

Date: 27 May 2008

Report: END OF YEAR PROGRESS REPORT ON 2007/08 OBJECTIVES

Purpose of the report

1. To provide Members with an overall assessment of the Authority's performance in relation to the objectives set for 2007/08.

Strategic Planning Framework

2. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework:
 - **Best Value Performance Plan objectives**
Ensure a robust and accountable Performance Management Framework is in place and is driving improvement, so that at least 75% of the Authority's objectives are achieved or remain 'on course' each year.

Background

3. Each year the Authority produces a 'Corporate Plan' (formerly called the Best Value Performance Plan), setting out the things it intends to achieve. These fall into three main categories, all of which are interlinked:
 - **objectives** – the major things we want to achieve over the next few years
 - **performance indicators** – measuring progress towards our objectives
 - **actions** – specific things we are going to do to help achieve our objectives
4. During the year, progress is monitored by the Audit and Review Committee through:
 - quarterly reports on progress on the actions;
 - half yearly reports on the performance indicators;
 - a detailed end of year report setting out progress on all of the objectives, actions and performance indicators.
5. The detailed report will go to the Audit and Review Committee on 27in June. The Committee will use the information to set up reviews of areas of the Authority's work that it identifies as having scope for improved performance.

Review of performance 2007/08

6. At the start of 2007/08, the Authority had 66 specific objectives. The **Annex** gives a brief assessment of progress on each of the objectives.
7. Overall, 55 (83%) of the objectives were either achieved or remain on course. High priority objectives that were achieved included:
 - maintaining the efficiency of the development control service, with 76% of 'minor' and 90% of 'other' planning applications being determined within 8 weeks – well above government targets;
 - approving planning applications for over 1.5 ha of employment land, while preventing any significant development 'detractors';
 - putting in place measures to manage the use of 85% of highly sensitive 'green lanes';
 - assisting Natural England to bring over 15,000 hectares of land into the new Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme;
 - working with the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust to help farmers to restore or enhance over 50 hectares of hay meadow;
 - supporting 19 local economic, social and environmental projects – worth over £900,000 - through the Sustainable Development Fund.
8. Other significant achievements included:
 - working with the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and Forestry Commission to support the planting of 86 ha of new native broadleaf woodland;
 - providing over 6,000 volunteer days;
 - completing initial digitisation of the three definitive maps of rights of way covering the Park;
 - improving the effectiveness of the National Park Centres and increasing the number of people using them (up to almost 700,000)
 - completing works to open up 16 km of the Pennine Bridleway, so that 90% of the route is now open.

Areas for improvement

9. Three high priority objectives were not achieved (one only very narrowly):
 - applications determined in line with development plan policy (98.2% against target of 100%)
 - new homes on previously developed land (54% against target of 100%);
 - appeals allowed following refusal of planning permission (44% against target of 35%)
10. Other objectives that were not achieved were in relation to:
 - enforcement;
 - national public awareness of the Yorkshire Dales National Park;
 - customer satisfaction with car parks and toilets;

- landscape character guidelines.
11. Of the longer term objectives, there are four whose achievement is currently in doubt (as a result, two of these objectives have *already* been revised by Members for 2008/09):

Priority programmes

- increasing the rights of way that are 'easy to use'.

Programmes where we will maintain a good level of service and/or make steady improvements

- increasing national public awareness of the Yorkshire Dales National Park;
- setting targets for increasing the amount of affordable/local needs housing;

Programmes where progress will be limited and/or dependent on external funding

- making rights of way more accessible to users of all abilities;

12. At the Authority meeting in March, Members will recall that they removed a significant number of the objectives listed in the Annex, as well as adding a small number of new objectives to the list for 2008/09. As a result, next year's progress report will be a little shorter – covering some 47 objectives.

