

# Draft Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan 2019-24



Prepared by:

## The National Park Management Plan Steering Group

	Craven District Council		Cumbria Tourism Businesses
	Destination Dales		Rural Estates (Cumbria/Lancs)
	Rural Estates (Yorkshire)		Environment Agency
	Eden District Council		Forestry Commission England
	Lancaster City Council		Natural England
	Richmondshire District Council		South Lakeland District Council
	Cumbria Farmer Network		Yorkshire Dales Farmer Network
	Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust		Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

# Introduction

## National Parks

National Parks contain the most beautiful, spectacular and dramatic areas of countryside in England.

They are landscapes of national importance and their designation gives them the highest status for the conservation of landscape and scenic beauty. They also contain fantastic opportunities for recreation and millions of visitors enjoy their qualities every year.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park was designated in 1954 and is one of ten National Parks in England, which cover around 9.3% of the country. The vast majority of its land is in private ownership.

## National Park statutory purposes and duty

The statutory purposes of English National Parks are set out in Section 61 of the Environment Act 1995. These are:

- **to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the national parks;**
- **to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities [of the national parks] by the public.**

The purposes are underpinned in law by the ‘Sandford Principle’. This makes it clear that the first purpose should take precedence over the second in cases of irreconcilable conflict.

The landscapes of National Parks have been home to communities and industry for thousands of years, and continue to be so. The National Park Authorities, therefore, also have a duty under Section 62(1) of the Environment Act:

- **in taking forward the national park purposes, [to] seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.**

The most recent statutory guidance on the English National Parks is set out in ‘English National Parks and the Broads – UK Government Vision and Circular 2010’.

## National Park Management Plan

There is a statutory duty to review the National Park Management Plan “at intervals of not more than five years” (s66 of the Environment Act 1995).

The National Park Circular makes clear that the National Park Management Plan is the single most important document for each National Park. It should set out the vision,

strategic policies and outcomes for the National Park over the long term. It should also ensure that National Park purposes are being delivered.

It is a plan for the National Park - its communities, businesses, visitors and the many organisations that operate there. It requires all who have an interest in the National Park to work together to achieve its aspirations. The Government expects public agencies and authorities that are active within or bordering a National Park to co-operate in the development of the National Park Management Plan and the achievement of its objectives.

This National Park Management Plan was produced by a partnership - the Management Plan Steering Group. It includes statutory environmental bodies, local authorities, the voluntary sector, and representatives of local businesses.

The review has involved many elements so far: initial public consultation; detailed evidence reports; and the direct involvement of a range of individuals and organisations in drafting the proposed objectives. This included the first annual National Park Forum, held in Ingleton in November 2017.

The consultation results, detailed evidence reports and a full description of the review process are all available at [www.yorkshiredalesmanagementplan.org.uk](http://www.yorkshiredalesmanagementplan.org.uk)

## **Statutory assessments**

The preparation of this draft Management Plan was subject to:

- **[Sustainability Appraisal](#)**. This tested the implications of the objectives and made recommendations on their potential impact on sustainable development – including any impacts on the environment. In turn, these impacts were taken into account in drafting the final objectives.
- **[Habitats Regulations Assessment](#)**. This was undertaken to assess whether any of the objectives might have an impact on conservation sites designated under the European Habitats Directive, which are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species.
- **[Equality Impact Assessment](#)**. This is to guard against unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. The Act also requires the advancement of equality of opportunity between people who show ‘protected characteristics’ and those who do not. Protected characteristics are age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation

All three documents have been published alongside this draft Plan at [www.yorkshiredalesmanagementplan.org.uk](http://www.yorkshiredalesmanagementplan.org.uk)

# Our Vision

Through their passion for this special place, local people and businesses will keep the Yorkshire Dales National Park a thriving area. Its unique cultural landscape will be treasured for its stunning scenery, exceptional heritage and wonderful wildlife, and every year millions of people will be inspired to be a part of it.

By 2040, it will be:

- **A distinctive, living, working, cultural landscape that tells the ongoing story of generations of people interacting with their environment.**
- **A friendly, open and welcoming place with outstanding opportunities to enjoy its special qualities.**
- **Home to the finest variety of wildlife in England.**
- **Resilient and responsive to the impacts of climate change, storing more carbon each year than it produces.**
- **Providing an outstanding range of benefits for the nation based on its natural resources, landscape and cultural heritage, which underpin a flourishing local economy.**
- **Home to strong, self-reliant and balanced communities with good access to the services they need.**

Each element of this Vision carries equal weight.

The following sections set out the specific objectives that we intend to achieve over the next five to ten years to make progress towards the six elements of our Vision.

As might be expected given the integrated approach that has been taken in developing this Management Plan, every objective will help to deliver at least two, and often more, of the elements of the Vision. The objectives should, therefore, be considered as a whole rather than section by section.

***A. A distinctive, living, working, cultural landscape that tells the ongoing story of generations of people interacting with their environment***

**A1. During Brexit transition, support farmers and landowners to deliver a range of public benefits by ensuring at least 60% of the Yorkshire Dales National Park is in national agri-environment scheme agreements or other similar initiatives.**

**Rationale:** In advance of the development of a new approach to environmental land management (see objective A8), funding from existing agri-environment schemes will be critical to the survival of many farm businesses in the National Park, and to the survival of many elements of the landscape and its natural beauty.

