

Special qualities survey results

1. An online survey on the special qualities of the National Park was open for five weeks between 15th March and 19th April 2024. Options to reply by email or post were also provided. The survey was voluntary and anonymous and was publicised via social media and newspaper. Sixty-four responses to the survey had been received (over 9,500 words total).
2. An overview of the special qualities consultation is provided below. Overall, the comments reflected a strong sense of community pride in and concern for the future of the National Park, and a desire for robust action to conserve landscape / seascape, wildlife and ecological integrity, and heritage for future generations. Particular concerns were voiced regarding water quality and recreational disturbance.
3. The survey results have informed section 2 of the draft Partnership Plan (*Special qualities of the National Park*), section 3 (*The State of the Park – challenges and opportunities*) and the proposed policies and actions (sections 4 to 7 of the draft). A selection of quotes from the survey is included in the draft Partnership Plan.

Summary of responses to questions 1 and 2

Q1. Think of three places in the National Park that are special to you. What is it about these places that make them special?

Q2. Can you think of anything else that makes the National Park special?

Natural beauty: breathtaking landscapes, pristine beaches, and stunning views, e.g. Treginnis headland, St Davids Head, Pwll Deri.

Tranquillity and escape: peace and quiet and the ability to escape from busy modern / urban life.

Rich history and heritage: castles, e.g. Nevern, ancient monuments, and prehistoric landscapes and landmarks, e.g. Pentre Ifan, hold significant historical and cultural importance.

Wildlife / biodiversity: diverse wildlife and habitats e.g. marine wildlife on and around Skomer and Skokholm. An appreciation for the partners' conservation work in terms of natural beauty and wildlife, including rare or edge of range species.

Connection to nature: the sense of a deep connection to nature while exploring the Park's landscapes.

Welsh language, linguistic heritage and culture: an integral part of the Park's identity; poetry - cultural richness and historical significance.

Relatively remote and unspoiled places: e.g. Ceibwr, Brynberian moor, Ty Canol - opportunities for solitude and exploration.

Unique features: ancient woodlands, geological formations, coastal scenery...

Personal connections: personal significance - a place of childhood memories, family connections, or a source of inspiration.

Quiet places: opportunities for solitude and exploration away from tourist crowds, allowing people to enjoy the beauty of nature in peace.

Sense of community: among residents, businesses, and visitors.

Varied landscapes and rural pattern: farmed land, rivers, woods, hills and moorland, coastal waters.

Recreational opportunities: wide range of opportunities for outdoor activities e.g. walking, swimming, birdwatching, and surfing.

Accessibility and protection for future generations: efforts to increase accessibility and protect natural beauty so that future generations can enjoy and appreciate the Park's wonders.

Development policy: the role of separate, sensitive policies for the Park and development management in conserving and enhancing the scenic beauty and environmental quality.

Status as the UK's only coastal National Park: The distinction of being the UK's only truly coastal national park makes Pembrokeshire Coast National Park special in its own right.

Summary of responses to question 3

Q3 What are the main challenges facing the special qualities you've listed above?

Inappropriate development: impacts of human activity on landscape / seascape character, including development in coastal waters.

Overcrowding and accessibility: the challenge posed by high visitor numbers, particularly during peak season, leading to overcrowding, congestion and difficulty in accessing certain areas, especially for individuals with mobility issues.

Littering and pollution: littering, sewage pollution, agricultural runoff, plastic pollution.

Climate change: sea level rise, coastal erosion, habitat loss, and changes in wildlife behaviour and distribution.

Intensive farming and development: some farming practices, agricultural pollution, and inappropriate development with impacts on biodiversity, water quality and scenic beauty.

Tourism pressures: especially in regard to coasteering in proximity to wildlife.

Infrastructure and resource management: infrastructure maintenance, funding for conservation efforts, and the management of public facilities.

Community engagement and education: scope to increase awareness within and beyond the Park boundary.

Summary of responses to question 4

Q4 What action needs to be taken to protect or restore the things that make the National Park special?

Regulatory measures: limit aquaculture in sensitive coastal areas. Stricter regulation of adventure tourism.

Community engagement: increase opportunities for young people to engage with the National Park, offering career pathways and educational programs. Foster community involvement in conservation efforts through awareness campaigns and participation.

Environmental education: educate people and providers about responsible behaviour, e.g. waste disposal and respecting wildlife habitats. Promote

environmental awareness in schools and businesses through litter pick initiatives and educational programmes.

Infrastructure improvement: improve access to beaches, install more bins, and provide adequate facilities such as toilets and parking. Enhance public transport options and promote alternative modes of travel like cycling and walking.

Habitat restoration: Restore and protect natural habitats such as dunes, grasslands, and hedgerows through landscape-scale projects and habitat management initiatives. Implement rewilding efforts and increase woodland cover to enhance biodiversity.

Policy and planning: Integrate nature conservation objectives into planning policies and decision-making processes. Strengthen regulation to control inappropriate development and enforce planning rules to protect sensitive areas.

Climate action: Commit to achieving net-zero carbon emissions and reduce the Park's carbon footprint. Implement measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change, such as tree-planting, soil conservation, and adaptation strategies.

Collaborative effort: foster collaboration between stakeholders, including local communities, landowners and businesses. Engage in partnerships to address common challenges and work towards shared conservation goals. Invest in sustainable tourism practices, habitat restoration projects, environmental education, and climate adaptation measures.

Enforcement and monitoring: Strengthen enforcement of regulations related to water quality, pollution, and recreational activities. Monitor the health of ecosystems and species populations to track progress and identify emerging threats.

Celebrate culture: Promote and preserve Welsh language, culture, and heritage within the Park. Support initiatives that celebrate local traditions and promote sustainable tourism practices that respect cultural values.

Public awareness and advocacy: Raise awareness about the importance of nature conservation and the need to protect the Park's special qualities. Advocate for stronger regulatory protection and enforcement, increased funding, and policy changes at local and national levels.

Q5: Which of the following best describes you?

I live in Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	52
I visit Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (day trips)	2
I visit Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (overnight stays)	5
Other	5

Summary of responses to final question

“Thank you for replying to the survey. Your responses will help shape the management of the National Park. If you have any other comments, please add them below.”

(Note – many of the following points are also raised in other people’s responses to previous questions).

Language and culture: importance of promoting and protecting the Welsh language, culture, and heritage within the Park. The need for bilingual communication and recognition of the unique linguistic identity of the area.

Accessibility: make the Park more accessible, particularly for people with disabilities. Suggestions included improving facilities, signage, and infrastructure to accommodate a diverse range of visitors.

Environmental conservation: concerns about pollution, habitat degradation, and overdevelopment within the Park. Calls for greater regulation, enforcement, and education to address these issues and protect biodiversity.

Community engagement: involve local communities more actively in conservation efforts, including volunteer programs and collaboration with community organisations. Engage young people and promote nature-based activities.

Sustainable tourism: concern about the balance between nature conservation and tourism. Many responses advocated for a shift towards nature tourism and away from adventure tourism, particularly in sensitive wildlife areas and at important times for breeding seabirds and seals.

Communication and transparency: the importance of transparent decision-making, effective communication, and community involvement in Park management. Suggestions included regular updates, accessible management plans, and public forums for discussion.

Collaboration and partnerships: calls for closer collaboration between the National Park Authority, community/town/city councils, conservation agencies and other stakeholders to address common challenges and achieve shared conservation goals.

Climate change adaptation: the need to address climate change impacts, such as rising sea levels and flooding, through adaptation measures and contingency planning.