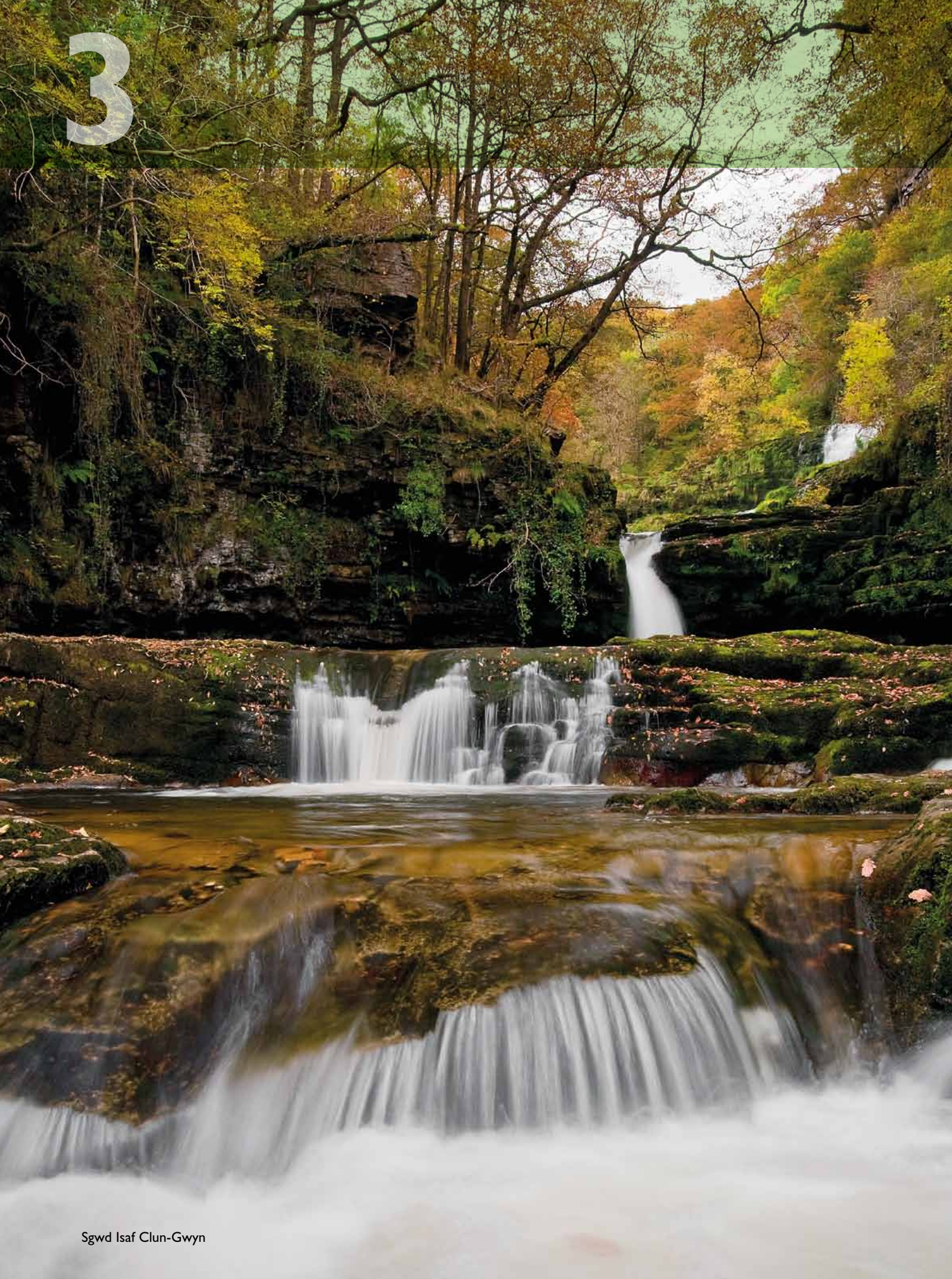


3



Sgwd Isaf Clun-Gwyn

Special Qualities

The Brecon Beacons National Park covers a broad geographical area, encompassing an impressive diversity of natural and cultural landscapes within its boundaries. The Park provides a wealth of opportunities to enjoy outstanding natural beauty, varied flora and fauna and local flavour. Whilst pursuing these opportunities, one also gains a better understanding of the Park's communities, their history and time-honoured traditions and a sense of what it means to be Welsh.

It is the richness and variety of experiences that the Brecon Beacons have to offer that make it such a valued natural and cultural resource for so many people. There is something here for everyone. Though each individual's impressions of the Park are forged by his or her own personal experiences here, there are commonalities that emerge from these experiences which are shared by a variety of audiences. The broad appeal of the Park's diverse qualities was reflected in the comments received from participants attending the consultation workshops for the preparation of this plan. Participants representing a wide range of interests and

viewpoints nevertheless identified Park qualities sharing several common threads.

Collectively these qualities apply to the Park as a whole. Specific localities within the Park, however, are characterised by different combinations of the qualities listed in **Table 3.1**. These special qualities, referenced in the Park's Second Purpose, are what all those involved in managing the Park's resources strive to conserve and enhance so that present and future generations may continue to benefit from them. Consequently management activity must take into consideration the potential effects on special qualities specific to a given locality.

Table 3.1 captures the most common themes identified by stakeholders as special qualities, although it is not an exhaustive list. With these special qualities in mind, there is no wonder why this marvellous place has been designated as a National Park.