**Lead organisation:** Natural England.

**Supporting organisations:** Forestry Commission; Environment Agency; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust; National Trust

**A2. Maintain the National Park as a place where a true sense of tranquillity, remoteness and solitude can be found, and by 2021 obtain Dark Skies Reserve status to enhance and promote enjoyment of its Dark Skies.**

**Rationale:** Working towards a 'Dark Skies' designation has been strongly supported through the Parish Forums and at the National Park Management Plan Forum in 2017. The designation process would lead to advice and support for individuals, businesses and organisations looking to reduce light pollution as well as a programme of activities to encourage enjoyment of the night skies by locals and visitors.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**Supporting organisations:** County Councils; District Councils

**A3. By 2020 produce a simplified and updated Landscape Character Assessment for the National Park, and use it to support initiatives to enhance local distinctiveness and promote positive landscape change.**

**Rationale:** The existing Landscape Character Assessment is dated (2002) and does not cover the new area of the National Park. An updated and simplified assessment could be used to promote local distinctiveness, assess development capacity around settlements, inform large scale development proposals, inform a new local land management scheme, and encourage development and funding for landscape-scale projects.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**Supporting organisations:** Natural England.

**A4. Continue to reduce the amount of overhead power lines and other equipment, including putting another 20 km of existing power lines underground by 2023.**

**Rationale:** Putting intrusive overhead lines underground is an immediate and permanent way to enhance the natural beauty of the National Park. This objective continues the national Ofgem programme, which is implemented by the electricity distribution companies in consultation with the National Park Authority.

**Lead organisation:** Electricity North West; Northern Powergrid

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Friends of the Lake District

**A5. Use the Historic Environment Record (HER) and Dales Countryside Museum to help local community heritage groups to research, record and promote the stories of the National Park area, including completing the enhancement of the HER for the new area of the National Park by 2024.**

**Rationale:** The HER is an actively managed and dynamic record of the known historical environment. The information it contains is used to inform conservation, development and land management programmes, and as a resource to both encourage greater understanding and public appreciation of the historic environment of the National Park. The HER for the National Park Extension Area is less comprehensive and would benefit from enhancement. This will improve it as a knowledge base for managing the historic environment, and target future research.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales Historic Environment Group, Historic England

**A6. Help local people to restore, repair and bring back into use nationally-important historical sites, buildings and structures so that by 2024, less than 4% of scheduled monuments and listed buildings are considered at risk.**

**Rationale:** Each scheduled monument and listed building is nationally important. The number of monuments in the National Park has almost doubled as a result of the boundary extension. Currently 11 scheduled monuments (3.7%) and 75 listed buildings (3.5%) are assessed as being at risk. Just maintaining those levels will be challenging, unless significant new funding can be found.

**Lead organisation:** Historic England.

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Natural England.

**A7. Deliver co-ordinated programmes of activity that enhance the distinctive landscape, geology and cultural heritage of the 'Ingleborough Dales' (by 2020) and the 'Westmorland Dales' (by 2023).**

**Rationale:** The Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership Programme funds local partnerships that aim to conserve areas of distinctive landscape character to improve the landscape's management and help people connect with it. A Landscape Partnership scheme is made up of many small projects, often grouped under themes, within a defined landscape character area. These individual projects are brought together in a way that achieves a long-term legacy for the area.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust; Friends of the Lake District

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Natural England; Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust; Woodland Trust, Tarmac; Hanson; Cumbria Geoconservation; Eden Rivers Trust; Cumbria Farm Environment Partnership; the Farmer Network; Lunesdale Archaeology Society; and, Yorkshire Dales Landscape Research Trust.

**A8. By 2021 develop a fully costed, locally tailored, locally delivered, outcome-focused environmental land management scheme to maintain, restore and improve the outstanding natural capital and rural heritage of the National Park.**

**Rationale:** Brexit provides an opportunity to re-think the way in which farming and land management can be better supported to deliver public benefits in a National Park. Amongst the farming community there is strong support for a more collaborative approach that gives greater local flexibility to deliver a wider range of environmental outcomes whilst still allowing the whole farm to work as a system. Through the Yorkshire Dales Farming and Land Management Forum and other local partnerships a consensus is emerging about how a future national agri-environment scheme should work in nationally-important environments like the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales Farming and Land Management Forum

**Supporting organisations:** Natural England; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Northern Hill Farming Panel; Forestry Commission.

***A9. Establish local partnerships to identify and secure significant funding to repair, restore, and find adaptive new uses for traditional field barns, particularly those in Swaledale, Arkengarthdale and Littondale.***

**Rationale:** Traditional field barns and drystone walls are a defining quality of this National Park but half of them are thought to be in poor or very bad condition. The sheer number of buildings (>6,000) and length of walls in the Dales, together with the absence of widespread funding means not everything can or will be conserved. But if significant new funding can be found, some of the most important examples can be targeted, especially in the two barns and walls Conservation Areas. Recent changes to planning policies have created more opportunities to convert some barns to housing and business uses. Many other buildings are not suitable for conversion to intensive uses at all, so further effort is needed to stimulate more innovative and sensitive options to broaden the potential for adaptive re-use.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**Supporting organisations:** Natural England; Historic England; Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust.

## **B: A friendly, open and welcoming place with outstanding opportunities to enjoy its special qualities.**

### **B1. Maintain and promote the Pennine Trails and other recognised long-distance routes, and raise the standard of public rights of way so that 90% are 'easy to use' by 2023.**

**Rationale:** The National Park has one of the best rights of way networks in the country. These routes are fundamental to people's enjoyment of the Park's special qualities - around 80% of people go on a short or long walk while they are here. The condition of rights of way in the new area of the National Park is significantly lower (67% easy to use) than the rest (89%). Bringing these paths up to the same standard as the rest of the National Park over the next five years will be challenging but achievable.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**Supporting organisations:** Cumbria County Council, North Yorkshire Council, Lancashire County Council, Dales Way Association, Wainwright Society, Pennine Trails Partnership.

