise and experience into play to ensure the sustainability of a World Heritage Site. The National Trust at Fountains has worked in partnership over a number of years especially with English Heritage and Natural England, and has realised the importance of connecting across cultural and natural heritage interests. Better understanding of those links adds significantly to the way that heritage is conserved, presented and promoted to the public as a World Heritage Site — “Your local place for everyone in the world”.

Written by Mick Stanley, Right Worshipful Mayor of Ripon
The Moon Pond and the Temple of Piety
The Surprise View of the abbey from the water garden
Introduction

About the World Heritage Site

Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site is special for its spectacular 18th century landscape and water garden, integrating the ruins of Fountains Abbey. It was inscribed as a World Heritage Site (WHS) in 1986 as ‘Studley Royal Park including the ruins of Fountains Abbey’. The site is 822 acres (333 hectares), lies a few miles west of the city of Ripon in North Yorkshire and sits within the Borough of Harrogate and the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The 18th century water garden, incorporating some of the largest Cistercian abbey ruins in Europe, shares the landscape with a deer park, Jacobean mansion and a magnificent Victorian church designed by William Burges.

To be inscribed as a WHS, a place must not only demonstrate ‘outstanding universal value’, it must also fit at least one of ten criteria established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The name of the site on the World Heritage List is ‘Studley Royal Park including the ruins of Fountains Abbey’, rather than the name the site is usually known by, ‘Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal’. The site was inscribed as a WHS by UNESCO as ‘a masterpiece of human creative genius’ which is one of the ten WHS selection criteria. Studley Royal is considered an outstanding example of the ‘English’ garden style. The early parts of the garden created by John Aislabie from 1718 are influenced by earlier formal French and Dutch geometric designs though moving in a more naturalistic, English, direction. Instead of imposing a design upon nature, this style worked in harmony with it. Later in the 18th century this move towards a more natural approach progressed further. William Aislabie, John’s son, further developed the garden while maintaining much of his father’s earlier designs at its core. Studley Royal therefore demonstrates the evolving garden tastes of the 18th century in one landscape.

There are other significant buildings and landscapes on the site which contribute towards the WHS status. The abbey ruins are not only a key eye-catcher in the 18th century garden but also of international importance in their own right, being one of the few Cistercian houses to survive from the 12th century. There are also Fountains Hall, St Mary’s Church, Fountains Mill and the deer park. Together these buildings and landscapes combine to make a harmonious whole which UNESCO considers to be ‘an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble which illustrates significant stages in human history’, another of the ten WHS criteria.

The National Trust has owned the estate since 1983 and manages the WHS in partnership with Historic England and the English Heritage Trust. The National Trust has around 68 regular staff, 20 seasonal staff and over 400 volunteers that work in a range of roles at Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal.

Today the WHS welcomes approximately 350,000 visitors every year from the local area and further afield. It is one of the most visited places owned by the National Trust and one of the most popular tourism attractions in Yorkshire. There are many reasons why people choose to visit Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal.

Some enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the site, while others are inspired by its history or wish to enjoy its rich diversity of wildlife. Managing the site as a popular visitor attraction whilst still protecting and enhancing the WHS is a complex and challenging task.

Further information about the site is included in:

Appendix 1 — Facts and figures about the World Heritage Site
Appendix 2 — A short history of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal
Map 1 — World Heritage Site
About the plan

This is the management plan for the Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site. It is a plan for all those with an interest in, and responsibility for, managing the WHS. The UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention state that ‘each nominated property should have an appropriate management plan or other documented management system which must specify how the outstanding universal value (OUV) of a property should be preserved, preferably through participatory means’. UK Government policy aims to ensure a management plan is in place for all UK WHSs.

The main purpose of the plan is therefore to sustain the OUV of the WHS to ensure it can be passed on for future generations to enjoy. The plan:

— sets out what is special about Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal WHS, including a full description of the OUV of the site
— identifies key issues affecting the WHS
— sets out a long-term vision, objectives and action plan for the WHS to ensure the maintenance of its OUV for present and future generations

The WHS Management Plan for Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal was first published in 2001. This plan is the second review and will run for six years from 2015 to 2021. It builds upon the objectives and actions in the earlier plans. The plan also includes the new Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) defining the site’s significance which was approved by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 2012. The successful delivery of the plan relies on all partners working together to achieve the management objectives and actions.
Vision for the World Heritage Site

Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site is a special place, loved for generations. It is a place of calm reflection, of delight and exploration, for those who come to discover it now and in the future. Taking the 18th century pleasure gardens as its core and inspiration, the WHS possesses many layers of an extraordinary history that have shaped the abbey, the parkland, the rural setting and extended further afield to other landscapes.

The designed landscape was inscribed as a WHS in 1986 and since that time the National Trust and its partners have undertaken an ambitious programme of conservation work to restore the gardens to their former splendour, ensuring the outstanding universal value (OUV) of the WHS is sustained for future generations to enjoy. At the same time, facilities for visitors such as the Visitor Centre and Porter’s Lodge interpretation centre have been developed as part of our mission to present and communicate the OUV of the site to as many people as possible.

Our vision, is to build on this work and to ensure the WHS will be:

- conserved and enhanced for future generations to enjoy, the genius of the place will be captured and celebrated through delivery of our conservation work
- a place which is accessible to all, brought to life for everyone to understand and enjoy
- a place cherished by the local community and wider communities of interest and an iconic symbol of Yorkshire
- a place where sustainable management sits at the heart of all we do
- an exemplary WHS which aims to make a significant contribution to the purposes and functions of UNESCO
Chapter 1

The Cascade, Studley Lake and the Tabernacles, by Balthazar Nebot, 1730s
1.1 What is a World Heritage Site?

World Heritage Sites are prime examples of the world’s greatest cultural and/or natural sites. They provide an irreplaceable source of inspiration to everyone, irrespective of where they are located. It is, therefore, vitally important to protect them for future generations. World Heritage Sites have a cultural or natural significance that ‘is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and of importance for present and future generations of all humanity.’ This concept, referred to as outstanding universal value, is set out in the World Heritage Convention of 1972.

There are currently 1031 World Heritage Sites spread across 163 countries (in August 2015) reflecting the rich diversity of the world’s cultural and natural heritage. Their position on the World Heritage List ensures that they will remain a part of our global heritage for generations to come. It is important to ensure that World Heritage Sites contribute toward UNESCO’s overall goals of peace, security and sustainable development.

‘World Heritage is a building block for peace and sustainable development. It is a source of identity and dignity for local communities, a wellspring of knowledge and strength to be shared.’ Irina Bokava, the Director-General of UNESCO

This plan contributes to UNESCO purposes through its learning programme and sharing of good practice on conservation management, its engagement with local communities and other wider communities of interest and its efforts to promote sustainable management.
1.2 Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

All World Heritage Sites have a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) which sets out the significance of the site, its integrity and authenticity and measures for its management and protection. The SOUV will guide the management of the site for the foreseeable future. Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal’s SOUV was approved by the World Heritage Committee in 2012 and can only be altered with their approval. There have already been some changes to the planning and management framework described in the SOUV and the amendments follow the Statement below. In addition to the outstanding universal value there are a whole range of national, regional and local values which will inform how the site is managed. These are set out in Section 1.4.

Studley Royal Park including the Ruins of Fountains Abbey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Brief Synthesis

Situated in North Yorkshire, the 18th century designed landscape of Studley Royal water garden and pleasure grounds, including the ruins of Fountains Abbey, is one harmonious whole of buildings, gardens and landscapes. This landscape of exceptional merit and beauty represents over 800 years of human ambition, design and achievement.

Studley Royal is one of the few great 18th century gardens to survive substantially in its original form and is one of the most spectacular water gardens in England. The landscape garden is an outstanding example of the development of the ‘English’ garden style throughout the 18th century, which influenced the rest of Europe. With the integration of the River Skell into the water gardens and the use of ‘borrowed’ vistas from the surrounding countryside, the design and layout of the gardens is determined by the form of the natural landscape, rather than being imposed upon it. The garden contains canals, ponds, cascades, lawns and hedges, with elegant garden buildings, gateways and statues. The Aislabies’ vision survives substantially in its original form, most famously in the spectacular view of the ruins of Fountains Abbey itself.

The abbey is not only a key eye-catcher in the garden scheme but is of outstanding importance in its own right, being one of the few Cistercian houses to survive from the 12th century and providing an unrivalled picture of a great religious house in all its parts. The remainder of the estate is no less significant. At the west end of the estate is the transitional Elizabethan/ Jacobean Fountains Hall, partially built from reclaimed abbey stone and with its distinctive façade, it is an outstanding example of its period. Located in the extensive deer park is St Mary’s Church, a masterpiece of High Victorian Gothic architecture, designed by William Burges in 1871 and considered to be one of his finest works.

Key Components

Studley Royal Park, including the ruins of Fountains Abbey, combines into one harmonious whole buildings, gardens and landscapes constructed over a period of 800 years. All, important in their own right, have been integrated into a continuous landscape of exceptional merit and beauty. Its principal components are:

Studley Royal: one of the few great 18th century ‘green gardens’ to survive substantially in its original form, arguably the most spectacular water garden in England. The landscape garden is an outstanding example of the development of the ‘English’ garden style throughout the 18th century, which influenced the rest of Europe. The garden contains canals and ponds, cascades, lawns and hedges, with elegant temples and statues used as eye-catchers. The layout of the gardens is determined by the form of the natural landscape, rather than a design that is imposed upon it. The Aislabies’ design survives substantially in its original form.

Fountains Abbey ruins: a key element in the garden scheme, providing the spectacular culmination to the principal vista, but also of outstanding importance in their own right. It is one of the few Cistercian houses surviving from the 12th century and provides an unrivalled picture of a great religious house in all its parts. Fountains Abbey, founded in 1132, soon became one of the largest and richest Cistercian abbeys in Britain, before being closed by Henry VIII in 1539 during the Dissolution of the Monasteries. It was partially demolished soon after.

Jacobean Fountains Hall: an outstanding example of a building of its period and partially built with stone from the Abbey. It has a distinctive Elizabethan façade and is enhanced by a formal garden with shaped hedges. The interior of the Hall has been adapted for successive uses, including a courthouse.

St. Mary’s Church: an outstanding example of High Victorian Gothic architecture by one of its leading exponents, William Burges, in 1871, and considered to be one of his finest works. A building of importance in its own right, it has also been successfully integrated into the landscape of the Park. The church is one of a pair: its twin is Christ the Consoler at Skelton-on-Ure. They were both designed by Burges and built using the same craftsmen.
Criteria

Criterion (i): Studley Royal Park including the ruins of Fountains Abbey owes its originality and striking beauty to the fact that a humanised landscape was created around the largest medieval ruins in the United Kingdom. The use of these features, combined with the planning of the water garden itself, is a true masterpiece of human creative genius.

Criterion (iv): Combining the remains of the richest (Cistercian) abbey in England, the Jacobean Fountains Hall, and Burges’ miniature neo-Gothic masterpiece of St Mary’s, with the water gardens and deer park into one harmonious whole, Studley Royal Park including the ruins of Fountains Abbey illustrates the power of medieval monasticism, and the taste and wealth of the European upper classes in the 18th century.

Integrity

The Studley Royal Park was at its most extensive under the ownership of William Aislabie in the latter part of the 18th century. It is one of the few great 18th century gardens to survive substantially in its original form. The landscape design has been little altered by subsequent owners, who mainly respected and only modestly enhanced the original designs by their additions. However, many landscape features disappeared and the maintained part of the gardens contracted due to lack of maintenance. A number of decaying buildings and landscape features from the late 18th century were also removed and parts of the estate were sold into different ownerships. Despite the changes to the estate, the attributes which express the outstanding universal value remain intact and are still evident today. The integrity and authenticity of the ruins of Fountains Abbey is high as is that of St Mary’s Church and Fountains Hall.

The World Heritage Site boundary largely follows the area in National Trust ownership rather than the extent of the historic estate. Therefore some important elements of the designed landscape lie outside the World Heritage Site boundary and may be vulnerable to change. The proposed buffer zone, arising out of the Management Plan process, would protect the integrity of the wider historic estate.

Authenticity

The property as a whole has high authenticity in terms of form and design, materials, function, location and setting of features of the great 18th century designed landscape. However, in common with many other cultural sites, particularly those that develop in an organic way such as parks and gardens, both the fabric and design of the landscape at Studley Royal have been continually altered, first throughout the period of inception (up to c. 1781) and thereafter by a mixed process of maturity, modification, ageing and decline. Natural growth, impact of climatic events and development can have both positive and negative impacts on the landscape, as can later design interventions and alterations to its physical fabric.

There have been numerous conservation interventions since inscription which were necessary to ensure the outstanding universal value of the property was maintained. Conservation works in the garden, to the many garden buildings and to the Abbey and other buildings have adhered to good conservation practice and have been thoroughly researched and documented. Fountains Hall, Porter’s Lodge and the Cistercian Water Mill have been sensitively reused to enhance visitor enjoyment of the site. The water garden has been affected by climatic events, such as flooding, and pragmatic modifications, such as the use of modern engineering technology, has enabled conservation of the water garden design.
Protection and Management Requirements (2012)

The UK Government protects World Heritage Sites in England in two ways. Firstly individual buildings, monuments, gardens and landscapes are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act and secondly through the UK spatial planning system under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

National guidance on protecting the Historic Environment (Planning Policy Statement 5) and World Heritage (Circular 07/09) and accompanying explanatory guidance has been recently published by Government. Policies to protect, promote, conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, their settings and buffer zones can be found in regional plans and in local authority plans and frameworks. World Heritage status is a key material consideration when planning applications are considered by the Local Planning Authority. The Harrogate Borough Council Local Development Framework contains policies to protect the property.

Since 1983, the Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal estate has been owned and managed by the National Trust. In partnership with English Heritage and the local landowners, the site has been designated under a guardianship agreement. St Mary’s Church is owned by the State and managed by the National Trust under a local management agreement. Whilst currently not within the World Heritage Site boundary, later land additions to the National Trust estate hold significant historical features that had become isolated, including the Swanley Grange part of the monastic grange complex and How Hill, a scheduled monument, which also contains one of John Aislabie’s earliest 18th century eye-catchers.

The estate is important for its recreational values and has an unusually long history of tourism, beginning in the 17th century. Each year over 300,000 people come to the site and use for conservation and access projects. The National Trust monitors the number of visitors who come to the estate and their physical impact on the landscape to inform access arrangements and ensure the necessary protection of the site. Although damage is considered to be relatively limited there are some areas of concern including the presence of vehicles in the deer park, the intrusive car park at Studley Lake, wear and tear on the footpaths and damage to the lawns (after excessive rainfall) caused by walking on the grass. The National Trust has developed a Conservation for Access Toolkit which measures the impact of visitors on the site and provides management recommendations to protect the site in the future. The main visitor facilities, services and car parking are provided at the Visitor Centre to protect the character of the historic area from intrusive modern developments and to minimise the impact of cars on the historic landscape.

