

Reading

Read the interview.

• *Do you think it is a good idea to have National Parks? Why?*

What are National Parks?

National Parks are extensive areas of countryside which have been given this status to ensure they are protected to *sustain* their special qualities. The

conservation of the natural

beauty, wildlife & cultural heritage of these parks is paramount, yet they also provide opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the great British countryside.

How many National Parks are there and where are they? In total, there are 15 National Parks. Ten of these are in England, two are in Scotland and three are in Wales. The size of the parks varies from 305 to 3,800 square kilometers & they *constitute* 9% of English land.

Who owns the National Parks? A lot of the land within the National parks is privately owned by farmers & the many people who live in the villages & towns there. Landowners also include organizations such as the National Trust. The government-funded National Park *Authorities* (who work alongside the landowners to preserve the landscape & protect its natural beauty, wildlife & historic sites) sometimes own parts of the land, too. It is also the responsibility of park authorities to educate visitors about the parks and *facilitate* their enjoyment of them.

Who pays for the National Parks? English National Park & Broads Authorities are *funded* by the government. Lottery and European grants & *collaborative* projects also help to pay for the *upkeep* of these unspoilt areas.

Who makes decisions about the future of National Parks? Any planning or decisions made to make changes to areas *designated* as National Parks is closely controlled & the conservation of the natural beauty of the countryside is *paramount*. Only under *exceptional* circumstances is major development allowed to take place.

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 designates the National Parks in England. They are created when this designation has been *confirmed* by the *Secretary of State*. The Welsh Assembly Government & The Scottish Government take responsibility for the National Parks in their countries. The Norfolk & Suffolk Broads Act 1988 manages the Norfolk & Suffolk Broads.



When were the National Parks designated? The first National Parks, which were designated in 1951, include the Peak District, Lake District, Snowdonia & Dartmoor. The most recent National Park to gain its **status** was the South Downs in 2010.

The Norfolk & Suffolk Broads is a network of rivers & lakes in the counties of Norfolk & Suffolk. It is Britain's largest protected wetland & it is the third largest inland waterway. As such, it is not technically a designated National Park, however it was given **equivalent** status & is considered part of the 'National Park family'.

Are National Parks good places to visit? Absolutely. Lots of people like to get involved in outdoor activities like walking, cycling, sailing & adventure sports. Whether you want a peaceful, relaxing break, or an action-packed holiday, you can be **assured** that you'll see beautiful scenery & remarkable wildlife.

*Look at the definitions below. Find words **in bold** from the text which have the same meaning & write the answers.*

- 1) organizations with administrative powers in a specific field =
- 2) make up; form; compose =
- 3) paid for =
- 4) support; keep in existence =
- 5) an official position/title =
- 6) made certain; guaranteed =
- 7) maintenance; keeping something in good condition =
- 8) selected; set aside for a duty/purpose =
- 9) more important than anything else =
- 10) uncommon; deviating from the norm =
- 11) head of a government department =
- 12) verified; made official =
- 13) the same; an equal amount of something =
- 14) involving two or more people/organizations working together for the same purpose =
- 15) make easier or possible =