### **B2. Carry out works to improve access on appropriate public rights of way and established permissive routes so that 262 km (10%) are suitable for users of all ages and abilities by 2024.**

**Rationale:** The Local Access Forum considers the access improvements that have taken place in the last 5 years to be one of the success stories from the last National Park Management Plan. The objective would increase the proportion of the network available to a wide range of users (currently 6.5% following the extension of the Park boundary) by improving around 100km of routes. In recent years there has been a step change in the equipment available to help increase the accessibility of the rights of way network overall.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales Farming and Land Management Forum; Experience Communities; Access the Dales.

### **B3. By 2023, provide 6,000 people from all backgrounds and all abilities with opportunities that will enable them to access the special qualities of the National Park and so increase their understanding, enjoyment, health and well-being.**

**Rationale:** Defra's '8 Point Plan for National Parks' aims to make them accessible for everyone. The Local Access Forum has long recognised that there are large sections of our surrounding communities that do not access the Park, and will not do so unless support is given through organised visits. This can include people with disabilities, people from minority ethnic groups and older people with physical or mental difficulties. There are also people within the National Park that need this kind of support to appreciate the place where they live. Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust provides around 700 opportunities per year, and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's *Dales Experience* programme provides 600, with the remainder coming from National Trust and others.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**Supporting organisations:** National Trust; Public Health England; Sport England

### **B4. Through educational and skills based activities inspire 6,000 young people, on average each year, from in and around the National Park to discover, explore and enhance their environment.**

**Rationale:** Connecting young people with nature is key theme of Defra's '8-Point Plan for National Parks'. The recently-launched '25 Year Environment Plan' set a national target for English National Park Authorities to double the number of schoolchildren they engage with directly each year, from 60,000 to 120,000. There are a number of organisations who deliver education visits and skills based activities in the National Park, including the Field Studies Council; National Trust, and Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust through their *Green Futures* project, which runs until 2021. Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is developing a new project *National Park Curriculum and Careers*, working with teachers to help them inspire their students about the National Park.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust; Field Studies Council, National Trust

**B5. Run a cohesive programme of inspirational, participatory activities to attract at least 4,000 people annually to find out more about the special qualities of the National Park.**

**Rationale:** The programme is focused on providing people with opportunities to discover and learn about the Yorkshire Dales National Park – to share the story. This objective brings together the range of events run by the National Park Authority for the public, including: tourism events; National Park Centres; volunteer-led guided walks; specialist walks; and, events at the Dales Countryside Museum.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**Supporting organisations:** Dales Tourism Network; Friends of the Dales Countryside Museum

**B6. Give people from all backgrounds an opportunity to enjoy and contribute to the National Park by providing at least 7,000 volunteer days per year by 2024, with 15% coming from under-represented groups.**

**Rationale:** The input of volunteers is critical to achieving many of the other objectives of the National Park Management Plan, and to the work many local organisations. This objective would increase levels of volunteering (currently 5,500 days per year) in line with the increase in the size of the National Park, and with a higher percentage coming from under-represented groups.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust; National Trust

**B7. Work with organisers of large-scale events to ensure they are well run, benefit local businesses, and contribute to the maintenance of the Park's natural capital, for example funding the cost of maintaining the 'Three Peaks' route.**

**Rationale:** The issues surrounding large-scale events come up regularly at the Local Access Forum. There is support for the Authority's guidance for event organisers. There is a desire to see stronger 'management' of events. However, that would require new legal powers and resources. The oversight of events in terms of health and safety rests with the relevant local authority Safety Advisory Group. Even where these Groups have had major concerns about an event, they may not be able to prevent it taking place.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**Supporting organisations:** District Councils; Local Access Forum.

**B8. Promote and encourage responsible cycling by supporting world class cycling events that showcase the National Park, enabling the development of four 'cycle hubs', and at least one further family-friendly cycling route by 2023.**

**Rationale:** The 2014 Tour de France dramatically raised the profile of cycling as a way of enjoying the National Park. The Tour de Yorkshire and 2019 Cycling World Championships will continue to showcase the area. Facilitating the development of cycle hubs – places with cycle hire, good routes and supporting businesses – should be encouraged, along with more family-friendly and off-road routes for the benefit of visitors and residents.

**Lead organisation:** North Yorkshire County Council; Cumbria County Council

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; District Councils; Welcome to Yorkshire

**B9. Maintain ‘green lanes’, and keep under review and enforce appropriate measures to manage the use of recreational motor vehicles on those with Traffic Regulation Orders.**

**Rationale:** The use of byways and unsurfaced unclassified roads by recreational motor vehicles is not as contentious an issue as it once was. However, the Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum firmly believes that it is only through continued careful monitoring, management and maintenance that the current stable situation will be sustained.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**Supporting organisations:** North Yorkshire County Council; Cumbria County Council; Lancashire County Council; North Yorkshire Police; Cumbria Police; Lancashire Police; Land Access and Recreation Association; Trail Riders Fellowship; Local Access Forum

***B10. Develop and launch an annual farm and estate ‘open day’ programme by 2020, to enable more people to experience and understand the role that Dales’ farming, food production, woodland and moorland management plays in looking after the distinctive landscape of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.***

**Rationale:** 95% of the National Park is in private ownership. Farming and sporting uses are responsible for the way that the National Park is managed. Many of the important habitats – heather moorland; hay meadows – would not exist without that management. Yet the general public has little understanding of - nor the opportunity to experience - this farming life. Wider public support will be essential to secure future taxpayer funding to support high-nature value farming and land management.