Conclusion

13. The overall headline is that good progress has been made, with 83% of the objectives either achieved or on course.
14. A full assessment of the Authority's performance in 2007/08 depends on looking at the whole picture: performance on the objectives, actions and performance indicators, as well as other external assessments such as the annual audit letter and audit report. The need for action to tackle apparent areas of weakness identified in this report can only be assessed by digging behind the headlines; something the Audit and Review Committee will do at its meeting on 27 June. The Committee will identify up to two areas of the Authority's work that will be the subject of 'performance improvement reviews' in 2008/09.

RECOMMENDATION

15. That Members note the Authority's overall performance in relation to its objectives in 2007/08.

Gary Smith
Head of Conservation and Policy
14 May 2007

BVPP 2007/08 – ‘REVIEW OF PROGRESS ON OBJECTIVES’

☑ = achieved ✓ = on course ✗ = not achieved or on course

	Objective	Progress	Comment
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Priority programmes

1.	Develop and implement a system for monitoring the Local Biodiversity Action Plan and reporting progress on it by 2007, and produce a map that shows the distribution and status of all LBAP priority habitats and species, and make it widely available through the National Biodiversity Network by 2008.	✓	An annual report on progress against the actions contained in Nature in the Dales was produced in May 2007. The habitat map is 95% complete and will be publicly available via the North & East Yorkshire Data Centre from July 2008.
2.	Respond to 90% of nature conservation consultations within the agreed period by 2008	☑	94% completed within the agreed period
3.	Assess the condition of all ancient woodland in the Park by 2010.	✓	Surveys of remaining two areas (parts of S. Lakeland and Craven) planned over next two years.
4.	Identify and put in place a range of initiatives that would enable visitors and local people to get actively involved in the implementation of the Local biodiversity Action Plan by 2010.	✓	Range of initiatives being developed including Road Verge project (started January 2008) and parish wildlife project (due to launch in December 2008)
5.	Ensure that 70% of the area covered by Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats is in favourable condition by 2010 (NC3)	✓	Over 15,000 ha brought into the Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme by Natural England.
6.	Ensure that the populations of all Local Biodiversity Action Plan species are stable or increasing by 2010 (NC5)	✓	As above.
7.	Determine 100% of applications in line with adopted Development Plan policies	✗	98.2%
8.	Ensure that at least 60% of new homes are provided on previously developed land each year	✗	54% (down from 75% in 2006/07)
9.	Ensure that no more than 35% of appeals allowed following refusal of a planning application	✗	44% (up from 11% in 2006/07)
10.	Maintain the efficiency of the development control service so that 65% of 'minor' and 80% of 'other' planning applications are being determined within eight weeks.	☑	76% and 90% respectively – maintaining good performance from previous year.

	Objective	Progress	Comment
11.	At least 98% of standard decision notices are issued within two days of decisions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	98% achieved – maintaining good performance from previous year.
12.	Provide a helpful and responsive service, which meets 83% of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) 'Quality of Service Checklist' criteria by March 2010, so that at least 88% of applicants are satisfied with the service provided	✓	Achieved 100% of checklist
13.	Improve the quality of 70% of applications through officer advice and negotiation.	✓	87% of applications improved through officer advice.
14.	Avoid the loss of existing employment land and premises and ensure that, by 2011, at least nine hectares of employment land have been made available for sustainable, high-quality economic development. (EE6)	✓	1.77 ha of the 9 ha of employment land allocated in the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan has been made available and developed
15.	Prevent the introduction of significant new development 'detractors' from the landscape. (L4)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No significant new development detractors.
16.	Encourage and support widespread take-up of Environmental Stewardship and other agri-environment schemes so that 80% of the National Park is covered by agreements by 2010. (L2)	✓	Some 123,000 ha (70% of the Park) now covered by agri-environment agreements.
17.	Increase the area of Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats by 7% by 2011, including restoring 140 hectares of hay meadow through the Hay Time project. (NC4a)	✓	53 ha of hay meadow restored or enhanced.
18.	Identify the most appropriate measures to manage the use of motorised recreational vehicles on each sensitive 'green lane', and put in place management plans for 75% of sensitive routes by 2008. (AR2)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	85% of highly sensitive 'green lanes' now have management plans in place
19.	Improve the network of public rights of way so that 90% are 'easy to use' and 98% are signposted where they leave a road by 2009/10	X	77% and 91% respectively (down from 84% and 94% in 2006/07)
20.	91% of public rights of way infrastructure (stiles/gates and so on) are maintained in 'condition 1' by 2009/10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	94% in 2007/08.
21.	Less than 1.1% of the network requires major works due to concerns over surface condition by 2009/10	✓	Currently 1.38% of the network requires major works. Works planned will reduce the figure to 1.19% for 08/09.
22.	72% of engineered routes are maintained in 'condition 1' by 2009/10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	72% achieved in 2007/08.
23.	88% of bridges and river crossings are maintained in 'condition 1' by 2009/10	✓	87% in 2007/08