There are a range of statutory and non-statutory designations on the property. Fifty four buildings and structures on the site have been listed under the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as buildings of special architectural and historical interest. The abbey and its surroundings are a scheduled monument. The whole site is Grade 1 on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens in England. The majority of the site also lies within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Detailed protection of the site is also provided by Harrogate Borough Council’s Local Development Framework. A proposal arising out of the Management Plan is being progressed to create a buffer zone to protect the setting of the World Heritage Site. The buffer zone was approved by the World Heritage Committee in July 2012. Additional non-statutory protection is afforded by the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan, the Environment Agency’s Catchment Flood Management Plans and Harrogate Borough Council’s Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation designation.

Protection of the estate’s artefacts and chattels collection is currently provided by various agencies. Other than the Trust, the main repositories are English Heritage and North Yorkshire County Council.

The World Heritage Site Management Plan for Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal was reviewed in 2009. A wide audience was involved in developing the plan. The key priorities set out in the plan include the restoration of the garden and parkland, production of a Conservation Management Plan, protecting the setting of the World Heritage Site through a buffer zone, water management and adapting to climate change, promoting sustainable management, improving environmental performance, engaging people and partnership working. Delivery of the World Heritage Site Management Plan is monitored by a Steering Group which includes the National Trust, English Heritage, Harrogate Borough Council and ICOMOS-UK. The Steering Group also coordinates an annual stakeholder event involving a wider range of partners, including Natural England, Nidderdale AONB, the Environment Agency, local community groups and neighbouring landowners.
The protection and management requirements for the site have changed since 2012. This has included considerable changes to the UK planning system and policy framework. The Harrogate Borough Council planning position has changed as a result of the new planning requirements. The current planning framework is set out in Appendix 3. The Steering Group membership has also been widened since the SOUV was approved and now includes North Yorkshire County Council, Historic England and the English Heritage Trust.

1.3 Defining the attributes of the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site

The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value sets out a summary of the World Heritage Committee’s reasons why the site is of international importance. All World Heritage Sites have been asked to define the attributes of outstanding universal value (OUV) to help with the management of the site. Attributes are aspects of a World Heritage Site which are associated with, or express, its OUV. Within the decision making process, they should assist with the assessment of the impact of any proposed change to the site or in its setting. It will be a priority over this plan period to work with partners to define the attributes of the OUV of the WHS.

1.4 Other values associated with the WHS

In addition to the outstanding universal value, there are a range of other values which guide how the site is managed. The World Heritage Convention 1972 places value on both cultural and natural heritage and recognises the need to preserve the balance between the two. Although inscribed on the World Heritage List as a cultural site, the natural environment (biodiversity and geodiversity) is an integral part of the site. There are also important archaeological and historic sites not referred to in the SOUV. Finally, the site has enormous value as a tourist destination and the social, cultural and economic values of the site are set out below.

1.4.1 Archaeological values

The surface beauty of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal rests literally and intellectually on an outstanding archaeological resource. This reflects periods of the past no longer very visible in the landscape, commencing with prehistoric remains dating back to the Neolithic period and including a significant (if elusive) Romano-British occupation. Place name evidence reflects a sophisticated use of the landscape in the early medieval period, before the establishment of the abbey. After its foundation, half of the present property was owned by the monks, the rest an independent, vanished, medieval village – Studlei Magna – whose remains extend over some 330 acres. This is archaeology of at least regional and often national value.
The archaeological potential of designed landscapes is less overt than that of medieval abbeys or villages, but just as important. On sites such as Studley Royal, it is probably even more important, as it has the potential to tell the detailed story of the designed landscape which is the reason for the estate’s WHS inscription, and therefore is of international value. All gardens evolve over time, often creating a far more significant archaeological record than documentary one. This has been proven to be the case time and time again at Studley Royal over the past 25 years. The site’s archaeology has been quite well mapped, but the potential for further discoveries or more detailed investigation remains considerable.

In addition to these highlights in the estate’s history there is a range of other elements that have left significant archaeological record, not least the domestic life of the lost Studley Hall in the deer park, and the occupation and development of the Fountains estate between 1540 and 1767.

Archaeological resources are all a) unique, b) highly sensitive and vulnerable to ill-informed management and c) an irreplaceable resource. It is crucial to understand this resource as well as possible to avoid inadvertent damage, optimise what is learnt from unavoidable interventions, and find means of investigation that leave the resource untouched.

1.4.2 Natural environment values

Biodiversity

The WHS contains a rich and varied ecology. Eight species of bat can be found at the site with at least three species breeding and many roosts within the historic buildings and structures. The freshwater habitats of the river and ponds are UK BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) priority habitats and support a number of species including the native white-clawed crayfish and great crested newt. The site also supports a wide variety of birds including the spotted flycatcher, hawfinch and lesser spotted woodpecker.

The veteran trees of the deer park and their deadwood invertebrates are of international importance due to the rarity of old parkland in Europe. Many trees are more than three hundred years old and a few date from before 1600. The native oak, field maple and yew trees, as well as the introduced lime, beech and sweet chestnut trees support a wide variety of saproxylic invertebrates that are dependent on dead or decaying wood, as well as other organisms.

The ancient woodland on the valley sides is rich in bluebell and dog’s mercury as well as bird’s nest orchid, small teasel and toothwort. The abbey ruins also support over fifty species of wall flora.

The underlying Millstone Grit of the site is overlain by Magnesian Limestone and this sustains species-rich Magnesian Limestone grassland, especially around the Banqueting House, which is now part of a lowland calcareous grassland UK BAP priority habitat.

Geodiversity

Within the Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal estate there are 2 principal bedrock types. The majority of the site is underlain by Magnesian Limestone (Permian). The southern and western part of the site, including the abbey precinct and Fountains Hall, is underlain by Millstone Grit (Carboniferous). The whole site is overlain by a cover of Pleistocene gravel and clay with associated late Pleistocene landforms. The best exposures of Millstone Grit occur on the north side of the Skell valley, forming Echo Cliff which is where much of the building stone for the abbey was quarried. Exposures of Magnesian Limestone can be seen either side of the formal water gardens and within the Seven Bridges Valley. In the late Pleistocene a river swollen with glacial meltwater cut the steep sided valley of Fountains Abbey and the Seven Bridges gorge along which today’s River Skell flows. The natural shelter provided by the deep post-glacial river valley, the presence of water and the surrounding geology and geomorphology have all influenced the development of the site, the design of the landscape and the construction of the historic buildings and structures.
1.4.3 Educational and learning values

Many visitors come to the site to increase their knowledge of the historic landscape, wildlife and people who have lived here. The learning team provides visitors with a variety of different ways to discover the estate, its stories and history. These include guided and self-led tours, an audio tour of the abbey and lively exhibitions. For children and students there are classrooms and workshops at Swanley Grange which offer year round activities to help children and young people learn about different aspects of the site. The site also works with local colleges, universities and apprenticeship schemes, to provide a learning base for people to develop skills in the conservation and care of historic places.

1.4.4 Social, economic and cultural values

Community

Local people have strong attachments to the World Heritage Site. The deer park and the Seven Bridges Valley are very popular for family outings, often with several generations coming for a walk, to see the deer and enjoy the views. The popularity of the estate rests on the fact there are many things to do but it is also still possible to find a quiet place. The majority of the site’s regular volunteers live in Ripon, Harrogate and the surrounding area.

Recreation and tourism

The site has had a long history of welcoming visitors, from the beginning of the 17th century to today. Even before the Studley Royal landscaped garden was finished, it was described as the ‘Wonder of the North’ by a visitor (Travel Journal of John Tracy Atkins, 1732). It is one of the most visited National Trust properties and a key attraction in Yorkshire, drawing visitors from many parts of Britain and overseas. Each year approximately 350,000 visitors come to the paying area and an estimated 150,000 people visit the deer park.

Religious and spiritual

The estate retains an active and significant spiritual and celebratory significance for many people. A small number of ecumenical services take place in the abbey church, notably at Easter and Christmas. During the summer months the parish minister and current and former members of the clergy volunteer their time so they can respond to spiritual matters should it be appropriate. St Mary’s Church remains consecrated and is used several times a year for services, in addition to parish weddings and christenings.

Peace and tranquillity

The site is highly valued for its tranquillity and peaceful beauty and for providing a quiet place for calm reflection.

Economic

The site has always been a working estate and its success as a visitor attraction means it is an important economic driver locally and regionally. It is one of the most visited attractions in Yorkshire and one of only two World Heritage Sites in the region; Saltaire is the other. The estate is committed to increasing the provision of locally sourced products and working with local contractors.

Many of the visitors to the site also visit Ripon and other attractions in the local area and stay in nearby holiday accommodation. The estate is also an important employer with many of its staff living locally. The National Trust has agricultural agreements with local farmers relating to agricultural pockets of land on the fringes of the estate, which reinforces the economic and social significance of the estate and the important relationship between the estate and the local community.
Chapter 2: Managing the World Heritage Site

This chapter sets out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the management of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site and the process for this update of the plan.

2.1 Management structure

The National Trust, Historic England and the English Heritage Trust are chiefly responsible for the conservation and maintenance of the site.

It should be noted that in 2015, English Heritage split into two separate organisations:

– Historic England, a public body to champion and protect England’s historic environment, and

– English Heritage Trust, a new independent charity retaining the name English Heritage, to look after on behalf of the nation — the National Heritage Collection of more than 400 historic sites across England including the ruins of Fountains Abbey.

The National Trust owns the Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal estate and manages the garden, parkland, Fountains Hall and the visitor infrastructure. The State owns St Mary’s Church and it is cared for by the English Heritage Trust on its behalf, although the day to day management has been taken on by the National Trust under a Local Management Agreement. All three organisations play a role in the conservation and management of the abbey ruins and Fountains Abbey Mill. The abbey ruins and mill are in a Guardianship Agreement with the State and therefore although owned by the National Trust, their conservation is the responsibility of the English Heritage Trust. The English Heritage Trust also takes care of the monastic artefacts at Helmsley Stone Store. The abbey precinct is a scheduled monument and Historic England is responsible for advising the Department for Culture, Media and Sport whether consent should be given for works affecting the scheduled monument. They also provide advice on listed buildings, planning and research.

Both Historic England and the English Heritage Trust are represented on the World Heritage Site Steering Group which has overall responsibility for the preparation and delivery of the World Heritage Site Management Plan.
A detailed explanation of responsibilities is shown in the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Management Framework</th>
<th>English Heritage Trust Responsibility</th>
<th>National Trust Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbey ruins</td>
<td>1966 Guardianship Agreement for the abbey ruins</td>
<td>Consolidation and maintenance of the ruins (standing fabric and buried archaeology), including vegetation control, condition surveys, research, excavations and the conservation of artefacts in the Helmsley and on-site store.</td>
<td>Maintenance of surfaces inside and outside the abbey and erosion control, visitor management, interpretation and activities. Contribution to archaeological investigation of the ruins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precinct wall</td>
<td>1966 Guardianship Agreement for the abbey ruins</td>
<td>Expertise and advice.</td>
<td>Consolidation and maintenance of the wall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s Church</td>
<td>Local Management Agreement for St Mary’s Church 2014</td>
<td>Conservation of the church, interpretation and guidebook.</td>
<td>Visitor access, lighting, cleaning, organ playing, stewarding and interpretation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The WHS Steering Group includes representatives from the National Trust, Historic England, the English Heritage Trust, North Yorkshire County Council, Harrogate Borough Council and the International Council on Monuments and Sites-UK (ICOMOS-UK). The Steering Group is responsible for setting the management priorities and monitoring delivery of the plan.

The WHS Coordinator is based on the site and is responsible for coordinating, preparing and monitoring delivery of the WHS Management Plan.

The WHS Stakeholder Group meets annually to monitor delivery of the plan and has helped inform the management issues and actions in this plan. The Group includes local landowners, the local authority, representatives from the local community including mayors and parish councillors, businesses, tourism and environmental organisations and interest groups. A list of these stakeholders can be found in Appendix 4.

2.2 Producing the plan

This plan was developed by the WHS Coordinator and the WHS Steering Group. Consultation events were held throughout the plan process to gather people’s opinions on the issues that matter the most to them. This ensured that national and local organisations, visitors and local residents had the opportunity to make their voices heard and shape this revision of the plan. A questionnaire was also available for completion online and promoted through National Trust social media networks. A second phase of formal consultation on the draft plan was held from December 2014 to February 2015. The outcomes of the consultation can be found in Appendix 5.
The process, including key milestones in the preparation of the plan, is set out below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review of current Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHS Stakeholder event 26 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action plan of current plan reviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement strategy produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHS Steering Group agree engagement strategy: 22 January</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussions on key management issues with partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement with property staff &amp; volunteers: 5 &amp; 6 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement event at Ripon Town Hall: 22 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor engagement at World Heritage Weekend: 3, 4 &amp; 5 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online and paper questionnaire launched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHS Steering Group to review Draft Consultation Report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drafting the Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft the chapters of the plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHS Steering Group review objectives chapter of draft plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation on the draft Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHS Steering Group meet to sign off draft plan for consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder meeting to consider actions of draft plan: 20 Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft plan published for consultation: 8 weeks Nov to Jan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of draft plan produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHS Steering Group review consultation responses March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amending and finalising the Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amend the Plan following consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit Plan to DCMS for endorsement and send to UNESCO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and launch of Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An aerial view of the water garden
Chapter 3: Current issues affecting the World Heritage Site

This chapter sets out the main issues to be addressed at Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site over the next 6 years. The issues were identified by:

- consulting a wide range of stakeholders including national and local organisations, local communities and visitors
- reviewing the objectives in the last plan and progress on delivery of the 6 year action plan
- analysing the key performance indicators set out in the last plan and the results of the 2012 Periodic Report which assessed the state of conservation of the World Heritage Site (WHS)

Defining these issues has helped shape the long-term objectives and actions set out in Chapter 4 of the plan. Where an issue is addressed by a specific objective these have been highlighted in this section of the plan.

3.1 Ensuring protection of the World Heritage Site, buffer zone and wider setting through the planning system

Ensuring the protection of the WHS, its buffer zone and wider setting continues to be a high priority. Although the area within the boundary of the WHS is unlikely to be subject to development proposals which impact on its outstanding universal value (due to the fact it is wholly owned by the National Trust), outside the boundary there is potential for development proposals to threaten the values of the WHS. These could include large scale or poorly sited renewable energy schemes, some agricultural developments and inappropriately sited buildings which could harm its setting or key views into or out of the site.

As a response to the potential harmful impact on the WHS of development outside the boundary, the development of a buffer zone was taken forward in the last plan period and approved by the World Heritage Committee in 2012. The buffer zone boundary is shown on Map 2. Policies to protect the WHS, the buffer zone and its wider setting were included in the Harrogate Borough Council Draft Sites and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD). This was withdrawn in June 2014, however, following concerns expressed by the Inspector at the Public Examination. Work has now started on the preparation of a new Local Plan but it is expected to take three years before the plan is submitted for examination. In the interim, planning policies contained in the existing Harrogate District Local Plan together with guidance in the Heritage Management Supplementary Planning Document will provide a basis for protecting the OUV of the WHS and its wider setting including the buffer zone.

Ripon City Plan Committee which includes the Ripon Mayor and representatives from Ripon City Council and other local interests is leading the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan called the Ripon City Plan. Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011 and gives communities powers to make a development plan for their area. The National Trust and their partners at the Council are working closely to ensure that the UNESCO approved buffer zone is included in the plan, particularly policies to protect the vista from the WHS to Ripon Cathedral and beyond to Blois Hall Farm.