**Lead organisation:** Dales Farmer Network

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Northern Hill Farming Panel; Yorkshire Dales Farming and Land Management Forum

## ***C: Home to the finest variety of wildlife in England***

### **C1. Support farmers and landowners to restore and manage land in nationally and internationally important wildlife sites, so that 50% is in ‘favourable condition’ by 2024.**

**Rationale:** The 57,000 ha of nationally and internationally designated wildlife sites form the heart of the most coherent network of semi-natural habitats in England. 30% are currently in favourable condition, although almost all are being actively restored. The biggest challenge relates to the 24,000 ha of internationally-designated blanket bog, which – once degraded - takes many years to reach favourable condition again (see objective D0).

**Lead organisation:** Natural England.

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Peat Partnership

### **C2. Support farmers and landowners to restore and manage priority habitats outside SSSIs, so that 30% are in good condition by 2024, and create at least one landscape-scale ‘nature recovery area’.**

**Rationale:** There are over 36,000 ha of nationally-important habitats outside of designated nationally-important wildlife sites. Currently, only 22% are in good condition. The Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan includes a commitment to developing a ‘Nature Recovery Network’ to link existing protected sites. This includes creating up to 25 new ‘nature recovery areas’.

**Lead organisation:** Natural England

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Peat Partnership; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Environment Agency; Forestry Commission; Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust; National Trust.

### **C3. Work with farmers and landowners to achieve and maintain stable or increasing populations for 90% of priority species by 2025, including the UK ‘red-listed’ upland birds — Black Grouse; Curlew; Hen Harrier; Lapwing; Merlin; Skylark; and Yellow Wagtail — for which the National Park is renowned.**

**Rationale:** Of the 59 nationally-important species for which trend data is available, 48 (81%) currently have populations that are stable or increasing. The importance of the National Park is highlighted by the fact that it holds stable or increasing populations of 4 of the 7 nationally red-listed species named above.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**Supporting organisations:** Natural England; Forestry Commission; Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership; People’s Trust for Endangered Species

### **C4. Work with farmers and landowners to improve the condition of the Aire, Eden, Lune, Ribble, Swale, Ure and Wharfe so that at least 90% of all rivers achieve ‘good ecological status’ by 2027.**

**Rationale:** River water quality (47% in good condition) is amongst the best in England but still relatively poor. The largest sources of pollution are: soil erosion; nitrates/phosphates from agriculture; and, historical lead mine workings. The National Park’s rivers are also affected by a number of downstream barriers that prevent fish passage upstream. These are long term issues and it is likely to be several years before the current investment starts to show significant improvements to water quality.

**Lead organisation:** Environment Agency

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust; Ribble Rivers Trust; Lune Rivers Trust; Eden Rivers Trust; Upper Aire Project; Natural England; Forestry Commission.

**C5. Work with farmers in Wensleydale to demonstrate the benefit of 'high nature value', low-input farm systems through a 5-year trial of a 'payment by results' approach to agri-environment funding.**

**Rationale:** There is strong support amongst farmers and conservation groups to develop a new, more collaborative approach that rewards farmers for the environmental outcomes they deliver rather than for following detailed prescriptions. A 2-year national pilot for this approach in the uplands is running on 19 farms in Wensleydale but ends in September 2018. The intention is to extend that pilot for a further 3 years to provide more robust evidence of environmental benefits and costs. The National Trust is also trialling similar approaches to support some of its tenants.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**Supporting organisations:** Natural England; National Trust; Northern Hill Farming Panel; Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership; Yorkshire Dales Farming & Land Management Forum

**C6. Work with moorland managers and other key stakeholders to devise and implement a local approach to end illegal persecution of raptors, including independent and scientifically robust monitoring, and co-ordinated Hen Harrier nest and winter roost site protection.**

**Rationale:** There have been no successful breeding pairs of Hen Harrier in the National Park since 2007. Populations of other important raptor species (e.g. Peregrine and Goshawk) remain much lower than might be expected. There have been regular instances of raptor persecution in the National Park. Illegal persecution of raptors was one of the most commonly raised issues in the public consultation.

**Lead organisation:** Natural England

**Supporting organisations:** Police; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Moorland Association

**C7. Support landowners to restore and manage ancient semi-natural woodlands so that 60% are in good condition or being well managed by 2023.**

**Rationale:** Ancient semi-natural woodland is the most important type of woodland for biodiversity. It is now very scarce and fragmented, covering only 1% of the National Park. Currently around 50% is in good condition. The predominant species in Dales' woodland is Ash, and action will be needed to help adapt to the impacts of Ash Dieback disease, as well as seeking to restore Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

**Lead organisation:** Forestry Commission

**Supporting organisations:** Natural England; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Woodland Trust

## ***D. Resilient and responsive to the impacts of climate change, storing more carbon each year than it produces***

### **D1. Work with farmers and landowners to ensure that at least 70% of all woodland is in active management by 2023, including positive management of conifer plantations to increase suitable habitat for red squirrels and black grouse**

**Rationale:** Good management of woodland improves biodiversity, makes it more robust, and reduces run-off. Currently 65% of woodland is in management. Achieving the objective would mean bringing a further 440 ha into management over 5 years.

**Lead organisation:** Forestry Commission.

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Dales Woodland Forum

### **D2. Support landowners to create at least a further 450 hectares of native broadleaved and mixed woodland that enhances the National Park's landscape by 2024, with priority given to projects that strengthen habitat networks, increase carbon storage and help to reduce flooding.**

**Rationale:** There is a strong local track record of native woodland creation (over 1,000 ha planted in the last 10 years) but the National Park remains very sparsely covered by native woodland (2.5%). Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan sets a national target of 12% coverage by 2060. There is still significant scope to increase native woodland coverage without detriment to farm viability, landscape character or wildlife. The southern edge of the National Park lies within the area of the proposed Great Northern Forest. The National Park is also within the area of the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership, which has proposed the long-term creation of 35,000 ha of new native and mixed woodland along the northern Pennines.