Tommy Jones obelisk, near Corn Du and Pen y Fan

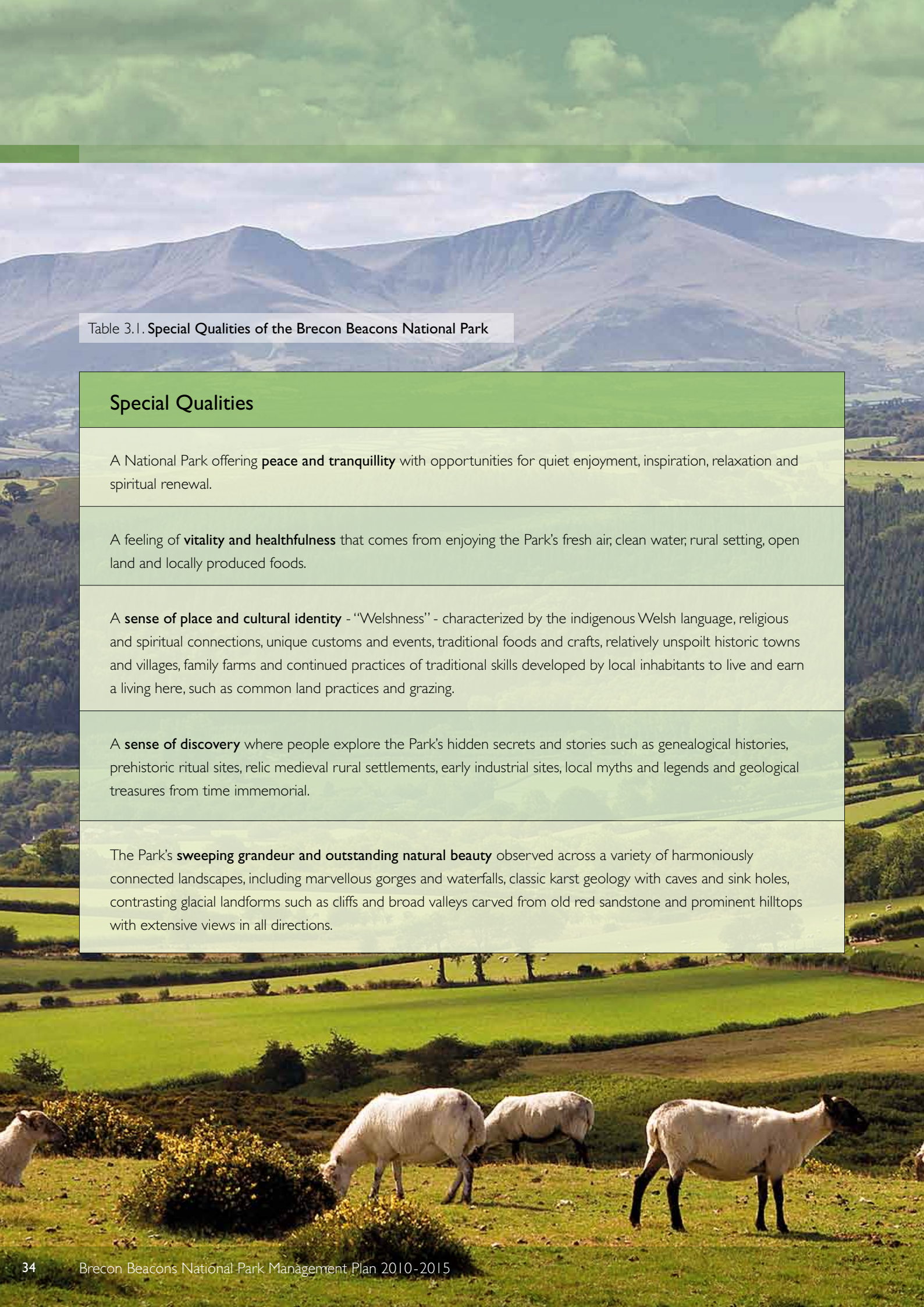


Table 3.1. Special Qualities of the Brecon Beacons National Park

Special Qualities
A National Park offering peace and tranquillity with opportunities for quiet enjoyment, inspiration, relaxation and spiritual renewal.
A feeling of vitality and healthfulness that comes from enjoying the Park's fresh air, clean water, rural setting, open land and locally produced foods.
A sense of place and cultural identity - "Welshness" - characterized by the indigenous Welsh language, religious and spiritual connections, unique customs and events, traditional foods and crafts, relatively unspoilt historic towns and villages, family farms and continued practices of traditional skills developed by local inhabitants to live and earn a living here, such as common land practices and grazing.
A sense of discovery where people explore the Park's hidden secrets and stories such as genealogical histories, prehistoric ritual sites, relic medieval rural settlements, early industrial sites, local myths and legends and geological treasures from time immemorial.
The Park's sweeping grandeur and outstanding natural beauty observed across a variety of harmoniously connected landscapes, including marvellous gorges and waterfalls, classic karst geology with caves and sink holes, contrasting glacial landforms such as cliffs and broad valleys carved from old red sandstone and prominent hilltops with extensive views in all directions.

Special Qualities

A working, living "patchwork" of **contrasting patterns, colours, and textures** comprising well-maintained farmed landscapes, open uplands, lakes and meandering rivers punctuated by small-scale woodlands, country lanes, hedgerows and stone walls and scattered settlements.

Extensive and widespread access to the Park's **diversity of wildlife and richness of semi-natural habitats**, such as native woodlands, heathland and grassland, natural lakes and riparian habitats, ancient hedgerows, limestone pavement and blanket bogs including those of international and national importance.

In the context of the UK, geographically **rugged, remote and challenging** landscapes.

Enjoyable and accessible countryside with extensive, widespread and varied opportunities to pursue walking, cycling, fishing, water-based activities and other forms of sustainable recreation or relaxation.

An **intimate sense of community** where small, pastoral towns and villages are comparatively safe, friendly, welcoming and retain a spirit of cooperation.