The planning and policy framework for the WHS is set out in Appendix 3.

Link to Objective E

3.2 Adequacy of the boundaries of the World Heritage Site

The boundaries of the WHS are based on the National Trust ownership boundary when the site was acquired in 1983. The boundary of the site was proposed...
by the UK Government to the World Heritage Committee because it represented an area managed by the least number of stakeholders. ICOMOS-UK, however, recognised that there were other areas outside the proposed boundary, most notably How Hill, Chinese Woods and Spa Gill, which were part of the 18th century gardens and should be included within the WHS at a later time. These areas now lie within the WHS buffer zone but are still outside the WHS boundary.

Link to Objective F

3.3 Encouraging more visitors while continuing to ensure the peaceful beauty and tranquillity of the WHS is maintained

The WHS has seen a growth in visitor numbers of approximately 2% per year over the last plan period and on peak days such as Easter, bank holidays and during school holidays, visitor numbers can reach 4000 a day. During busy periods the capacity of the car parks is exceeded with the result that visitors park on the grass verges along the main access road, the deer park avenue and the grassland surrounding the Studley Lakeside car park. There can also be some localised queuing at the catering outlets and admission points.

Visitor pressure on the historic fabric presents issues for the maintenance of the outstanding universal value of the WHS and the conservation and presentation of the gardens and parklands. The National Trust has identified the following issues currently facing the site:

- wear and tear to car park surfaces caused by the number of cars and year round use
- erosion to path edges on the estate and on roads through the deer park by visitor and delivery vehicles
- damage to grassland and compaction around tree roots at Studley Lakeside car park and the footpath around the lake
- damage to the paving at the Studley Royal entrance by delivery vehicles
- erosion to the footpaths and entrances to the abbey ruins, particularly in winter when the ground is waterlogged

Assessment work carried out to inform the last plan and recent customer research carried out by the National Trust showed that people value the site for its peaceful and tranquil surroundings, the beautiful setting in the Skell Valley, the echoes of the past, the atmosphere and spiritual values. It is important that visitor pressure is carefully managed to maintain these valued attributes of the site.

Link to Objective B

3.4 Financial sustainability of the WHS

To conserve and protect the WHS for future generations, it is vital that income is raised to fund conservation work. The site relies on its role as a popular visitor attraction to generate income. Visitor numbers for the site are still on an upward trend. Recent years, however, have shown that these numbers can be negatively affected by the economic environment, weather and competitive pressures. The impact of the global credit crunch was felt during the last plan period. As a primarily outdoors attraction, the site is particularly susceptible to poor weather. The wet summer of 2012 impacted negatively on visitor numbers and therefore visitor income.

The main source of funding for the estate is admissions and membership income. Visitor spending in the restaurants and shops, as well as staying in one of eleven holiday cottages on site, also makes a very important contribution to the site’s financial sustainability.

A lot of work was done over the previous plan period to diversify the commercial activities on site, reducing reliance on visitor income. Projects included the development of five new holiday cottages at How Hill.

Yorkshire has an extensive tourism offer, and there is a vast number of other historic sites within the region that compete for the same leisure and visitor spend. While the region’s richness in cultural and natural heritage does attract domestic and international visitors to the site, the competitive environment can put visitor numbers at risk.

Link to Objective C

3.5 Managing the impacts of flooding and siltation

The River Skell runs through the estate and was vastly modified in the 18th century to create the water garden. The river feeds the formal ponds, canals and cascades that form central features of the water garden. Upstream the catchment for the Skell is relatively small at 36 sq. km and very steep. It consists of soils which are prone to compaction and therefore high levels of run-off are experienced during periods of heavy rainfall which can cause flooding of the WHS.
It is clear from historical documents and anecdotal evidence that historic features set within the valley floor have been, and continue to be, at risk from the extremes of river flow. The valley bottom sits within the flood risk area on the Environment Agency flood maps. The recent Inland Flood Risk Assessment for the abbey ruins (2013) carried out by English Heritage identified the area as ‘high risk’. The most significant threat to the outstanding universal value of the WHS continues to be flooding that causes damage to the built and natural heritage and the deposition of silt within the river course. This project has now ended and there is currently no catchment wide scheme in place to reduce silt deposition or manage flooding on the site.

Whilst project work has stopped within the catchment, the National Trust has begun to focus on mitigation measures within the site and is currently exploring options to manage flooding within the water garden. It continues to allocate comparatively large financial and staff resources to the management of the water course. In 2010 the Trust spent £0.5 million on the Studley Lake Project which included removal of silt from the lake. There is no external funding available for these works. The dredging programmes will continue to generate vast quantities of silt therefore new ways of reusing this material off-site need to be explored.

### 3.6 Managing the risks associated with climate change

Evidence suggests that significant global warming is occurring causing changes to the climate that can be seen now and are likely to become widespread and more severe in the future. Changes are already occurring in temperature and precipitation patterns towards hotter drier summers and milder wetter winters but also increasing storminess and heavy rain. These changes do have the potential to impact on the outstanding universal value (OUV) of the WHS as well as the wider values of the estate. Management implications for the WHS and maintenance of the OUV include:

- impact of flash floods and low water levels on the landscape design and its built and natural features (link to issue 3.5)
- grassland management, including maintenance of the lawns
- the condition and selection of trees and maintenance of historic planting patterns
- the condition and maintenance of garden features such as the yew hedges and bosquets
- the vulnerability of exposed rock faces which form important elements of the garden design in the Chinese landscape at Seven Bridges, within the water garden and adjacent to the abbey
- impact on built structures including the abbey ruins, Fountains Hall and the garden buildings
- impact on soils and archaeology
- pests and diseases

Potential risks to the site include irreversible damage or loss of historic features, landscapes and buildings due to extreme weather changes; diminished visitor enjoyment and access to the site as a result of flooding and drought; and a threat to the integrity and authenticity of the landscape posed by potential solutions to these risks. Work to identify the risks associated with climate change and measures to adapt or mitigate them, whilst still maintaining the OUV of the WHS, remain a priority.

Although some possible impacts of climate change have been identified, there is no robust baseline data demonstrating trends in climatic conditions and modelled predictions of how this might impact on the site.

Link to Objective G and L

Flooding in the abbey cloister in 2007

Silt deposition in the Half Moon Reservoir

The Ripon Multi Objective Project (Ripon MOP) was a partnership of stakeholders led by the Environment Agency and involving Natural England, Nidderdale AONB, the Forestry Commission and the National Trust. Its aim was to reduce run-off from the upper catchment of the Rivers Skell and Laver using a variety of soft engineering techniques. Unfortunately, take up by land managers in the Skell catchment was limited, resulting in little flood alleviation. This project has now ended and there is currently no catchment wide scheme in place to reduce silt deposition or manage flooding on the site.

The 2004 Environment Agency report on the Ripon Flood Alleviation Scheme detailed a flood alleviation option for the River Skell upstream of Fountains Abbey. That option, however, was not adopted by the Agency and the valley floor remains at high risk from flooding. Weirs, walls, historic structures, including the abbey ruins, and natural features such as soils and plants continue to be vulnerable to flood damage or loss. Low levels of flow also impact on the water garden.

The Ripon Multi Objective Project (Ripon MOP) was a partnership of stakeholders led by the Environment Agency and involving Natural England, Nidderdale AONB, the Forestry Commission and the National Trust. Its aim was to reduce run-off from the upper catchment of the Rivers Skell and Laver using a variety of soft engineering techniques. Unfortunately, take up by land managers in the Skell catchment was limited, resulting in little flood alleviation.

This project has now ended and there is currently no catchment wide scheme in place to reduce silt deposition or manage flooding on the site.

Whilst project work has stopped within the catchment, the National Trust has begun to focus on mitigation measures within the site and is currently exploring options to manage flooding within the water garden. It continues to allocate comparatively large financial and staff resources to the management of the water course. In 2010 the Trust spent £0.5 million on the Studley Lake Project which included removal of silt from the lake. There is no external funding available for these works.

The dredging programmes will continue to generate vast quantities of silt therefore new ways of reusing this material off-site need to be explored.

Link to Objective G and L

Flooding in the abbey cloister in 2007
3.7 The impact of the Shoot on the management of the WHS

The freehold sporting rights on the estate were sold off in two lots by the Vyner family in 1966 and 1971. They were purchased by the current private owner in 1971, prior to the National Trust acquiring the estate in 1983. The sporting rights extend to a wide range of game bird, primarily but not exclusively pheasant, which are reared on the site. The rights extend well beyond the WHS boundary, taking in much of the WHS buffer zone.

The National Trust has reached an agreement with the Shoot owners to close the pay-for-entry areas of the site on Fridays in November, December and January to minimise the disruption to visitors while shooting takes place. The Shoot, however, can and does shoot anywhere on any day within the confines of their sporting rights. The agreement also imposes constraints on the National Trust in terms of visitor access to areas of the WHS, conservation of the garden and archaeological remains and management of wooded areas. The Shoot and its associated management therefore impacts on visitor enjoyment and maintenance of the OUV of the WHS.

Link to Objective H and J

3.8 Delivery of the Conservation Management Plan

In 2011 a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was produced for the site. The CMP aims to conserve and, where there are opportunities, also enhance the OUV of the WHS. It recognises the international significance of the pleasure grounds designed by John Aislabie and his son William Aislabie — ‘the masterpiece of human creative genius’ described in the WHS inscription criteria.

The CMP informs the National Trust’s prioritisation and spending on conservation projects and highlights the large and challenging backlog of conservation work to be delivered on the site. The key challenges for conservation of the site highlighted in the plan include:

- restoration of the 18th century water garden and parkland
- access to and interpretation of the 18th century water garden which includes improving access to the water gardens so visitors can approach the abbey ruins from the east as intended in the 18th century garden design
- landscape presentation and interpretation of the abbey ruins
- condition of some historic buildings and structures
- developing options for the future use of Fountains Hall
- protecting and recording the special habitats and species on the site
- impact of the Shoot management on biodiversity and historic features, its restriction on conservation works and visitor access to large areas of the garden

Resources still continue to be an issue for conservation work, both staff resources for the maintenance of the garden and buildings and funding for projects.

Link to Objective J

3.9 Ensuring comprehensive access and welcome for all whilst maintaining the outstanding universal value of the WHS

Access for all is not simply about improving the experiences for those visitors with physical limitations, but also encompasses visitors with a wide range of needs. While there are measures in place on site to improve the experience for less able visitors, including a minibus that connects all three entrances, hearing loops and disabled facilities, there is more that can be done.

The National Trust has recently conducted an Access Audit which has raised a wide variety of issues regarding the disabled visitor’s experience on site which will need to be addressed. As a WHS and one of the most visited National Trust places in the country, the site should aim to be at the forefront of disabled access in its broadest sense, in the heritage sector.

Some visitors may consider entry to the site unaffordable or irrelevant to their cultural or ethnic background. Increases in admission prices over the coming years may further exacerbate this issue.

Link to Objective M
3.10 Helping visitors to understand the site

Regular visitor feedback and the outcomes of the consultation on the draft management plan show that interpretation of the WHS is an important issue for people. Although there is a full guided tour programme, a guidebook and the Porter’s Lodge exhibition, there is a call for far greater promotion and celebration of the sheer scale and richness of the WHS. This includes both information about the abbey ruins and more ambitious interpretation about the ideas and people that shaped the design and layout of the 18th century water garden. Many visitors are unaware that the Fountains Abbey estate and Studley Royal estate came to be joined in 1767, with the abbey cleverly used as a romantic folly in the Aislabie’s forward-thinking garden designs. Fewer still are aware that it is the garden design, incorporating the abbey ruins, that is the reason for WHS status, rather than the abbey alone.

The site also has a conservation story to tell, promoting to visitors the work that is undertaken to ensure the outstanding universal value of the WHS is preserved for future generations to enjoy. More could be done to explain this work to visitors and stakeholders and connect people to the WHS and its conservation. The site has a role to play in the promotion of education and learning about the appreciation and care of heritage, both on the estate and beyond.

3.11 Optimising the impact of the site on the local and regional economy

Whilst the more traditional forms of interpretation do appeal to some, customer feedback shows that alternative approaches are also needed to help visitors understand the history, conservation and WHS status of the site.

Link to Objective J, N and O

3.12 Accessing the WHS by means other than the car

As a conservation charity, the National Trust encourages its visitors, staff and volunteers to use green transport wherever possible. Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal is not well located within public transport networks in North Yorkshire. Regular buses run to Ripon from Leeds and Harrogate but this is four miles away from the site. At present there are only buses connecting the estate to Ripon three days a week running on a very limited timetable. An additional summer Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday service is in operation from York which continues to Pateley Bridge but this is infrequent. The estate is also 12 miles away from the nearest train station with few options for ongoing travel and 22 miles from the nearest airport (Leeds Bradford).

There is recognition among a range of partners that the WHS plays a key role in the local and regional economy. The site is one of the most visited tourism attractions in Yorkshire and won best large visitor attraction in Yorkshire at the Welcome to Yorkshire White Rose Awards in 2012.

There are few references, however, to the role of the site in the plans for economic growth covering the area. The site lies within two overlapping Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas: the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP and the Leeds City Region LEP. LEPs are business led partnerships with the public sector and their purpose is to stimulate the economy and create good quality local jobs. Both LEPs have produced strategic economic plans and the challenge is to explore how the site can help deliver these plans.

Link to Objective R

Besides, the National Trust has actively encouraged cyclists for several years and the opportunities around cycling in the area have increased significantly since the Way of the Roses route was formed, passing directly through the deer park. The Way of the Roses is a coast to coast route linking Morecambe to Bridlington. Although the Way of the Roses continues to Ripon, part of the route is on the main road. The Tour de France Grand Départ was held in Yorkshire in July 2014 and has generated further interest in cycling around the region. There is an opportunity to work with partners to build on the legacy from this event.

Link to Objective S

Visitors are encouraged to cycle to the site
Enjoying the outdoors in the deer park
Chapter 4: Themes, objectives and actions

This section of the plan sets out the long-term objectives and actions for the next 6 years. The objectives are grouped under 4 themes which have been carried forward from the last plan. The long-term objectives have been revised and updated in light of the site’s current management issues set out in Chapter 3. The key partners and timescales for delivery of the actions are set out in the six year action plan in Chapter 5.

- **Theme 1: Overall Management Approach**
- **Theme 2: Conservation & Environmental Performance**
- **Theme 3: Access, Enjoyment & Understanding**
- **Theme 4: Local Community Links & Partnerships**

A crow invades the Banqueting House as part of the Follies Art Programme.
4.1 Introduction

This section sets out the wide range of overarching issues which impact on management of the World Heritage Site (WHS). Encouraging and supporting regular input from everyone who cares for the place will ensure a well-informed and balanced approach to decision making which maintains the outstanding universal value (OUV) of the WHS. Financial sustainability and sufficient human resources continue to be essential to ensure the continued delivery of high standards of maintenance, conservation and visitor enjoyment.

4.1.1 Management policy for the WHS

Objective A: Ensure holistic and sustainable management to maintain the OUV of the WHS and achieve the vision

Actions to deliver objective

A1 Raise awareness of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value and its role in planning and management of the site.
A2 Develop a set of attributes of the OUV of the site.
A4 Agree resources for the delivery of WHS management responsibilities by owners and partners.
A5 Continue to hold an annual stakeholder event and produce regular newsletters for partners.