**Lead organisation:** Forestry Commission

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust; National Trust; Woodland Trust.

### **D3. By 2030 restore all degraded blanket bog/deep peat habitat to ecologically and hydrologically functioning bog that is actively sequestering and storing carbon, and is being managed sustainably.**

**Rationale:** The National Park's peatlands are a nationally-important carbon store, covering around 55,000 ha and up to 7m deep. But much is in a poor condition as a result of artificial drainage installed in the 1970s and 1980s. Natural drainage has been restored across 18,000 ha by the Yorkshire Peat Partnership with the support of local landowners since 2009. Up to 37,000 ha remains to be surveyed and restored, which might take until 2040 at current rates. The economic and environmental benefits so far outweigh the costs that the partners will lobby collectively for funding to speed up restoration.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Peat Partnership.

**Supporting organisations:** Natural England; Ribble Rivers Trust; National Trust; Environment Agency; Cumbria Peat Partnership; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

### **D4. Progressively reduce road haulage of crushed rock, including reducing road haulage from the three quarries in Ribblesdale by 50% compared to 2011 levels.**

**Rationale:** Road haulage is generally agreed to be the most harmful remaining impact of the 5 large aggregate quarries in the Park. Good progress has been made through Tarmac installing a new rail

siding to serve Arcow and Dry Rigg quarries – reducing road haulage in Ribblesdale by 35%. Significant opportunities remain at Horton Quarry, which has permission to operate until 2042.

**Lead organisation:** Tarmac; Hanson

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**D5. Work with farmers and landowners to deliver landscape-scale natural flood management projects in the Aire, Eden, Ribble; Lune; Swale, Ure, and Wharfe catchments.**

**Rationale:** In recent years, rivers that rise in the National Park have contributed to flooding in towns and cities across the north of England. Within the Park, rivers cause localised flooding to communities and on farmland. There is now robust evidence that natural flood management measures – like reducing soil compaction - can help to reduce downstream flood peaks without disruption to farming operations. Long-term progress, though, will depend on funding to maintain installed measures.

**Lead organisation:** Environment Agency

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust; Lune Rivers Trust; Eden Rivers Trust; Dales Farmer Network; Upper Aire Project; Ribble Rivers Trust; Leeds City Council; Cumbria Strategic Floods Partnership; Forestry Commission; Natural England; National Trust.

**D6. Help local communities to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of extreme weather conditions by supporting emergency planning, and undertaking a programme of actions to improve the resilience of infrastructure, such as communications.**

**Rationale:** Within the Park rivers cause localised flooding to communities and on farmland. In addition to long-term natural management measures, there is a need to plan for and mitigate the impacts of severe weather events on local communities and businesses.

**Lead organisation:** County Councils

**Supporting organisations:** Environment Agency; District Councils.

**D7. By 2020 develop and launch an online, interactive habitat network map for the Yorkshire Dales National Park in order to support farmers and land managers to develop connected, climate-resilient habitats.**

**Rationale:** The Lawton Report in 2010 highlighted the need to make habitats not only bigger and better but also more joined-up. Joining up areas of semi-natural habitat makes them more robust/resilient, and allows species to move through landscapes more easily. Collectively, the partners in the Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum hold the most detailed and extensive habitat data in England. This needs to be made widely and easily available so it can be used to target future work.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**Supporting organisations:** Natural England; Forestry Commission; Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership; Yorkshire Dales Farming & Land Management Forum.

***E: Providing an outstanding range of benefits for the nation based on its natural resources, landscape and cultural heritage, which underpin a flourishing local economy***

**E1. Connect Grassington, Hawes, Reeth and Sedbergh to hyperfast, fibre-to-the-premises broadband (1,000 mbps) by 2023, and secure at least the Universal Service Obligation for broadband of 10 mbps) for the rest of the National Park.**

**Rationale:** Businesses in the National Park are physically remote from their markets but high-quality broadband can overcome a lot of the barriers, and open up opportunities for new, high-tech and home-working businesses. Broadband for the Rural North has demonstrated clearly that this is realistic and achievable in rural areas, without the need for a proliferation of masts. The Government announced in December 2017 that consumers will have a right to request a connection. A universal service provider will be obliged to build all reasonable requests up to a cost threshold (£3,400 proposed).

**Lead organisation:** County Councils

**Supporting organisations:** Broadband for the Rural North; District Councils; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**E2. Improve the quality, variety and marketing of the tourism ‘offer’ to encourage more overnight stays and more visitors in the ‘shoulder months’, so that the value of tourism grows by at least 5% in real terms by 2024.**

**Rationale:** There was a lot of discussion at the NPMP Forum about how to make this objective specific and measurable. Economic impact was seen as more important than total visitor numbers but it was noted that economic growth can be very variable from year to year. Indexed economic growth has been 11% over the last 8 years. The Yorkshire Dales Local Plan contains planning policies that support new visitor facilities and infrastructure to help deliver this objective.

**Lead organisation:** Destination Dales

**Supporting organisations:** District Councils; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Welcome to Yorkshire; Cumbria Tourism.

**E3. Promote the Yorkshire Dales National Park as a leading sustainable tourism destination, including the development of 4 ‘visitor hubs’ that promote local distinctiveness and assist destination promotion for local activities, accommodation, food and itineraries.**

**Rationale:** Builds on objective B1 in the existing Management Plan. There was a lot of support at the 2017 NPMP Forum for promotion of local distinctiveness and individual dale’s ‘uniqueness’, through visitors having easy access to information in each locality. There is also good fit with the development of itineraries through the current pan-National Park Discover England project.