	Objective	Progress	Comment
24.	Develop Rights of Way Improvement Plans for Cumbria and North Yorkshire by 2007, and involve local communities and their representatives, the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum, landowners/managers and users in their development and implementation. (AR4)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cumbria and North Yorkshire County Council have published RoWIPs.
25.	Promote 'sustainable development' within the National Park as the basis for the long-term social and economic well-being of local communities including funding at least 15 innovative local initiatives each year that bring economic, social and environmental benefits (CC10)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	19 projects funded, worth over £900,000.

Programmes where we will maintain a good level of service and/or make steady improvements

26.	Carry out surveys of historic buildings, landscapes and monuments and to ensure that information on the condition of those that are designated is never more than five years old (HE3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	One fifth of Listed Buildings surveyed in 2007/08. Scheduled monuments all surveyed in 2004/05.
27.	Prepare management prescriptions for 40 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and bring at least 10 into appropriate management by March 2008 (HE5)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	43 management prescriptions prepared over last 3 years and 13 scheduled monuments brought into appropriate management
28.	Provide an enforcement service that minimises environmental harm by regularising 60% of cases within 16 weeks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	51% (down from 65% in 2006/07)
29.	Increase the number of visitors from black and minority ethnic communities from 1% in 2005 to 2% in 2011. (UE3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Continued a number of initiatives, including the MOSAIC project, working with black and minority ethnic groups in Bradford and Keighley in order to familiarise them with the national park, and the Dales Experience project which works to increase understanding among community representatives.
30.	Increase the percentage of residents in Keighley and Bradford who are aware of the National Park from 25% in 2005 to 30% by 2011 (UE3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	See above
31.	Increase the percentage of residents in Keighley and Bradford Asian communities who are aware of the Yorkshire Dales National Park from 8% in 2005 to 13% by 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	See above
32.	By 2011 undertake five promotional campaigns aimed at specific recreational activities to raise awareness of the Authority's recreation charter and codes of conduct. (AR5)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	During 2007/08 a campaign to help educate trail riders about trail riding in the Yorkshire Dales was undertaken.
33.	Contribute to local and regional partnerships developing appropriate recreational events, including supporting Craven District Council to host a week long cycle festival based on Settle in 2007 and prepare for the 2008 world championship fell race.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Support provided to Settle Cycle Festival and the Three Peaks World Championship Fell Race. Support also provided to the North Yorkshire student games - a regional event, which involves young people of all abilities