Objective B: Retain the distinctiveness, sense of historical continuity and peaceful beauty of the site

Actions to deliver objective

B1 Review the Conservation for Access Toolkit 2013 and implement recommendations.
B2 Continue to develop the zoning and programming approach to visitor management on site.
B3 Monitor the impact of traffic and visitor use on Studley Royal Deer Park.
B4 Develop and implement a plan of repairs to the abbey paths and entrances.

Management policies and principles

The 2001-2007 Management Plan proposed a holistic approach to site management. This means that all activities that can have an effect on the values of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site should be considered in light of the overall conservation of the WHS. In 2012, the WHS’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value was approved by UNESCO. It provides the basis for determining conservation and management strategies for the site and is a key consideration in planning decisions. A priority for this plan period will be to define a set of attributes which convey the OUV and allow an understanding of that value. These attributes will be the focus of protection and management actions and will also inform the boundary review.

The WHS has many designations attached to it, including several which highlight the importance of its natural heritage. Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal, however, is of international importance for its cultural values, a WHS inscribed as ‘a masterpiece of human creative genius’. There may be potential for conflict between the management approaches suited to the two different kinds of significance. Therefore as a general principle, on those rare occasions where designations make opposing demands, the cultural significance will take priority. However, improving the biodiversity of the WHS and fulfilling the local and national Biodiversity Action Plans will almost always bring benefits and will be promoted within the WHS and the surrounding area.

Under the World Heritage Convention, all WHSs sign up to preserve the OUV of the site for future generations. It is important that disaster risk management measures are in place. The National Trust has an emergency plan for the site which identifies potential threats to the WHS. The plan puts measures in place to ensure the Trust is able to respond effectively to emergency or disaster situations which may threaten the OUV of the WHS, such as flooding and fire. The National Trust and the English Heritage Trust have also produced salvage plans for the collections on the site.
The more specific conservation policies and principles adopted by the National Trust and English Heritage are set out in Appendix 7 of the plan and include the National Trust Triple Bottom Line approach and the English Heritage Conservation Principles. These approaches ensure that the different interests of the site are considered and appropriate management is undertaken. In terms of managing projects and maintenance works on the property, the National Trust now works within a project management framework which aims to ensure effective and efficient delivery of projects and sharing of learning.

The site now has a WHS Coordinator and membership of the WHS Steering Group was expanded in 2013 to include representatives from North Yorkshire County Council, Harrogate Borough Council and ICOMOS-UK. Stakeholder events are held annually to monitor delivery of the plan. In addition, the site also produces an annual newsletter for stakeholders. It is planned to continue this framework for delivering the World Heritage responsibilities for the site.

Balancing visitors and conservation

The National Trust uses a number of tools to ensure the impact of visitors on the outstanding universal value of the WHS is carefully managed. One of these is the Conservation for Access Toolkit which provides a framework for historic buildings and gardens to get the balance right between visitor access and conservation. It establishes the ‘carrying capacity’ of a historic space, identifies the resources needed to increase access and proposes practical solutions to manage visitor impact.

The site also follows a policy of zoning the visitor experience, to meet the needs of different visitor groups. This means that many family-based facilities such as the playground, ball games and picnic area and bird hide are sited together, outside the sensitive historic areas of the estate. Visitor events and activities are also carefully programmed to target the audience visiting at that time.

A priority during the last plan period was to minimise the impact of traffic on the WHS, particularly the parkland and lake side. The National Trust has introduced a new rising bollard at the Studley Roger entrance to the deer park to control vehicle access outside opening hours. Greater use of the minibus has also been encouraged through a regular timetable of trips and parking at St Mary’s Church is now restricted to church services and weddings. The use of estate and contractor vehicles and noisy garden operations such as grass cutting are planned to take place outside visitor hours, when possible. This can be a challenge, however, as the site is open throughout the year and has long opening hours, particularly in the summer.

4.1.2 Finance and people

Objective C: Ensure adequate and sustainable financial and human resources to maintain the OUV of the WHS and achieve the vision for the site

Actions to deliver objective

C1 Increase overall National Trust annual income to finance conservation works.

C2 Develop and deliver the Visitor Experience Project, creating new visitor offers and a masterplan for improving the Visitor Centre and Studley Royal entrances.

C3 Develop peak season additional enterprise capacity.

C4 Review and update the estate’s three year marketing strategy and produce an annual marketing action plan.

C5 Identify fundraising opportunities and available grants to support conservation work.

C6 Hold annual legacy days to enthuse potential donors with conservation work.

C7 Continue to carry out staff surveys and deliver action plans to ensure staff satisfaction.

English Heritage Conservation Principles

Principle 1 The historic environment is a shared resource.

Principle 2 Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment.

Principle 3 Understanding the significance of places is vital.

Principle 4 Significant places should be managed to sustain their values.

Principle 5 Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.

Principle 6 Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.

Every cup of tea contributes to the financial sustainability of the WHS
Financial sustainability

The sustainability of the WHS depends largely on its role as a visitor attraction. Over the last plan period the National Trust’s annual income on the estate has risen from £1.10 million to £1.56 million. This income includes admissions income, membership subscriptions and a recruitment credit for new memberships. Income is also generated from rental, enterprise income from the shops, restaurants and holiday cottages has risen from £1.10 million to £1.56 million.

The income generated by the estate is critical to maintenance of the outstanding universal value of the WHS. The income is used to fund a team of gardeners and builders to maintain and care for the gardens and estate buildings. It also funds maintenance work across the estate and an ambitious programme of conservation projects each year. Although mainly self-funding in terms of annual operating costs there is a backlog of conservation work of over £20 million. The conservation projects planned over the next six years are set out in Appendix 8.

Over the next 6 years the site will work with partners to develop and implement new visitor offers and infrastructure as part of the Visitor Experience Project. This project includes a number of programmes of work designed to improve visitor enjoyment, increase the length of time visitors stay on site and attract new visitors to the WHS. Projects include a new vision for Fountains Hall, a living history experience in Swanley Grange, contemporary art in the water garden and a fresh look at the Visitor Centre and Studley Royal entrances.

As well as the Visitor Experience Project, other opportunities will be sought to sustainably increase income over the plan period. This will include developing additional catering capacity on peak days to alleviate pressure on the tea rooms and restaurant.

Marketing the WHS

An exciting visitor experience needs to be promoted to current and new visitors in a compelling and relevant way to ensure that the site continues to attract visitors. During the last plan period, much work was undertaken to understand and identify the different groups that visit the estate. This improved understanding feeds into the visitor experience planning process and enables the most suitable promotional tools to be selected for different visitor groups.

Marketing activity will build brand and property reputation and continue to position the WHS as a major attraction in the north of England. Through the careful selection of imagery, design and words, marketing activity will highlight the eighteenth century experience and the monastic experience on site, bringing to life the site’s ‘Spirit of Place’ and raising awareness of the WHS status. The marketing strategy will be reviewed and a detailed marketing action plan will be prepared each year to increase visitor numbers and enterprise income.

People

The National Trust currently employs 66 full time staff although this is increased during peak periods to help meet visitor demand. In addition, there are over 400 volunteers who help in a variety of roles across the site including guided tours and visitor assistance, support for educational visits and events, and helping with gardening and stone cleaning. Without this group of committed individuals the site would not be able to operate at its current capacity. It is vital that the site continues to provide well-considered and meaningful volunteer roles that enable people to contribute in a way that benefits both parties. The personal circumstances of the core volunteer base are likely to change over the coming years as people work longer. Adapting to changing demographics and circumstances of the volunteer base will be a focus of this plan period.

A happy and motivated workforce is essential to deliver the vision for the site. The National Trust conducts an annual survey of staff satisfaction at each of its properties. The results of the survey are monitored with an action plan created to deal with any issues arising. This approach will continue during this plan period.

4.1.3 Maintenance and presentation

Objective D: Deliver high standards of presentation and maintenance of the buildings, landscape and visitor infrastructure

Actions to deliver objective

D1 Maintain the standard of visitor infrastructure such as toilets, catering and retail, signage, car parks and footpaths. Priority projects include improvements to the toilets at Studley Royal car park, an upgrade to the Visitor Centre car park and delivery of the signage programme.

D2 Ensure all owners, staff and volunteers within the World Heritage Site know how to contribute to the high standards of presentation of the site through sharing and celebrating good practice.

D3 Ensure regular maintenance of historic structures and visitor infrastructure.

The presentation of the site is an important element of maintaining its outstanding universal value and ensuring a great visitor welcome. Apart from caring for the estate through conservation work, it is important that the facilities provided for visitors such as the car parks, toilets, catering and retail, seating and signage do not compromise the natural and historic beauty of the site. The National Trust has introduced presentation standards which set out actions to be taken
to ensure high standards are maintained. These include picking up litter, walking the visitor route and seeing things through the eyes of visitors, treasuring the first ‘wow’ views, replacing deteriorating signs and seeking creative alternatives to barriers.

A key element of presentation is the conservation and maintenance of the buildings and landscape. A cyclical maintenance programme is a fundamental part of ongoing conservation on the site and a team of estate builders and gardeners maintain the site, as well as local contractors.

4.1.4 Planning and policy framework

Objective E: Ensure the conservation and enhancement of the OUV of the WHS, its buffer zone and wider setting are taken into account in the preparation and implementation of planning, regulatory and policy documents which might affect it

Actions to deliver objective

E1 Finalise and adopt policies which protect the OUV of the WHS, its buffer zone and wider setting in the revised Harrogate Borough Council Local Plan.

E2 Ensure policies to protect the WHS, buffer zone and wider setting are included in the Ripon City Plan.

E3 Historic England and National Trust to respond to planning applications with a potential impact on the OUV of the site.

Ensuring the protection of the WHS, its buffer zone and wider setting continues to be a high priority. Following the withdrawal of the Harrogate Borough Council Sites and Policies Development Plan Document it is important that the Council reflects the WHS, buffer zone and setting in the development of the new plan. The Council has also produced Heritage Management Guidance which was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document for development control purposes in 2014. The Guidance sets out key principles for determining planning applications in the WHS and buffer zone and assessing the impact of new development on the setting of heritage sites.

The Ripon City Plan is currently being drafted but the buffer zone and policies to protect the buffer zone, particularly the foreground to the view of Ripon Cathedral and the view across Ripon to Blois Hall Farm, are being developed.

There are a range of Landscape Assessments covering the WHS, its buffer zone and wider setting. These Assessments will help maintain the OUV of the WHS by providing a greater understanding of the landscape surrounding the WHS. This understanding can be used to inform planning and management decisions affecting the WHS and surrounding area.

A more detailed description of the planning and policy framework for the WHS is set out in Appendix 3. More information on the landscape character can be found in Appendix 10 which includes a summary of the Natural England National Character Areas, the North Yorkshire County Council Historic Landscape Characterisation Project and the Harrogate Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment.

4.1.5 The boundaries of the World Heritage Site

Objective F: Ensure the boundaries of the WHS include the area that gives the site its outstanding universal value

Actions to deliver objective

F1 Review the boundaries of the WHS in partnership with local landowners.

F2 If the review demonstrates the boundary of the WHS should be revised a proposal will be prepared and submitted to the World Heritage Committee for approval.

The WHS boundaries do not currently include all the historic landscape which was held, in the 18th century, by the Aislabies. The boundaries will be reviewed during this plan period. The process for a boundary review is to carry out research and consultation with stakeholders and neighbouring landowners. In the event that the review demonstrates that the boundaries of the WHS should be revised, a proposal will be prepared for endorsement by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. It will be forwarded by them for consideration and approval by the World Heritage Committee.

4.1.6 Climate change

Objective G: Examine the impact of climate change on all objectives and adopt a strategy for accommodation and adaptation

Actions to deliver objective

G1 Set up a monitoring programme to improve understanding of the current and future impact of climate change on the WHS.

G2 Produce a Climate Change Risk Assessment for the WHS.

The impact of climate change on the site needs to be better understood and the risks faced to the OUV of the WHS as a result of climate change assessed with partners. The water gardens are internationally important and the fact they are designed around a river make them particularly vulnerable to flooding, drought and siltation. The historic fabric of the site, including its trees and planting, is also vulnerable to shifts in temperature, rainfall and storms and the invasion of pathogens and pests.

Stonehenge and Avebury WHS has just completed a Climate Change Risk Assessment which looked at the potential risks to the site from the impacts of climate and this could be a model to follow. The Climate Change Risk Assessment would also look at management measures to adapt or mitigate against the risks identified.
4.1.7 The Shoot

The priorities over this plan period will be to continue to maintain a positive relationship with the Shoot owners and to complete the review of the Shoot/National Trust Management Agreement (1997). Included in that Agreement are visitor access routes, Shoot sensitive areas and a programme of conservation works. The review will focus on, but not exclusively, the conservation of the water garden. The programme includes restoration of the wooded areas and hedges, opening up 18th century views and works to the wooded valley sides and those areas of the garden now covered by plantations of conifers. The review will also seek to extend the current level of visitor understanding of these areas.

4.1.8 Research and archives

Archaeological and historical research supports the care and conservation of the WHS and informs learning and interpretation initiatives. There is currently no formal research programme for the WHS. A wide range of research, however, has been carried out over the previous plan period, often in response to a management need or a specific conservation project. Recent research projects have included the historical and archaeological survey of the Quebec area of the water garden in 2012, the bathing house excavation in 2013 and the English Heritage survey of the abbey infirmary tunnels following a collapse in 2012. A further programme of archaeological investigation and research has been identified in the Conservation Management Plan as part of restoration works to the water garden.

While research is being undertaken, and reports written, it is often not compiled in an accessible format for stakeholders and visitors. These reports on research projects, archaeological investigations and building recordings are currently available on the North Yorkshire Historic Environment Record but work will be done with partners to make this research more widely available. The archaeological and historical survey of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal written by the National Trust’s archaeologist Mark Newman will also be published during this plan period.