**Lead organisation:** Destination Dales

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; District Councils

**E4. By 2020 undertake a costed audit of the public goods that are provided by sustainable land management in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, and use it to support an increase in real-terms in the total level of funding to farmers and landowners who produce locally-distinctive, high-quality food in a way that delivers an outstanding range of public benefits.**

**Rationale:** This goes to the heart of sustaining a viable agricultural economy in the context of the National Park's special qualities. It attempts to implement the concept of ecosystem services whereby those who manage and farm the land are *properly* rewarded for the wide range of public benefits that 'high nature value' farming can provide. This will, increasingly, include private sector 'payments for ecosystem services', alongside public sector investment (so-called 'blended finance').

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**Supporting organisations:** Natural England; Forestry Commission; Environment Agency; Dales Farmer Network; Yorkshire Dales Farming & Land Management Forum.

**E5. Support the development of rail services and related economic uses along the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle Railway, measures to re-instate the former Colne-Skipton line, and the reinstatement of the Wensleydale Railway from Redmire to Aysgarth starting before 2024.**

**Rationale:** The Leeds-Settle-Carlisle railway is the only national transport infrastructure in the Park. It connects residents to major service centres and growth areas outside the Park. It has the potential to service more commuters living in the Park. The former Wensleydale Railway route is also a potential economic, visitor and public transport corridor. Wensleydale Railway PLC has stated its ambition to reach Castle Bolton and to work with landowners to connect Aysgarth to Redmire. The Department for Transport and Transport for the North recently commissioned a study to consider the feasibility and value of re-opening the Colne-Skipton Line, which would open up access to the southern gateway into the National Park from Manchester and East Lancashire

**Lead organisation:** Transport for the North

**Supporting organisations:** Wensleydale Railway; Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership; Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Company; District Councils; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

**E6. Develop and promote new events, festivals and attractions based on the Park's special qualities and local distinctiveness so that at least 10% of visitors each year are coming for the first time.**

**Rationale:** Without a continued influx of new visitors to the area, the visitor economy will decline. Surveys show that the proportion of new visitors each year has remained around 10% since 2002. The 2017 visitor survey figure is 14%, which is a significant increase, and it is suggested this reflects the enhanced profile from the Tour de France, National Park extension and TV coverage over the past three years. It is still some way behind the 20% average across all National Parks.

**Lead organisation:** Destination Dales

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; District Councils; Welcome to Yorkshire; Cumbria Tourism

**E7. Provide at least 20 apprenticeships by 2023, focusing on the skills that are essential to maintaining the National Park's special qualities.**

**Rationale:** The National Park has a disproportionately low number of younger, working age people (18-44). The longer term conservation and enhancement of the National Park's special qualities will depend on a new generation of farmers, land managers and conservation specialists with the right skills. The key local challenge is in coordinating and administering apprenticeships given that most local businesses are very small.

**Lead organisation:** Friends of the Lake District

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust; District Councils; Dales Farmer Network; Cumbria Farmer Network

**E8. Deliver at least one key economic development project in Craven, Eden, Richmondshire and South Lakeland, and increase the number and range of jobs so as to increase gross value added (GVA) by 10% by 2024.**

**Rationale:** In 2016 GVA of businesses in the National Park was £400 million. Farming and tourism are fundamental to the National Park but are relatively low wage, low added value sectors. There are 12 allocated business sites in the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan, which provide the opportunity for significant new economic development. While there are proposals under consideration for several sites, they are small in regional terms and struggle to attract investment to make development viable. Broader business growth is likely to be heavily dependent on better broadband (objective E1) to support small and micro-businesses attracted by local quality of life.

**Lead organisation:** District Councils

**Supporting organisations:** Local Enterprise Partnerships

**E9. Support a profitable and sustainable farm business sector which attracts young farmers and new entrants, so that by 2025, average LFA farm business incomes have increased to match the national average wage for farming.**

**Rationale:** High-nature value farming is critical to the long-term well-being of the National Park's special qualities but many farmers earn less than the minimum wage for the hours worked, and their core agricultural business currently operates at a loss. The Dales' average farm business income is £19,000 compared to national average of £22,800. Alongside reforms of agri-environment support (see objectives A8 and E4), there is a need to improve core business profitability – with a renewed focus on improving business margins rather than just business turnover.

**Lead organisation:** Dales Farmer Network

**Supporting organisations:** Local Enterprise Partnerships; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**E10. Support rural business innovation and diversification, so as to increase the number of jobs within the rural and land-based sector to 3,250 full-time equivalents by 2023.**

**Rationale:** The land-based sector provides around 3,000 jobs in the National Park. Whilst farming and land management often uses traditional techniques that have helped to create and maintain many of the National Park's special qualities, there is considerable scope for innovation – in land management practice; food production; forestry and business diversification to improve profitability and add value. The Yorkshire Dales Local Plan contains planning policies that support new development that will help grow, diversify or improve the viability of farming and other essential rural land management work.

**Lead organisation:** Defra

**Supporting organisations:** Local Enterprise Partnerships; Forestry Commission; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

## **F. Home to strong, self-reliant and balanced communities with good access to the services they need**

### **F1. Support the completion of at least 325 new dwellings in a range of tenures, sizes and types by 2023.**

**Rationale:** 325 represents five years of the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan housing target, adjusted *pro rata* for the new area of the National Park. It is an ambitious figure - well above the 'objectively assessed need' for housing in the National Park. Delivery will be challenging as developable land is almost wholly privately owned, is not freely available or commands unrealistic expectations of value. A range of housing types and tenures are needed, but the focus remains on delivering housing that is affordable or satisfies local needs.

**Lead organisation:** District Councils

**Supporting organisations:** Housing Associations; County Councils; Homes England; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

### **F2. Undertake a 5-year programme of measures to promote the National Park as a place to live for working age households to help halt the decline in the working age population (18 to 44 years).**

**Rationale:** The National Park has a disproportionately low number of younger, working age people (18-44), almost half the national average. The District Councils and National Park Authority are working together to develop a range of practical interventions to create new employment opportunities and housing (see section E and objective F1). This will be supported by active promotion of the National Park area as a place to live and work. The intention is to try to not only retain working age households but to attract them from elsewhere in the country.

**Lead organisation:** District Councils.

**Supporting organisations:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

### **F3. Retain access to services – like primary schools and GP surgeries - that are essential to the long-term viability of local communities, using the four main service 'hubs' (Sedbergh, Hawes, Reeth and Grassington) and their surrounding 'spoke' settlements to create economies of scale.**

**Rationale:** The long-term viability of local communities depends in part on retaining access to key services, especially for families. The objective is to sustain overall service quality and use the four hub settlements and their village hinterlands to create the scale within the heart of the Park to compete with peripheral settlements in retaining households and attract new households into the Park. This spatial objective also seeks to stop the further loss of critical services into the A1 and M6 corridors, where they would be less accessible to National Park communities.

**Lead organisation:** District Councils.

**Supporting organisations:** County Councils

### **F4. Provide basic mobile phone coverage across the National Park to reduce 'not spots' and ensure 4G (or later) services are available on all networks in the 4 service 'hubs' and their surrounding 'spoke' settlements by 2021.**

**Rationale:** Residents and visitors expect reliable mobile communications and data services. The regulator may require lobbying in order to push providers to roll out services (and choice) into 'not

spots'. North Yorkshire County Council is assessing the extent of current provision and discussing with commercial operators how to achieve improvements in areas with challenging topography, no or poor coverage.

**Lead organisation:** County Councils.

**Supporting organisations:** Local Enterprise Partnerships.

**F5. Through 'Great Place: Lakes and Dales' deliver a programme of research and investment in local culture, arts and heritage so as to retain and attract younger people and businesses to the rural corridor linking Skipton to Grasmere.**

**Rationale:** The National Park has a disproportionately low number of younger, working age people (18-44). Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund have awarded Craven and South Lakeland District Councils £1.34 million for a project to boost the local economy through celebrating local culture, arts and heritage. The project is focused on the rural corridor linking Skipton in the south to Grasmere in the north, including the market towns and rural hinterlands, extending into the Yorkshire Dales.

**Lead organisation:** Craven District Council;

**Supporting organisations:** South Lakeland District Council; Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority; Chrysalis Arts, Grassington Festival

**F6. Use the Sustainable Development Fund and other funding sources, to support 20 new local projects each year that bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the National Park.**

**Rationale:** The National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund supports local schemes that promote a more sustainable way of living in, working in and visiting the National Park, while conserving and enhancing its local culture, wildlife, landscape and communities.

**Lead organisation:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**Supporting organisations:** District Councils; County Councils

**F7. Determine the demand from local communities and visitors for bus services to and within the National Park, and use that information to work with operators and community transport providers to provide services that:**

- a) **meet the needs of local communities, with the 4 service hubs (Grassington, Hawes, Reeth, and Sedbergh) linked throughout the year to their nearest main service centre and railway station (Skipton, Leyburn, Richmond, and Kendal).**
- b) **link the main visitor destinations to the main visitor catchments via Harrogate, Ilkley, Northallerton, Ingletton, Kendal, Leyburn, Richmond, Settle and Skipton.**

**Rationale:** Bus services are crucial to households that do not have access to, or cannot afford to run, a car. It provides a link between settlements inside the Park and the larger service centres outside that provide employment and key services, like further education and training, hospitals, recreation and retail. Bus services can also provides access into the National Park for a potentially wide range of visitors without having to use or park a car.

**Lead organisation:** County Councils

**Supporting organisations:** Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company; Little White Bus; Upper Wharfedale Bus Community Interest Company; Upper Wharfedale Community Interest Company.

# Special Qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park

In the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the interaction of people with nature has produced a landscape of remarkable beauty and distinctive character that is cherished and enjoyed by the nation.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park is a home and a workplace for over 24,000 people, with around 95% of the land in private ownership. It is also a place that millions of people visit every year.

The area's unique landscape character is created by the particular combination of many elements - the managed moorland, pastures and valley grasslands; small woodlands; dispersed villages and farmsteads; the local building materials; strong field patterns; drystone walls and field barns. This is what makes it such a special place.

## Natural Beauty

The area straddles the Pennines, the backbone of northern England. The underlying geology, natural processes and human activity have created a hugely varied landscape and numerous dramatic features and beautiful views:

**Dales with distinctive stepped profiles**, produced by the weathering of layers of limestone interspersed with shales and sandstones from the Carboniferous period.

**Fells that rise to over 700 metres** at High Seat, Great Shunner Fell, Wild Boar Fell and the Millstone Grit-capped 'Three Peaks', and include the highest peaks in Yorkshire (Wharfedale) and Lancashire (Gragareth). Glaciers and rivers have cut deep dales into the extensive moorland plateaux, each distinctive in character and atmosphere.

**One of the best examples in Britain of classic limestone scenery**, with its scars such as those at Gordale and Attermire, and limestone pavements, such as those above Malham Cove and Great Asby Scar.

**The most extensive caving area in the United Kingdom**, including the longest cave system in Britain - the Three Counties System – and the largest cave in Britain and the largest waterfall in Britain at Gaping Gill.

**The Howgills**, a series of grassy rounded hills made up of rocks from the older Silurian period, sweeping steeply upwards from deep ravines to broad rounded tops.

**Significant glacial and post-glacial landforms and features**, including: drumlin fields, such as the one at Ribbleshead; erratics, including those at Norber; moraines; and the post-glacial lakes of Semerwater, Malham Tarn and Sunbiggin Tarn.