The National Trust will continue to work in partnership with local colleges and universities such as the University of York and Bradford University to carry out archaeological surveys and research in the WHS.
A view of the abbey from the south
### Theme 2: Conservation and Environmental Performance

#### 4.2 Conservation and Environmental Performance

#### 4.2.1 Conservation of the World Heritage Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective J: Ensure the highest standards of conservation management and enhancement of the whole WHS. This includes the garden and designed landscape, built heritage (including archaeology) and the natural heritage (biodiversity and geodiversity) of the site</th>
<th>Actions to deliver objective</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>J1</strong> Deliver the Conservation Management Plan priorities set out in Appendix 8.</td>
<td><strong>J6</strong> Review the condition and location of the artefacts in the mill to improve the state of their environment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J2</strong> Review the Conservation Management Plan.</td>
<td><strong>J7</strong> Promote access to objects held by the English Heritage Trust at Helmsley Store by making the entire collection accessible online and linked with the National Trust website.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J3</strong> Organise a programme of talks, leaflets and digital media to share the conservation priorities for the site with stakeholders, visitors and communities.</td>
<td><strong>J8</strong> Support loan requests from the collection held by the English Heritage Trust at Helmsley Store.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J4</strong> Produce a Heritage Partnership Agreement for Fountains Abbey Scheduled Monument.</td>
<td><strong>J9</strong> Complete the condition survey of all the archaeological sites on the property and implement management measures for their conservation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J5</strong> Prepare and deliver a prioritised programme of conservation works from the Asset Management Plan for the abbey ruins.</td>
<td><strong>J10</strong> Record the ancient and venerable trees for the Woodland Trust National Register.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J6</strong> Review the condition and location of the artefacts in the mill to improve the state of their environment.</td>
<td><strong>J11</strong> Produce a deadwood policy for the deer parks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J7</strong> Promote access to objects held by the English Heritage Trust at Helmsley Store by making the entire collection accessible online and linked with the National Trust website.</td>
<td><strong>J12</strong> Deliver the Key Habitats and Species Monitoring Programme.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J8</strong> Support loan requests from the collection held by the English Heritage Trust at Helmsley Store.</td>
<td><strong>J13</strong> Deliver recommendations in the Geodiversity Audit as set out in Appendix 9.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Volunteers plant the yew trees for the new bosquet.
In 2011, a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was produced for the site. The maintenance of the outstanding universal value (OUV) of the WHS is a principal aim of the CMP. Although inscribed as a cultural WHS, the site is reliant on the appropriate conservation of the natural heritage such as trees, plants, water and wildlife which form the fabric of the designed landscape and are enjoyed by visitors. The CMP therefore integrates the conservation of the cultural, landscape and natural heritage of the site. The CMP is based around the 11 character areas set out in the WHS Management Plan 2009-2014. It informs prioritisation and spending on conservation projects.

The garden, which forms such an important element of the OUV of the site, is made of constantly changing materials, the maturing trees and shrubs and the River Skell itself. The river forms the backbone of the abbey and water garden and has been greatly modified in both areas into artificial channels, with weirs, cascades and ponds. This makes it an incredibly challenging landscape to care for.

There is also an imbalance in the number of people visiting the abbey ruins as opposed to the water garden. An important aim of the CMP is to encourage visitors to understand and enjoy the 18th century gardens, as well as the abbey, so that all the features which contribute to the OUV of the WHS can be enjoyed and understood. (Link to Objective N)

Conservation priorities set out in the CMP for the next 6 years include:

- continuing the programme of conservation and enhancement of the 18th century garden and parkland
- repairing historic buildings and structures in a poor condition including High Seat, the precinct wall, deer park wall and Chinese Wood pillars
- completing the monitoring programme of archaeological sites and implementing management measures for their conservation
- delivering the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme in the deer parks to maintain and enhance their wildlife, historic features and landscape character
- completing a further condition survey of the abbey, abbey mill and St Mary’s Church for on behalf of the State. In 2009 English Heritage commissioned a condition survey of the abbey ruins, abbey mill and all associated water courses and culverts. This work was carried out as part of a wider and ongoing programme of investigations into the whole English Heritage portfolio of sites called the Asset Management Plan. The aim of the plan is to establish the outstanding defect liability across the English Heritage estate and to provide an outline cost for repair/conservation. Each defect is allocated a level of priority from 0 ‘urgent’ to 4 ‘to be monitored’ with this being used to set a programme of action required to eliminate each defect from the list within a defined timescale.

The National Trust is keen to share the vision, objectives and programme of work with stakeholders, including visitors and volunteers, over the plan period.

**Conservation of the abbey ruins, Fountains Abbey Mill and St Mary’s Church**

The English Heritage Trust is responsible for the conservation of the abbey ruins and the mill under a Guardianship Agreement and for St Mary’s Church which they care for on behalf of the State. In 2009 English Heritage commissioned a condition survey of the abbey ruins, abbey mill and all associated water courses and culverts. This work was carried out as part of a wider and ongoing programme of investigations into the whole English Heritage portfolio of sites called the Asset Management Plan. The aim of the plan is to establish the outstanding defect liability across the English Heritage estate and to provide an outline cost for repair/conservation. Each defect is allocated a level of priority from 0 ‘urgent’ to 4 ‘to be monitored’ with this being used to set a programme of action required to eliminate each defect from the list within a defined timescale.

The 2009 survey reported that there were no significant structural problems apparent in the abbey ruins, precinct buildings and structures, or in the grounds, with the possible exception of one or two small areas of the river containment. Records and documents made available to the surveyors show that continuous and consolidated repairs had been carried out to the abbey ruins since the early 1920s. Further repair works have taken place to the majority of buildings and remains within the standing ruins since the property was taken into the Guardianship of the State in 1966. It was suggested that some of the earlier repairs are nearing the point at which further work will be needed to maintain the level of structural stability. The main area of concern was the condition and future maintenance of the River Skell and its containment, including the tunnels and culverts. A number of defects with the river walls, infirmary tunnels and other features were identified during the inspection.

Following on from the 2009 survey, in addition to cyclical maintenance tasks, certain works were undertaken to address the urgent issues of the river walls and the infirmary tunnels.

In December 2014 English Heritage completed a further condition defect survey of the abbey ruins and mill, with no ‘urgent’ priority defect found. All of the structures were considered to be in a fair overall condition, with the observation that the ruins would benefit from removal of plant growth, work which has begun. A continued programme of monitoring is also recommended for the abbey ruins and the mill, whereas at St Mary’s Church it is suggested that a specialist detailed survey is completed by a conservator on the condition of the decorative interior of the church. The problems, issues and defects identified in these reports will form the basis of the future conservation programme for the English Heritage Trust.
Work has begun on drafting a Heritage Partnership Agreement between the English Heritage Trust, Historic England and the National Trust to agree works within the scheduled monument area.

**Archaeology**

The archaeology of the property is generally well understood. This understanding extends to surface traces of archaeology, documentary research and observations made in the course of previous operational interventions.

The key archaeological priorities for the plan period are described in other sections of this plan (link to Objective 1). The development of the research framework for the WHS will mark the opening of a new chapter in the understanding of the site. The research framework should be completed in the early part of the plan period enabling commencement of initial stages of research. Delivery of the framework will involve external partnerships and funding bids.

Elsewhere the archaeological emphasis will remain on optimising every opportunity to learn and record more about the site’s archaeology, from every relevant operational activity. This information will then be used to inform how the site is managed.

**Collections**

Collections for the site are looked after by both the English Heritage Trust and the National Trust. Over five thousand objects from Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal, including tiles, belt buckles and large pieces of stonework, are held by the English Heritage Trust at Helmsley Store. This collection can be accessed by request or through tours. There is also a display of objects from the abbey at Fountains Mill.

The National Trust collection includes the water garden statuary, a 17th century portrait of the Mallorie family and a number of other objects. Most of the collection can be viewed at the property or accessed online.

During this plan period both collections will be made more accessible to visitors through the availability of the English Heritage Trust collection to view online and more objects on display at the property. The condition of the collections will also be improved.

**Biodiversity**

The natural environment of the site is highly valued and experiencing wildlife and landscape is one of the reasons that people enjoy visiting the WHS. A large area of the gardens is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) by the local authority and includes the areas of woodland along the valley sides of the garden and grasslands on the valley floor and at the Banqueting House. Protecting and enhancing the special habitats at Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal continues to be a high priority. The monitoring and recording of all habitats and species is important to their long-term protection and over this plan period the Key Habitats and Species Monitoring Programme will be delivered. Current priorities include the recording of the ancient and venerable trees in the gardens and parkland for the Woodland Trust national register, a saproxylic (deadwood) invertebrate survey in the deer parks and a survey of the ponds at How Hill and Kitchen Bank, just to the south of the abbey.

The Studley Royal Deer Park and Mackershaw Deer Park are in Natural England supported Higher Level Stewardship (HLS), a comprehensive agreement lasting until 2021 to deliver significant environmental benefits in these important areas of the WHS. The funding package includes an annual payment for maintenance of woodland, wood pasture and parkland, whilst also recognising the needs of the deer and their future management. The HLS has also funded capital works to restore the 18th century ice houses and Rough Bridge and repairs to the deer park boundary wall.

Local Nature Partnerships (LNP) are a Government initiative to change how partners work together on the natural environment and were one of the key proposals in the 2011 Natural Environment White Paper. The site lies within 2 LNP areas, the Northern Upland Chain and the North Yorkshire and York LNP. Continuing to engage in these partnerships will deliver nature conservation benefits for the site.

**Geodiversity**

The geological influence at Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal is both implicit and explicit within the natural, designed and built elements of the site’s landscape. Many of the buildings have grown from the landscape, their materials extracted from local rock faces and quarries, lime mortars burnt at lime kilns in the deer park and bricks made from local clay and fired in brick-making works in Mackershaw Deer Park.

Understanding geodiversity, therefore, is an important part of understanding the site, the development of its buildings and structures and the design of its landscapes. The National Trust and Natural England have worked together to prepare a Geodiversity Audit for the site to help with that understanding. Key recommendations in the Geodiversity Audit include:

- mapping of the Lower Magnesian Limestone and the Carboniferous sandstone outcrops and Pleistocene sediments and landforms
- survey of the links between geology and vegetation
- survey of soil types
- vegetation and stability management on exposed rock faces
- inclusion of geology into the way the story of the site is told and presented

The full audit is set out in Appendix 9.

**Involving people in conservation**

Building understanding and encouraging active involvement in the conservation of the historic and natural environment is part of the core work of the National Trust, Historic England and the English Heritage Trust. The site provides opportunities for young people to develop heritage skills through a programme of apprenticeships in the building and gardening teams.
4.2.2 Environmental performance

Objective K: Improve environmental practices incorporating environmental compliance, reduced energy usage, water conservation measures and sustainable resource use

Actions to deliver objective

K1 Deliver National Trust energy KPIs and achieve energy reduction targets for each year of the plan period, against 2009 baseline level.

K2 Plan and implement works to bring all buildings on the site to National Trust Bronze Standard.

K3 Embed ‘energy criteria’ in business decisions and wherever possible, ensure that both small scale and large scale renewable energy production and energy savings are incorporated in projects.

K4 Investigate feasibility and payback of a ground source heat pump at the Studley Tea Room.

K5 Change the remaining oil heated buildings to a renewable energy source, where appropriate.

K6 Set up a food waste composting programme.

K7 Communicate the environmental performance message to staff, volunteers and visitors.

K8 Increase opportunities for recycling across the estate. Priorities include the Abbey Tea Room recycling facilities for visitors and food waste recycling at the Visitor Centre restaurant.

K9 Continue mapping water supplies across the estate.

Monitoring energy usage

Globally it is now understood that the use of fossil fuels for energy has a severe detrimental effect on the environment. Reducing energy and water use and the production of waste are the priority areas for improving environmental practices for the National Trust. The Trust has made a commitment to reduce overall energy use, regardless of whether that energy comes from fossil fuel or renewables, by 20% by 2020.

A lot of work was undertaken over the last plan period to establish an energy monitoring system and a baseline energy consumption figure. The baseline is the total energy usage across the estate in 2009 and is used to compare consumption in future years. The monitoring of energy consumption is critical to long-term improvements in reducing energy usage. The National Trust Environmental Management System (EMS) will help to monitor and report on progress, providing a framework for implementation and ongoing environmental management practice. An EMS is an internationally recognised approach for organisations to review, measure and report on the environmental aspects and impacts of their operations.

Energy efficiency of buildings

Work will continue to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings on the estate to reduce overall energy consumption and enhance the comfort of the buildings for their users. Work will be implemented to bring all buildings to the National Trust Bronze Standard. This standard is the base level of the ‘Minimum Environmental Standards for all National Trust Buildings’ and includes low-cost, relatively unobtrusive actions which are therefore feasible for most existing buildings. These include improving insulation levels, installing double or secondary glazing, draught proofing and fitting efficient lighting and heating controls in buildings.

Renewable energy, recycling and reducing waste

A ground source heat pump is now providing much of the energy for the Visitor Centre and this programme of replacing fossil fuels with renewable sources of energy will continue to be a priority. This will include changing the remaining oil heated buildings to renewable energy sources and investigating the feasibility and payback of a ground source heat pump at Studley Tea Room.

The mantra of ‘reduce, reuse, and recycle’ will be followed when considering the approach to waste management. A food waste composting programme will be created, generating compost which can be...
During the previous plan period the Ripon Multi-Objective Project (MOP) was in place and aimed to reduce run-off in the upper catchment of the Skell. The funding for this project has now ended. Developing a project within the wider catchment remains a priority for this plan period and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Nidderdale AONB and National Trust are currently working together to develop a project for the River Skell, the Skell Living Landscapes Project, which delivers biodiversity benefits and flood management measures.

Whilst project work no longer takes place in the catchment, the National Trust has begun to focus on mitigation measures within the site. The Half Moon Reservoir Project is looking at the feasibility of designing and constructing a new control weir in the Reservoir to divert excess flow through existing sluice tunnels and reduce the impact of floods on Quebec, the Upper Canal walls and the Moon Ponds.

The Trust is exploring ways to manage the build-up of silts and organic matter through a low cost and low impact annual cleaning programme to run alongside the current large scale dredging programme. The large scale dredging and annual cleaning programme will continue to generate vast quantities of silt and new ways of reusing this material off site will be explored.

The lack of water in the river can be equally limiting and initiatives to reduce algae growth by improving both water circulation and aeration are currently being assessed.

### 4.2.3 Water management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective L: Develop with partners, long-term measures to manage the recurrent problems affecting the water features that arise from the catchment area</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actions to deliver objective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L1</strong> Work with external agencies and riparian owners directly upstream of the site to continue to reduce the speed and amount of run-off in the upper catchment through a series of land management initiatives including development of the Skell Living Landscapes Project.</td>
<td><strong>L4</strong> Commission research to look at market opportunities for the silt removed as part of dredging works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L2</strong> Deliver the dredging projects for the Half Moon Reservoir, the Moon Ponds and the Upper Canal.</td>
<td><strong>L5</strong> Continue to carry out a programme of repairs to river walls, tunnels, culverts, weirs and bridges as set out in Conservation Appendix 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L3</strong> Develop a project to research flood risk in the abbey ruins in response to the English Heritage Inland Flood Risk Assessment.</td>
<td><strong>L6</strong> Deliver measures to improve circulation and aeration in the Moon Ponds to reduce algae build up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L7</strong> Continue to engage with York and North Yorkshire and the Northern Upland Chain LNPs including delivery of the River Ure Priority Programme and the Yorkshire Peat Partnership Project.</td>
<td><strong>L7</strong> Continue to engage with York and North Yorkshire and the Northern Upland Chain LNPs including delivery of the River Ure Priority Programme and the Yorkshire Peat Partnership Project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L8</strong> Review the results of the Ripon Flood Alleviation Scheme for the Skell catchment and papers reviewing delivery of the Ripon Multi-Objective Project and explore appropriate flood management measures to protect the site.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Small boats remove the silt out of the Half Moon Reservoir
Theme 3 — Access, Enjoyment and Understanding

4.3 Introduction

Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site is a special place that inspires many people from Yorkshire and much further afield. The site aims to welcome as many different people as possible, and provide a fantastic visitor experience for all. This section of the plan sets out the broad approach that the site will take towards visitor experience over the next six years. This will include ensuring that the site is accessible for all, providing new and exciting interventions to attract visitors and an approach to both formal and informal learning that will share our knowledge and passion for the site. All the while, opportunities will be taken to promote public understanding of the WHS and the wider purposes and functions of UNESCO. New and stimulating volunteering opportunities will encourage the site to be shared and enjoyed in a ‘hands-on’ way.

4.3.1 Access for everyone

Objective M: Ensure the WHS is welcoming and accessible to all who visit

Actions to deliver objective

M1 Work with local disability groups to understand their needs better.
M2 Identify partners to work with to deliver staff training in order to improve understanding and awareness of the needs of visitors with a range of disabilities.
M3 Deliver the recommendations from the Access Audit.
M4 Develop a toolkit for project managers to ensure that the needs of disabled visitors are considered in the project planning process.
M5 Address the physical access issues on the site, such as the gradient of the path linking the Visitor Centre and the abbey and gardens and access to Deer Cottage disabled toilets.
M6 Improve pre-visit and on-site information for disabled visitors.
M7 Present a positive image of visitors with disabilities and those from ethnic groups in marketing materials.
M8 Continue to take part in Heritage Open Day providing free entry to the estate.
Access for visitors with a wide range of disabilities

Delivery of the recommendations from the recent Access Audit will be a key feature of this plan. An access steering group will be created to ensure an estate-wide approach to access issues. Key recommendations from the Access Audit include:

- improving pre-visit and on-site information to help disabled visitors to plan their day
- providing induction loops at catering, retail and admissions areas
- creating an access statement
- addressing the physical access issues on site such as the gradient of the path linking the Visitor Centre and abbey and access to Deer Cottage disabled toilets

In all activity, whether the operational day to day or longer term project planning, access issues should be considered. During this plan period the project planning frameworks will be reviewed to include consideration of such issues.

Working with partners will be crucial if the site is to deliver its access ambitions. Local disability groups and charities have a deep understanding of the challenges that face less able visitors. Working with these groups, training for staff and volunteers will be developed to give them the confidence to meet the needs of visitors with a wide range of disabilities.

Social, economic and cultural access

The site should be accessible for all, including those from low income and ethnic minority backgrounds. It is important, in the spirit of World Heritage, that as many people as possible can experience the site. Free access on foot to the wider estate including the deer park and Seven Bridges Valley will be maintained during this plan period as many local people, and those from further afield, consider this area to be a valued green space in the Ripon area. Participation in the annual Heritage Open Days event will continue, which gives everyone free admission to the site for one day. The National Trust will also continue promotion of the Ripon resident passes which allow free entry to the site on selected days throughout the year. In pre-visit information, positive imagery will be used to break down barriers to engagement with minority ethnic groups.

4.3.2 Visitor Experience

Objective N: Ensure a very enjoyable visit and deliver informal learning opportunities for all through an engaging visitor experience rooted in property stories and the outstanding universal value and wider values of the WHS

Actions to deliver objective

N1 Continue to develop visitor activities such as World Heritage Weekend which promote understanding of the WHS, its OUV and other associated values & the wider purposes and functions of UNESCO.

N2 Deliver the National Trust Visitor Experience Project.

N3 Deliver interpretation in the abbey and water garden.

N4 Update the interpretation in the mill

N5 Establish a vision for Quebec.

N6 Embed Spirit of Place in the day to day operation of the site.

N7 Monitor and respond to the National Trust Visitor Enjoyment scores and customer feedback monthly.

N8 Explore the possibility of opening Kitchen Bank stone store once a year as part of Heritage Open Day or similar event.

N9 Explore the possibility of putting a secure and accessible exhibition case in St Mary’s Church.

N10 Update the guidebook for St Mary’s Church.

N11 Redisplay decorative stonework, currently stored at Kitchen Bank stone store, in the abbey.

Developing understanding of the OUV of the WHS and the World Heritage Convention

Visitor feedback and market research has shown that visitors often struggle to make sense of the site’s history, the reasons for the WHS designation, the World Heritage Convention and the aims of UNESCO.

The dual nature of the abbey as a monastic ruin and an 18th century romantic folly is often missed by visitors and research shows that fewer visitors experience the water garden compared with the abbey. Many visitors think it is only the abbey, rather than the inclusion of the abbey in the 18th century garden, which is the reason for the estate’s WHS inscription. This is something that the estate is keen to explain further to visitors during this plan period through integrated interpretation on site at key points on the visitor journey.
It is equally important during this plan period to explain to visitors and stakeholders the wider role of UNESCO as a body that seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world. This and the role that the World Heritage Convention plays, will be a key communication message during this plan period for promotional activity and when delivering events such as World Heritage Weekend and on-site interpretation.

Our approach to interpretation

The estate has a varied and rich history, and many fascinating stories to tell. Telling all of the estate’s stories at once or in a piecemeal way can be confusing for visitors, particularly if the main narratives, that of the founding, rise and fall of the abbey and the creation of the 18th century water garden, are not explained. While the current forms of interpretation are popular with visitors, such as the Porter’s Lodge interpretation centre, guidebook, guided tours and the information in the mill, customer feedback has shown that visitors would still like more information, particularly regarding the abbey and the water garden.

Much work was undertaken during the last plan period to better understand the different audience groups who visit the site. This has shown that people visit the site for many different reasons and with different preferences as to how they like to find out about a place. These differences will be reflected in how interpretation is developed on the site.

The estate has recently developed a ‘Spirit of Place’ statement. This is a tool that the National Trust uses to inform its visitor experience, in particular how pre-visit information, interpretation, presentation and the programming of events and activities can create an experience that reflects the very essence of a place. The Conservation Action Plan (see Appendix 8) also has recommendations for how different parts of the estate should be brought to life for visitors. These two tools will be used to inform the approach to visitor experience over the six year plan period. A layered approach to interpretation will be developed which retains elements that are currently popular while also developing other more immersive approaches such as contemporary art, sensory experiences and living history.

Key guiding principles and themes when developing interpretation on site during this plan period will include:

- raising awareness and understanding of the World Heritage Site and its outstanding universal value
- raising awareness of the role of UNESCO and the World Heritage Convention
- explaining the conservation work that takes place to protect and conserve the WHS for future generations
- raising the profile of the water garden; rebalancing the experience on site to be less focussed on the abbey ruins
- developing interpretation at key points which draw on the rich narratives and the families who lived here and upgrade existing interpretation where necessary
- utilising a variety of interpretive techniques which appeal to different audiences and learning styles
- using the most appropriate tools for getting the message across including digital and immersive experiences
- being mindful not to clutter the landscape when the place can speak for itself

The above themes will be used in a story-mapping approach, ensuring that the most appropriate and relevant interpretation is used at the correct point in the visitor journey to deliver a cohesive narrative for visitors.

Developing the visitor experience

A number of key projects are planned during this plan period which will enhance the visitor experience on site. Projects include:

- new interpretation in the water garden which draws on the outstanding universal value of the site and the stories of the family who created the landscape. A feasibility study will take place to look into provision of a power supply in the water gardens, opening up the interpretative possibilities in that area of the WHS
- development of a vision for Quebec, a lost garden feature of the eighteenth century landscape
- a programme of contemporary art in the follies in the water garden
- a new visitor experience in Swanley Grange which reflects its agricultural past and connects it to the abbey story
- a consistent approach to presentation and interpretation on site which enhances the experience for visitors
- a feasibility study for Fountains Hall which considers options for how this building can play a more pivotal role in the visitor experience
- a Visitor Centre and Studley Royal masterplan. This project considers how both entrances can be improved in terms of visitor welcome, enterprise, presentation and interpretation. One aspect of this project is looking to develop a more direct walking route between the Visitor Centre and Studley Royal, making the 18th century garden more accessible to visitors. Improving the presentation and interpretation at the Studley Royal entrance will help visitors to understand the site’s outstanding universal value and the significance of the eighteenth century water garden
Improving visitor enjoyment

An engaging and inspiring visitor experience is crucial to ensure that visitors keep coming back and recommend the site to their friends and family. An enjoyable visit means different things to different people. It is essential that the National Trust understands the needs of its visitors to develop a visitor experience that appeals to all.

The National Trust’s key performance indicator for the quality of the visitor experience is the ‘VE score’. This is the percentage of people who, on completing either an online or paper survey after their visit, rate their experience of the estate as ‘very enjoyable’. Trust research has shown that a number of elements contribute towards a ‘very enjoyable visit’ including presentation of the site, customer service, catering, and how the site is interpreted for different visitors. The national target is for a VE score of 65%, a target which the estate regularly surpasses.

Customer feedback is monitored monthly from a variety of sources including the National Trust survey described above, comment cards, emails to the property and Trip Advisor. In 2014 the site received a ‘Certificate of Excellence’ from Trip Advisor. In 2014 the site received an overall VE score of 67%, a target which the estate regularly surpasses.

Education is important for passing on the values of World Heritage Sites and ensuring their care for future generations to enjoy. It is a common thread which runs throughout the visitor experience on site. In its broadest sense it includes activities such as formal learning offered to schools and colleges, informal activities such as bug box making, the day-to-day interactions between visitors and the estate team, interpretation on site and more immersive and experiential programming such as contemporary art. Education even plays a role in the site’s promotional activity, with the website a key tool in communicating the history of the site and its ongoing conservation programme.

The site is proud of its formal learning programme and the focus for the plan period will be to continue to develop the programme, responding to the changes in the curricula and syllabuses of schools and colleges. Around 12,000 students a year visit Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal WHS as part of an educational group.

Many students participate in learning activities led by the National Trust, while others are self-led. The aims of the learning programme are to encourage schools to visit and return to the site by providing a high quality experience for students and teachers which is responsive to their individual needs. Working with schools and learning networks such as other National Trust Learning Officers and the Harrogate and Ripon Education Network will ensure the learning programme is regularly revised and refreshed so it remains relevant.

The National Trust already has links with local schools and colleges including Ripon Grammar School, Harrogate College and Fountains School in Grantley and will continue to employ careful planning, well-designed resources and trained learning volunteers to help engender love of the site and its heritage in others.

The facilities available on site, such as the Swanley Grange Learning Centre, are also important for successful school visits and their condition must be refreshed and maintained to cater for a range of students of different ages and abilities.

The learning offer is not solely limited to schools but can open up a breadth of learning opportunities to other groups. The WHS has hosted a range of conferences and seminars in partnership with organisations such as Natural England and the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust to share best practice in management of the natural and cultural values of the WHS and wider issues around natural flood management. The Trust also regularly works with local universities and colleges on projects around garden design, building conservation, archaeological survey, marketing and promotion of the WHS and volunteer management. In 2015, the
WHS will provide a base for the English Heritage Measured Survey for Cultural Heritage summer school. There are also a fully trained group of fifty volunteer guides who run daily tours about the history and design of the garden and the abbey. The guides also carry out specialist tours for visiting groups which includes academic and professional institutions. The National Trust has delivered lectures both in the UK and in other WHSs in Europe, on the heritage management of the WHS.

Continuing to work with ICOMOS-UK and other partners, the potential to develop a programme of education activities aimed at adults as part of a regional programme of heritage training events will be explored. The purpose of the programme will be to share good practice with regards to the management of heritage sites.

4.3.4 Volunteering

Objective P: Provide volunteering opportunities that encourage active involvement and inspire support for the WHS

Actions to deliver objective

P1 Continue to identify opportunities to develop new volunteer roles that support the needs of the site e.g. in visitor experience, learning, gardening.

P2 Continue to use the National Trust’s annual volunteer survey to evaluate the success of volunteering and address any concerns.

P3 Invest in volunteer training, both role specific and general including the development of a volunteer estate handbook.

P4 Continue to develop the confidence and expertise of all staff who manage volunteers.

P5 Support the career development of graduates and increase the prospect of their future employment through the National Trust Internship Programme.

P6 Offer regular work experience placements to school and college pupils in the local area and ensure that their experience is meaningful and enjoyable.

P7 Consult volunteers during the initiation of new projects and plans to involve them in the management of the site.

Volunteers make a significant contribution towards the day to day running of the estate, fulfilling a wide variety of roles which all contribute to sustaining the values of the WHS. From catering to gardening, information assistants to the archaeological monitoring team, the number of roles in which volunteers are engaged continues to grow as the needs of the WHS change and develop. There are approximately 400 regular volunteers and together with group volunteering and those on working holidays, they contributed 30,589 hours to the operation of the estate in 2013/14.

The National Trust carries out an annual survey of volunteers to measure volunteer satisfaction. In 2014, 63% of volunteers at the property strongly agreed and 100% agreed and/or strongly agreed with the statement: ‘I would recommend volunteering with the National Trust’. Each year the results of the survey are analysed and an action plan is developed to address any issues to ensure volunteer satisfaction remains high.

The estate is committed to the highest standards of volunteer induction and training and prides itself on the high quality of both. During this plan period a volunteer estate handbook will be created as a reference point for all volunteers. As the visitor experience develops on site, there are increasing opportunities to involve volunteers in a wider range of roles and there is an ambition to involve volunteers more in the management of the WHS and delivery of the WHS Management Plan.

The site will continue to offer engaging work experience placements to local school children as a way of introducing young people to the WHS and inspiring them in a lasting way.
A Day in the Life of a Monk family activity in the abbey
Theme 4: Local Community Links and Partnerships

Parkrun attracts over 200 runners each week.
4.4 Introduction

As a World Heritage Site (WHS), it is vital that the estate continues to play an important role in the local community. This section of the plan sets out the approach that the site will take to ensure it remains relevant to its local and wider communities of interest.

Working in partnership will continue to be a key feature in this plan. By working collaboratively with partner organisations that have similar goals and objectives, the actions in this plan can be delivered in a mutually beneficial way.

4.4.1 Partnership Working

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective Q – Work through strong partnerships with local communities and other local, regional and national stakeholders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1 Maintain and strengthen links with the local community through volunteering opportunities and a local newsletter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 Explore new ways to engage the local community with the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 Promote the WHS as a place to improve health and wellbeing, for example through community bike rides, Parkrun and outdoor volunteering opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4 Maximise international links and partnerships through Welcome to Yorkshire and opportunities presented by other Destination Management Organisations, and through sharing management experience with sites in the UK, Europe and further afield.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 Raise the profile of World Heritage in the UK by working with the newly formed World Heritage-UK and other World Heritage Sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 Continue to engage with the wide range of partnerships in the local area to deliver objectives in this plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 Continue to engage with tourism groups to further the promotion of the WHS and enable access to market research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local community engagement

Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal WHS is a special place for many people, particularly those communities in the Ripon area, many of whom have grown up visiting the site. There are also a number of people who live locally that may not visit, and may not think of the National Trust as being ‘for them’. Through working with the local community, and being responsive to their needs, the site can ensure it remains relevant in the coming years. The site is represented on the Connecting Ripon Group which is made up of a number of community groups with the aim to deliver ‘a more connected area where our communities work together to make the city and rural parishes a great place to live, work and play’. The site also hosts local mental health groups, providing opportunities for active involvement in conservation work such as gardening.