**Spectacular waterfalls**, such as: Hardraw Force (the longest unbroken drop in England), Uldale Force, and Rutter Force; the Aysgarth Falls series; and, Cautley Spout, with a broken drop of 180 metres.

**A traditional pastoral landscape** created by livestock farmers over several centuries. This historical landscape is acknowledged as internationally important and includes:

- an intricate network of drystone walls (as well as hedgerows in Lower Bishopdale, the Lune Valley, Dentedale and Sedbergh) that create a patchwork of enclosures across valleys and valley sides;
- traditional stone-built field barns, the density of which in some parts of the National Park notably Arkengarthdale, Swaledale, Wharfedale and Wensleydale, is unique.

**A highly legible landscape**, in which there is still a very clear and evident link between the underlying geology and landform, the historic use and management of the land, the current land uses and land cover.

**A landscape of striking contrasts**, between the deep, sheltered dales and the open, exposed, sweeping fells above.

## Wildlife

Over a quarter (57,000 ha) of the Yorkshire Dales National Park is made up of **nationally and internationally important wildlife habitats** – the largest area of any English National Park.

Over a quarter of England's remaining **flower-rich upland hay meadows and pastures**, produced by traditional, low-intensity management of grazing land over many decades. Outstanding examples can be found in Swaledale and Langstrothdale.

**A range of rare limestone habitats** linked directly to the geology of the Craven and Westmorland Dales. The area's 'limestone country' is internationally recognised for its biodiversity, which includes rare wet meadows, over half of England's calcareous grassland, and over 30% of England's limestone pavement.

**Extensive areas of moorland**, much of it (42% of the area of the National Park) managed as grouse moor, that contain upland heath and blanket and raised bog, which are internationally important for wildlife and the carbon they store as peat. These habitats cover vast areas and contain a variety of plant species and important bird populations.

**Small areas of broadleaf woodland** (2.5% of the area of the National Park) that are remnants of former more extensive broadleaved woodland or later plantings. Surviving areas of ancient woodland are of particularly high biodiversity value.

**Nationally important populations** of birds like curlew, lapwing, black grouse, and ring ouzel; rare lime-loving plants such as bird's-eye primrose, rigid Buckler fern, globeflower and baneberry; rare and scarce invertebrates such as the northern Brown Argus butterfly and the Atlantic white-clawed crayfish; and important mammals, notably the red squirrel.

## Cultural Heritage

The Yorkshire Dales National Park has been home to communities and industry for several millennia, helping to shape much of what we now think is special. There is an exceptional amount of evidence of these previous generations of occupation, connecting past communities to the present and providing a highly visible record of the area's social and economic history, including:

**A culture of community spirit, self-sufficiency, determination and self-belief**, which has been shaped by the area's physical environment and remoteness, nurturing self dependency and close knit communities.

**Livestock farming**, with distinct sheep breeds like Rough Fell, Wensleydale, Dalesbred and Swaledale that are important for genetic diversity, and a strong tradition of upland cattle rearing, that is still deeply interwoven into local life and culture, and made famous through Wensleydale Cheese. Livestock sales and agricultural shows play an important part in the lives of local people.

**An exceptional range of archaeology**, which provides the evidence of human activity from the earliest hunters of the Palaeolithic through to 20th century industrial remains.

**The remains of former rural industries**, whose influences on the area's culture and social fabric are still evident today. They include lead and lime extraction and processing sites, as well as water mills.

**Powerful reminders of periods of dominance by large estates and religious houses** through place names and some surviving structures, such as Bolton Castle, Bolton Abbey, Barden Tower, Pendragon Castle and Marrick Priory.

**Distinctive, traditional architecture** where the local building materials used link directly to the area's geology.

Numerous **small, attractive villages and hamlets** most of which have been there for over a thousand years, as well as **scattered farmsteads**,

**Minor roads along the dales**, bordered by drystone walls or hedgerows and flower-rich verges. Higher up, unfenced roads cross open moorland and offer dramatic views.

**The Settle-Carlisle Railway Line**, opened in 1876, is unique and displays impressive engineering and conserved Midland Railway architecture. It offers a very special way of enjoying the dramatic landscape along its route. Elsewhere, the imposing structures of former railways at Smardale and the Lune Viaduct are testament to earlier feats of engineering

**A distinctive linguistic, literary and artistic heritage**, inspired by the landscape and by the history of the communities – past and present – who have lived and worked here.

## **The experience of being here**

Most of the people who spend any time in the National Park will experience a range of emotions, triggered by the beauty, grandeur, and other less tangible qualities. These all help create the 'spirit of place' that is unique to this National Park:

**Extensive areas where a true sense of tranquillity, remoteness and solitude** can still be found, which is rare in England today.

**The natural sounds of wind, water and birdsong**, which are important to the recreational experience; the 'spiritual exercise and enjoyment' that is at the heart of National Park designation.

**Expansive views** that show to advantage the area's beauty and variety.

**Ever-changing light, seasonal change and occasional severe weather**, which creates visual drama and contrast that enhance personal experience.

**Strong, self-reliant communities**, each with its own special character, but all with a very close sense of community, reflected in the wide range of local village shows, festivals, social activities, traditional pubs, and entertainment.

**Dark night skies** - as it suffers little from light pollution, the moon, night sky and atmospheric effects can be fully appreciated.

**A historical and extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and tracks**, including the Pennine Trails, Coast-to-Coast, Yorkshire '3 Peaks' and Malham Landscape Trail, some of the best known and loved walks in the country.

**Extensive areas of public access, rivers, crags and caves** – offering outstanding opportunities for outdoor recreation from paragliding to caving, with some of the hardest sport climbing in the World at Malham Cove.