One of the National Trust’s key strategic aims is to get more people outdoors and closer to nature. To deliver this strategy the site is developing more walking, cycling and running opportunities for current and new audiences. The Trust has developed a partnership with Parkrun, a not-for-profit organisation, which organises free, weekly, 5km timed runs around the world. The site hosts a weekly Parkrun every Saturday which has been very well received by the local community, attracting on average 220 runners a week. The site also hosts free family bike rides, allowing children to cycle and picnic by the abbey and the water garden in a safe environment. Horse riding is also a popular activity in the local area and the current provision of routes through the WHS will be reviewed. During the course of this plan, the site will aim to further develop its role as a place for the local community to improve their health and wellbeing.
Working with partners

Stakeholder involvement not only concerns volunteer and visitor engagement but also strengthens relationships with local landowners and other key partners. The WHS Stakeholder and Steering Groups include the National Trust and external representatives from various groups. Through relationships with such groups, WHS priorities are delivered and the outstanding universal value of the WHS maintained. Some of the key partnerships are set out in the table.

As a major tourism attraction in the region, the estate maintains a strong network of partners to share best practice and information and to identify opportunities for mutual promotion. Engagement with partners, particularly Destination Management Organisations such as Visit Harrogate, Visit York and Welcome to Yorkshire, is crucial to increase promotion and raise awareness of the WHS.

The site is also well connected in Ripon, through tourism partnerships such as the Ripon Ring, and through involvement with the Ripon City Plan group, Discover Ripon and the Greater Ripon Improvement Partnership (GRIP). The availability of accurate data regarding the tourism and leisure market is critical in enabling the site to make sound decisions regarding marketing and the creation of new visitor offers. During this plan period the site will work with Visit Harrogate and partners to ensure that the site has access to the most relevant research to enable this to happen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy/Partnership</th>
<th>Links to the WHS objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Heritage UK (WH-UK)</td>
<td>This is the newly formed network of World Heritage Sites across the UK. The network provides opportunities for sharing good practice between sites, developing joint projects and delivering better branding and promotion of WHSs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrogate Borough Council – Harrogate Borough Council Local Plan and Heritage Management Guidance.</td>
<td>The planning and policy documents which cover the WHS, buffer zone and surrounding area ensure the maintenance of the outstanding universal value of the WHS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Partnership (LNP)</td>
<td>A small part of the site lies within the North Yorkshire and York LNP. This LNP has identified 7 landscapes, known as priority areas, to pilot activity. Within that LNP, which covers a vast area, is a priority programme for the River Ure. The River Ure Priority Programme will help raise awareness of water management issues and biodiversity on the site and surrounding area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership</td>
<td>Over 90% of the site falls within the Northern Upland Chain LNP. A key project within the Northern Upland Chain area is the Yorkshire Peat Project. The Yorkshire Peat Partnership has potential to improve land management upstream of the WHS thereby reducing flash flooding and silt deposition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan</td>
<td>The whole site lies within the Nidderdale AONB and the NT is represented on the Nidderdale Joint Advisory Committee and Heritage Steering Group. The Nidderdale AONB Management Plan includes management policies to protect the landscape, promote enjoyment of the area and support its sustainable development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripon City Plan</td>
<td>The site has close links with Ripon and has been working with the Ripon City Plan Committee to develop policies in the plan which protect the OUV of the WHS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism partnerships including Welcome to Yorkshire, Visit Harrogate, the Ripon Ring, Discover Ripon and the Greater Ripon Improvement Partnership</td>
<td>Sharing best practice and information with neighbouring attractions enables the site to develop its own visitor experience and marketing objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability groups including Visits Unlimited and Dementia Forward</td>
<td>Visits Unlimited are a Community Interest Company working within the field of accessible tourism. They have provided training and advice and ‘mystery visitor’ reports for the site. Dementia Forward is a local dementia support charity that has provided awareness training and worked with the site to provide days out for those they support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern History Forum, Ripon and Harrogate Education Officers Network</td>
<td>The Ripon and Harrogate Education Officers Network provides a forum for sharing good practice in the delivery of education activities, specifically school visits. The Northern History Forum is the key forum for history teachers and related professionals and provides training and an opportunity to showcase our learning programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport partnerships including the Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Partnership</td>
<td>A new informal partnership of Dales bus users, operators and key stakeholders has been established in the Yorkshire Dales to raise usage and awareness of local public transport networks. The aim of the Partnership is to create a network to encourage local communities, including businesses, to get actively involved in the promotion and improvement of their local bus and train services, including Community Transport services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community partnerships</td>
<td>The site has a representative on the ‘Connecting Ripon’ group which is organised by the Ripon Centre for Voluntary Service and involves a number of community organisations in Ripon. By being part of this group new ways for people to experience the site can be explored.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Local and Regional Economy

There is recognition among a range of partners that the WHS plays a key role in the local and regional economy. The WHS is one of the most visited tourism attractions in Yorkshire, an employer, runs a programme of internships and apprenticeships and sources a wide range of services from the local area. There is a need to develop an understanding of the role of the site in the local and regional economy so it can be optimised.

The site lies within two overlapping Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas: the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP and the Leeds City Region LEP. Local Enterprise Partnerships are business led partnerships with the public sector and their purpose is to grow the economy and create good quality local jobs. Both LEPs have produced strategic economic plans and the WHS can play an important part in helping deliver economic priorities for the area.

Any future economic development will be carefully managed to ensure it does not have a negative impact on the outstanding universal value of the WHS.

Objective R: Optimise the positive impact of the WHS on the local and regional economy

Actions to deliver objective

R1 Explore opportunities to research and evidence the value of the two World Heritage Sites in Yorkshire to optimise their contribution to the local economy and communities.

R2 Engage with the two overlapping Local Enterprise Partnerships and the National Park and AONB strategy which forms part of the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Strategic Plan, to explore ways to optimise the positive impact of the WHS on the economy.

R3 Continue to provide high quality apprenticeships and internships in building skills such as joinery and masonry, landscaping and horticultural skills and in events and volunteer management.

R4 Sustain the number of jobs at the site.

R5 Maintain and increase use of local businesses.

R6 Maintain, and where possible, increase the contribution the site makes to the local and regional economy through tourism.

Links to WHS objectives

The WHS is part of the North Yorkshire cultural offer which is identified as a major strength of the LEP area in the Strategic Plan. The WHS can help deliver one of the three priorities, ‘Inspired People’, by continuing to provide opportunities for high quality apprenticeships and internships. In addition, the site has a key role in creating successful and distinctive places. Core activity under this priority is sustainable growth in the Dales, Moors and Wolds which includes maximising the strengths of market towns such as Ripon and raising the quality of the visitor infrastructure. Core activities around the priority to create a well-connected economy such as improving east/west connections, easing congestion in York and Harrogate and enhancing the reliability of current transport networks could also support the sustainable development of the site.

The Strategic Plan includes a strategy for the National Parks and AONBs in the LEP area. The WHS is listed as part of the strength of the region and one of the ‘world renowned’ cultural, leisure and tourism facilities. Key priorities set out in the Strategic Economic Plan are supporting growing businesses, developing a skilled and flexible workforce, building a resource smart city region and delivering the infrastructure for growth.
4.4.3 Green Transport

**Objective S — Ensure sustainable access to the WHS by broadening opportunities to travel by bus, bike or on foot**

**Actions to deliver objective**

- **S1** Work with partners to explore opportunities to expand bus service provision to the estate.

- **S2** Monitor current use of the public bus service and develop a programme of measures to promote the current bus service to demonstrate commercial viability.

- **S3** Improve cycling facilities at Studley Royal and West Gate admission points and increase storage space at the Visitor Centre to allow the safe storage of helmets and rucksacks.

- **S4** Explore options for an off-road cycle route between Ripon city centre and the Studley Royal Deer Park.

- **S5** Develop a network of walking routes that link the site with other local places of interest such as Brimham Rocks, Markenfield Hall and historic Ripon.

- **S6** Increase the marketing and promotion of green transport options, including cycling and walking, available to visitors.

- **S7** Implement a car share scheme amongst staff and volunteers.

**Public Transport**

Many of the local bus routes have been reduced or cut completely over the past few years and the National Trust does not have the resources to sustain an alternative bus service. Greater promotion of the available public transport options will be a focus over the plan period which will hopefully lead to an increase in services once demand is evident. The estate will also look to work with partners to encourage greater provision of bus services in the Yorkshire Dales. The Trust has just signed up as partner to the Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Partnership and will be working through that group to promote and improve bus services to the WHS and the wider area.

**Walking and Cycling**

The National Trust has actively encouraged cyclists for several years and the opportunities around cycling in the area have increased significantly since the Way of the Roses route was formed, passing directly through the deer park and then joining the main road into Ripon. Safer cycling routes from Ripon to the WHS and links with other local cycling networks are being considered and will continue to be investigated over the plan period.

The Tour De France Grand Départ held in Yorkshire in July 2014 generated further interest in cycling around the region and the estate is keen to build on that legacy. All those who have cycled to the property are entitled to a free cup of tea and new bike racks have been fitted at the Visitor Centre, with plans to continue this work at the other estate entrances.

Walking will also be encouraged. During the last plan period, walks were developed linking the site with neighbouring sites such as Hackfall designed landscape and Markenfield Hall. Working with partners, the National Trust will also promote walks to and from Ripon and links to the bus service.
The Aislabie walk links Studley Royal with Hackfall designed landscape.
Chapter 5: Action plan

The action plan sets out how the plan objectives and actions set out in Chapter 4 will be delivered. Each action is attached to a key partner and timescale that will help to monitor the implementation of the plan. The delivery of the actions in the plan will be monitored annually. A set of key monitoring indicators has also been developed to measure the impact of the actions in the plan.
## Theme 1: Overall management approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Monitoring indicator</th>
<th>Leader (in bold) &amp; key partners</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A:</strong> Ensure holistic and sustainable management to maintain the OUV of the WHS and achieve the vision</td>
<td>A1 Raise awareness of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value and its role in planning and management of the site.</td>
<td>Delivery of WHS Plan</td>
<td>NT/HE/EHT/HBC</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2 Develop a set of attributes of the OUV of the site.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/HE/EHT/HBC</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A3 Prepare and deliver the WHS Management Plan 2015-2021.</td>
<td></td>
<td>WHSSG/all</td>
<td>2015-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A4 Agree resources for the delivery of WHS management responsibilities by owners and partners.</td>
<td></td>
<td>WHSSG</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A5 Continue to hold an annual stakeholder event and produce regular newsletters for partners.</td>
<td></td>
<td>WHSSG/all</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B:</strong> Retain the distinctiveness, sense of historical continuity and peaceful beauty of the site</td>
<td>B1 Review the Conservation for Access Toolkit 2013 and implement recommendations.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B2 Continue to develop the zoning and programming approach to visitor management on site.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/HE/EHT/HBC</td>
<td>2015-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B3 Monitor the impact of traffic and visitor use on Studley Royal Deer Park.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/NE</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B4 Develop and implement a plan of repairs to the abbey paths and entrances.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C:</strong> Ensure adequate and sustainable financial and human resources to maintain the OUV of the WHS and achieve the vision for the site</td>
<td>C1 Increase overall National Trust annual income to finance conservation works.</td>
<td>% increase annual income / Number of visitors / Staff satisfaction results</td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C2 Develop and deliver the Visitor Experience Project, creating new visitor offers and a masterplan for improving the Visitor Centre and Studley Royal entrances.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/HBC</td>
<td>2015-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C3 Develop peak season additional enterprise capacity.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C4 Review and update the estate’s three year marketing strategy and produce an annual marketing action plan.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C5 Identify fundraising opportunities and available grants to support conservation work.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/NE/owners/HLF &amp; other funding bodies</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C6 Hold annual legacy days to enthuse potential donors with conservation work.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C7 Continue to carry out staff surveys and deliver action plans to ensure staff satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D:</strong> Deliver high standards of presentation and maintenance of the buildings, landscape and visitor infrastructure</td>
<td>D1 Maintain the standard of visitor infrastructure such as toilets, catering and retail, signage, car parks and footpaths. Priority projects include improvements to the toilets at Studley Royal car park, an upgrade to the Visitor Centre car park and delivery of the signage programme.</td>
<td>Condition of historic structures &amp; visitor infrastructure</td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/HBC</td>
<td>2015-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D2 Ensure all owners, staff and volunteers within the World Heritage Site know how to contribute to the high standards of presentation of the site through sharing and celebrating good practice.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/owners</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D3 Ensure regular maintenance of historic structures and visitor infrastructure.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/owners</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E: Ensure the conservation and enhancement of the OUV of the WHS, its buffer zone and wider setting are taken into account in the preparation and implementation of planning, regulatory and policy documents which might affect it</td>
<td>Include the OUV of the WHS, its buffer zone and wider setting in the revised Harrogate Borough Council Local Plan.</td>
<td>HBC/NT/EHT/HE</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E2 Ensure policies to protect the WHS, buffer zone and wider setting are included in the Ripon City Plan.</td>
<td>Inclusion of WHS policies in development plans covering the area</td>
<td>RCPC/HBC/NT/HE</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E3 Historic England and National Trust to respond to planning applications with a potential impact on the OUV of the site.</td>
<td>Area of WHS</td>
<td>HE/NT/HBC</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F:</td>
<td>Ensure the boundaries of the WHS include the area that gives the site its outstanding universal value</td>
<td>Review the boundaries of the WHS in partnership with local landowners.</td>
<td>WHSSG/HBC/NT/HE/EHT/Nidderdale AONB/landowners</td>
<td>2016-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If the review demonstrates the boundary of the WHS should be revised a proposal will be prepared and submitted to the World Heritage Committee for approval.</td>
<td>WHSSG/HBC/NT/HE/EHT/Nidderdale AONB/landowners</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G:</td>
<td>Examine the impact of climate change on all objectives and adopt a strategy for accommodation and adaptation</td>
<td>Set up a monitoring programme to improve understanding of the current and future impact of climate change on the WHS.</td>
<td>Climate Change Risk Assessment completed</td>
<td>NT/HE/EHT/NE/EA/HBC/Nidderdale AONB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Produce a Climate Change Risk Assessment for the WHS.</td>
<td>NT/HE/EHT/NE/EA/HBC/Nidderdale AONB</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H:</td>
<td>Minimise the impact of the Shoot on access, the historic and natural environment and woodland management</td>
<td>Seek to acquire the shooting rights that cover National Trust land should they become available.</td>
<td>New Management Agreement completed</td>
<td>NT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Produce a new Shoot/National Trust Management Agreement.</td>
<td>NT/Shoot</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure that historical features connected to the site and in Shoot ownership are protected and their condition is stable.</td>
<td>HE/NT/Shoot/HBC</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>Facilitate and encourage research to improve knowledge and understanding of the WHS to inform its management. Ensure that the results of such research are shared</td>
<td>Deliver a programme of research to inform restoration of the water garden. Priorities include an archaeological survey of the site of the Rotondo adjacent to the Banqueting House and Rustic Lodge next to Tent Hill</td>
<td>Number of research projects completed</td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/Universities &amp; Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop an archaeological research framework for the WHS, with a specific focus on the abbey precinct area.</td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/Universities &amp; Colleges</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Carry out research on the statuary collection of the water garden.</td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/Universities &amp; Colleges</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a project to produce a digital archive of the surveys and reports about the estate.</td>
<td>NT/EHT/WYAS/NYCC/Universities &amp; Colleges</td>
<td>2015-2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Publish the archaeological and historical survey of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal.</td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improve the accessibility of research projects and archaeological investigations undertaken on the site.</td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/NYCC/WYAS/Universities &amp; Colleges</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Monitoring indicator</td>
<td>Leader (in bold) &amp; key partners</td>
<td>Timescale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J: Ensure the highest standards of conservation management and enhancement of the whole WHS. This includes the garden and designed landscape, built heritage (including archaeology) and the natural heritage (biodiversity and geodiversity) of the site</td>
<td>J1 Deliver the Conservation Management Plan priorities set out in Appendix 8.</td>
<td>% Increase in NT Conservation Performance Indicator score</td>
<td>EHT/HE/NT/NE/HBC &amp; other partners</td>
<td>2015-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J3 Organise a programme of talks, leaflets and digital media to share the conservation priorities for the site with stakeholders, visitors and communities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/HE/EHT/Nidderdale AONB/NE &amp; other partners</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J4 Produce a Heritage Partnership Agreement for Fountains Abbey Scheduled Monument.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J5 Prepare and deliver a prioritised programme of conservation works from the Asset Management Plan for the abbey ruins.</td>
<td></td>
<td>HE/NT/EHT</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J6 Review the condition and location of the artefacts in the mill to improve the state of their environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J7 Promote access to objects held by the English Heritage Trust at Helmsley Store by making the entire collection accessible online and linked with the National Trust website.</td>
<td></td>
<td>EHT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J8 Support loan requests from the collection held by the English Heritage Trust at Helmsley Store.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/volunteers</td>
<td>2015-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J9 Complete the condition survey of all the archaeological sites on the property and implement management measures for their conservation.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/NE/Woodland Trust/volunteers/local groups</td>
<td>2015-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J10 Record the ancient and venerable trees for the Woodland Trust National Register.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/NE</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J11 Produce a deadwood policy for the deer parks.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/NE/volunteers/local groups</td>
<td>2015-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J12 Deliver the Key Habitats and Species Monitoring Programme.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/NE/volunteers/local geology groups/volunteers</td>
<td>2015-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J13 Deliver recommendations in the Geodiversity Audit set out in Appendix 9.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K: Improve environmental practices incorporating environmental compliance, reduced energy usage, water conservation measures and sustainable resource use</td>
<td>K1 Deliver National Trust energy KPIs and achieve energy reduction targets for each year of the plan period, against 2009 baseline level.</td>
<td>Reduction in total energy usage</td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K2 Plan and implement works to bring all buildings on the site to National Trust Bronze Standard.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/HE/HBC</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K3 Embed ‘energy criteria’ in business decisions and wherever possible, ensure that both small scale and large scale renewable energy production and energy savings are incorporated in projects.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/HE/HBC</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K4 Investigate feasibility and payback of a ground source heat pump at the Studley Tea Room.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K5 Change the remaining oil heated buildings to a renewable energy source, where appropriate.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/HE/HBC</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K6 Set up a food waste composting programme.</td>
<td>NT/HBC/NYCC</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K7 Communicate the environmental performance message to staff, volunteers and visitors.</td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K8 Increase opportunities for recycling across the estate. Priorities include the Abbey Tea Room recycling facilities for visitors and food waste recycling at the Visitor Centre restaurant.</td>
<td>NT/NYCC/HBC</td>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K9 Continue mapping water supplies across the estate.</td>
<td>NT/Yorkshire Water</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**L:** Develop with partners, long-term measures to manage the recurrent problems affecting the water features that arise from the catchment area

| L1 Work with external agencies and riparian owners directly upstream of the site to continue to reduce the speed and amount of run-off in the upper catchment through a series of land management initiatives, including development of the Skell Living Landscapes Project. | No of projects delivered in catchment | NT/ YDRT/Nidderdale AONB/landowners/NE/EA/YWT/NYCC | Ongoing |
| L2 Deliver the dredging projects for the Half Moon Reservoir, the Moon Ponds and the Upper Canal. | No of days per year site flooded | NT | 2015-2017 |
| L3 Develop a project to research flood risk in the abbey ruins in response to the English Heritage Inland Flood Risk Assessment. | | NT/ EHT/HE/Universities & Colleges | 2017 |
| L4 Commission research to look at market opportunities for the silt removed as part of dredging works. | | NT/EA/Universities & Colleges | 2018 |
| L5 Continue to carry out a programme of repairs to river walls, tunnels, culverts, weirs and bridges as set out in Conservation Appendix 8. | | NT/EHT/HE/NYCC/EA/HBC | Annual programme |
| L6 Deliver measures to improve circulation and aeration in the Moon Ponds to reduce algae build up. | | NT/HE/NYCC/EA/HBC | 2015 |
| L7 Continue to engage with York and North Yorkshire and the Northern Upland Chain LNPs including delivery of the River Ure Priority Programme and the Yorkshire Peat Partnership Project. | | NT/LNPs | Ongoing |
| L8 Review the results of the Ripon Flood Alleviation Scheme on the Skell catchment and papers reviewing delivery of the Ripon Multi-Objective Project and explore appropriate flood management measures to protect the site. | | NT/ EA/Nidderdale AONB/HBC/NYCC | 2016 |
### Theme 3: Access, enjoyment and understanding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Monitoring indicator</th>
<th>Leader (in bold) &amp; key partners</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>M:</strong> Ensure the WHS is welcoming and accessible to all who visit</td>
<td>M1 Work with local disability groups to understand their needs better.</td>
<td>Actions delivered from Access Audit</td>
<td>NT/local disability groups/ Ripon Museums/Connecting Ripon</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M2 Identify partners to work with to deliver staff training in order to improve understanding and awareness of the needs of visitors with a range of disabilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/local disability groups/ Ripon Museums/Connecting Ripon</td>
<td>2015-2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M3 Deliver the recommendations from the Access Audit.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/HBC</td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M4 Develop a toolkit for project managers to ensure that the needs of disabled visitors are considered in the project planning process.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/local disability groups</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M5 Address the physical access issues on the site, such as the gradient of the path linking the Visitor Centre and the abbey and gardens and access to Deer Cottage disabled toilets.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/HBC/local disability groups</td>
<td>2016-2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M6 Improve pre-visit and on-site information for disabled visitors.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/local disability groups</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M7 Present a positive image of visitors with disabilities and those from ethnic groups in marketing materials.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/local disability groups</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M8 Continue to take part in Heritage Open Day providing free entry to the estate.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/Heritage Open Day</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N:</strong> Ensure a very enjoyable visit and deliver informal learning opportunities for all through an engaging visitor experience rooted in property stories and the outstanding universal value and wider values of the WHS</td>
<td>N1 Continue to develop visitor activities such as World Heritage Weekend which promote understanding of the WHS, its OUV and other associated values &amp; the wider purposes and functions of UNESCO.</td>
<td>% Visitor Enjoyment score</td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/HBC</td>
<td>2015-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N2 Deliver the National Trust Visitor Experience Project.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/HBC and other partners</td>
<td>2015-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N3 Deliver interpretation in the abbey and water garden.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/HBC</td>
<td>2015-2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N4 Update the interpretation in the mill.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N5 Establish a vision for Quebec.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/HBC and other partners</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N6 Embed Spirit of Place in the day to day operation of the site.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N7 Monitor and respond to the National Trust Visitor Enjoyment scores and customer feedback monthly.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N8 Explore the possibility of opening Kitchen Bank stone store once a year as part of a Heritage Open Day or similar event.</td>
<td></td>
<td>EHT/NT</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N9 Explore the possibility of putting a secure and accessible exhibition case in St Mary’s Church.</td>
<td></td>
<td>EHT/NT</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N10 Update the guidebook for St Mary’s Church.</td>
<td></td>
<td>EHT/NT</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N11 Redisplay decorative stonework, currently stored at Kitchen Bank stone store, in the abbey.</td>
<td></td>
<td>EHT/NT</td>
<td>2015-16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### O: Share our knowledge, experience and understanding of the WHS to promote education and learning about both the site and the appreciation and care of heritage

| O1 | Maintain the quality of the learning programme and respond to changes in the curricula and syllabuses of schools and colleges. | Increase in number of school visits | NT/local schools, colleges & universities | 2014-16 |
| O2 | Develop relationships with local schools, engendering a love of this place in the local community and build on existing partnerships. | School satisfaction rating | NT/Fountains Primary School/Ripon Grammar School/Harrogate College | 2014-20 |
| O3 | Develop an offer that has a broad appeal including online resources, self-led activities, outreach activities and led visits. | | NT/local schools, colleges & universities/other partners | 2015-16 |
| O4 | Develop a programme of induction, training, monitoring and support of National Trust education volunteers and monitor feedback by education visitors to ensure that the delivery of workshops is excellent. | | NT | 2015 |
| O5 | Improve the facilities at Swanley Grange Learning Centre, including upgraded toilets. | | NT | 2016 |
| O6 | Work with local partners such as Harrogate and Ripon Education Visits Network to improve the learning programme. | | NT/Harrogate and Ripon Education visits network | 2015-16 |
| O7 | Investigate the development of supplementary education activities on site and a regional programme for delivering learning around green and outdoor heritage. | | NT/EHT/HE/NE/ICOMOS-UK | 2015-2017 |

### P: Provide volunteering opportunities that encourage active involvement and inspire support for the WHS

<p>| P1 | Continue to identify opportunities to develop new volunteer roles that support the needs of the site e.g. in visitor experience, learning, gardening. | No of volunteer hours | NT | Ongoing |
| P2 | Continue to use the National Trust’s annual volunteer survey to evaluate the success of volunteering and address any concerns. | % of volunteers who would recommend working for the NT | NT/volunteers | Ongoing |
| P3 | Invest in volunteer training, both role specific and general, including the development of a volunteer estate handbook. | | NT/volunteers | 2016 |
| P4 | Continue to develop the confidence and expertise of all staff who manage volunteers. | | NT | 2015-20 |
| P5 | Support the career development of graduates and increase the prospect of their future employment through the National Trust Internship Programme. | | NT/Universities &amp; Colleges | Ongoing |
| P6 | Offer regular work experience placements to school and college pupils in the local area and ensure that their experience is meaningful and enjoyable. | | NT/local schools | Ongoing |
| P7 | Consult volunteers regularly during the initiation of new projects and plans to involve them in the management of the site. | | NT/volunteers | Ongoing |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Monitoring indicator</th>
<th>Leader (in bold) &amp; key partners</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q: Work through strong partnerships with local communities and other local, regional and national stakeholders</td>
<td>Q1 Maintain and strengthen links with the local community through volunteering opportunities and a local newsletter.</td>
<td>Community organisation involvement in WHS</td>
<td>NT/Connecting Ripon/ community organisations</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q2 Explore new ways to engage the local community with the site.</td>
<td>NT/Connecting Ripon/ community organisations</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q3 Promote the WHS as a place to improve health and wellbeing, for example through community bike rides, Parkrun and outdoor volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>NT/Nidderdale AONB/ Parkrun/local doctor surgeries &amp; health centres</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q4 Maximise international links and partnerships through Welcome to Yorkshire, and opportunities presented by other Destination Management Organisations, and through sharing management experience with sites in the UK, Europe and further afield.</td>
<td>NT/WH-UK/WTY/Visit Harrogate/other WHSs</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q5 Raise the profile of World Heritage in the UK by working with the newly formed World Heritage-UK and other WHSs.</td>
<td>NT/WH-UK/Visit Britain/ WTY/other WHSs</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q6 Continue to engage with the wide range of partnerships in the local area to deliver objectives in this plan.</td>
<td>NT/all partners</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q7 Continue to engage with tourism groups to further the promotion of the World Heritage Site and enable access to market research.</td>
<td>NT/Ripon Ring/Discover Ripon/WTY/Visit Harrogate</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R: Optimise the positive impact of the WHS on the local and regional economy</td>
<td>R1 Explore opportunities to research and evidence the value of the two World Heritage Sites in Yorkshire to optimise their contribution to the local economy and communities.</td>
<td>Number of apprenticeships &amp; internships</td>
<td>NT/HE/WTY/Saltaire WHS/ LEPs</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R2 Engage with the two overlapping Local Enterprise Partnerships and the National Park and AONB strategy which forms part of the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Strategic Plan, to explore ways to optimise the positive impact of the WHS on the economy.</td>
<td>NT/LEPs/Nidderdale AONB &amp; National Parks</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R3 Continue to provide high quality apprenticeships and internships in building skills such as joinery and masonry, landscaping and horticultural skills and in events and volunteer management.</td>
<td>NT/EHT/HE/LEPs/ Universities &amp; Colleges/</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R4 Sustain the number of jobs at the site.</td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R5 Maintain and increase use of local businesses.</td>
<td>NT/EHT/local businesses, contractors &amp; producers</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R6 Maintain, and where possible, increase the contribution the site makes to the local and regional economy through tourism.</td>
<td>NT/WTY/Visit Harrogate/ LEPs</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S: Ensure sustainable access to the WHS by broadening opportunities to travel by bus, bike or on foot.</td>
<td><strong>S1</strong> Work with partners to explore opportunities to expand bus service provision to the estate.</td>
<td>Increased % of visitors arriving by other means than car</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S2</strong> Monitor current use of the public bus service and develop a programme of measures to promote the current bus service to demonstrate commercial viability.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/YDPTP/NYCC/bus companies 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S3</strong> Improve cycling facilities at Studley Royal and West Gate admission points and increase storage space at the Visitor Centre to allow the safe storage of helmets and rucksacks.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S4</strong> Explore options for an off-road cycle route between Ripon city centre and the Studley Royal Deer Park.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/YDPTP/SUSTRANS/NYC/NT/RCPC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S5</strong> Develop a network of walking routes that link the site with other local places of interest such as Brimham Rocks, Markenfield Hall and historic Ripon.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/RCPC/NT/Nidderdale AONB/Parks and Gardens Group 2015-2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S6</strong> Increase the marketing and promotion of green transport options, including cycling and walking, available to visitors.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT/Nidderdale AONB/NYCC/YDPTP/bus companies 2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S7</strong> Implement a car share scheme for staff and volunteers.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abbreviations:**

- **AONB** Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- **EA** Environment Agency
- **EHT** English Heritage Trust
- **GARLAND** The Garden & Landscape Heritage Trust
- **HBC** Harrogate Borough Council
- **HE** Historic England
- **ICOMOS-UK** International Council on Monuments & Sites UK
- **LEP** Local Enterprise Partnership
- **LNP** Local Nature Partnership
- **NE** Natural England
- **NT** National Trust
- **NYCC** North Yorkshire County Council
- **RCPC** Ripon City Plan Committee
- **WHSSG** WHS Steering Group
- **WH-UK** World Heritage UK, this network has developed from the Local Authority World Heritage Forum
- **WTY** Welcome to Yorkshire
- **WYAS** West Yorkshire Archive Service
- **YDPTP** Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Partnership
- **YWT** Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
Monitoring will take place regularly and the WHS Steering Group will meet twice a year to review progress on delivery of the plan. This may involve analysing quantitative data such as the results of National Trust visitor and volunteer surveys, looking at the Conservation Performance Indicator (CPI) process and assessing financial performance. It will also involve a review of delivery of actions set out in the 6 year action plan. This ongoing process of monitoring will contribute to a full review of the plan in 2020. The active involvement of partners will be essential to both the implementation of the plan and reviewing the effectiveness of its outcomes.