	Objective	Progress	Comment
34.	Assist in implementing the Dales elements of the sub-regional cycle tourism strategy.	✓	Taking forward aspects of the strategy when ever opportunities arise e.g. coast-to-coast MTB route
35.	Increase percentage of tourism providers who are offering a 'sustainable tourism product' from 25% (2005) to 50% by 2010	☑	95% of the original tourism providers now signed up to the Tourism Partnership's '5 point action plan'.
36.	Create 450 ha of upland ash woodland by 2010 (NC4d)	✓	86 ha planted in 2007/08.
37.	Provide at least 5,000 volunteer days per year by 2009. (UE7)	☑	6,065 volunteer days provided in 2007/08 <i>(up from 4,942 in 2006/07)</i>
38.	Advise and assist in the restoration of 60 traditional field barns, and take action to save 20 'at risk' listed buildings by 2010	✗	5 listed buildings taken off the 'at risk' register but only 6 barns restored in 2007/08.
39.	Work with communities to produce updated character appraisals for 12 existing conservation areas by 2010	✓	Two appraisals completed in 2007 and third in draft.
40.	Develop and secure funding for a programme of enhancement works in conservation areas by 2009 (HE9)	✓	Initial Authority funding identified. Cultural heritage likely to feature in 'Wider Dales' LEADER programme.
41.	85% of users are satisfied with the Authority's 'Promoting Understanding' services by 2007	☑	85% of users satisfied <i>(up from 76% in 2006/07)</i>
42.	By 2008 at least 10% of people in England and Wales can name [the Yorkshire Dales] as being a National Park. (UE8)	✗	National survey in 2007 revealed that 9% of people could identify the Yorkshire Dales as a National Park <i>(up from 7% in 2001)</i> .
43.	By 2008 90% of visitors are aware that they are in a National Park (UE2)	☑	Survey of 500 visitors revealed that 99.9% knew they were in a National Park.
44.	At least 50% of visitors and 70% of residents have an understanding of national park purposes and/or the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales by 2010. (UE1)	✓	Surveys to measure regional and resident population perception and understanding planned for 2009
45.	Provide three placements each year through the Dales Apprenticeship Scheme in partnership with the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and Craven College	☑	Three placements provided in 2007/08. Funding currently being sought to continue the scheme.
46.	Continue to review and update the Definitive Map, and produce digital versions of the three 'Definitive Maps' of public rights of way covering the Yorkshire Dales by 2011.	✓	Initial digitising of the three definitive maps covering the National Park has now been completed. Now carrying out detailed checks of the accuracy.
47.	Increase the number of education service users to over 5,000 by December 2008	☑	11,427 users in 2007/08 <i>(up from 4,879 in 2006/07 due to uptake of website provision)</i>

	Objective	Progress	Comment
48.	Each year develop and implement one new programme of formal or informal education or training to encourage schools and groups to get involved in conserving the special qualities of the National Park. (UE5)	☑	Completed by education service working with rangers in Upper Wharfedale School
49.	Ensure that there are up-to-date (i.e. less than five years old) local development plans covering the National Park, which properly reflect National Park purposes and provide a clear and consistent framework for planning decisions	☑	Local Plan adopted in 2006. Completed public consultation on Housing and Minerals & Waste 'Issues & Options' papers in 2007/08
50.	By 2008 use the Local Development Framework to set targets for increasing the amount of affordable and local needs housing, and then work through partnerships to meet those targets, including through social housing for rent, subsidised ownership, and shared ownership. (CC1)	X	Completed public consultation on housing issues and options. Further consultation on 'preferred options' still needs to take place before target can be adopted.
51.	To optimise annual income generation from car parks and toilets provided by the Authority and maintain customer satisfaction level year on year at 80% of users rating them satisfactory or above.	X	Income target for 2007/08 was achieved (budget: £511k; actual: £545k). But customer satisfaction survey not carried out for second year.

Programmes where progress will be limited and/or dependent on external funding

52.	Increase the accessibility of the National Park to users of all abilities so that by 2010 at least 10km (0.5%) of public rights of way are fully accessible by wheelchair users and 105km (5%) by those with limited mobility, and improve opportunities for those with sensory disabilities. (AR7)	X	2.5km and 37 km respectively (up from 2km and 23 km respectively in 2006/07current rate of)
53.	Develop a network of Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites by 2009. (L6)	✓	North Yorkshire Geodiversity Partnership has completed initial audit of geological sites in the Park
54.	Develop a research strategy for the historic environment of the Yorkshire Dales National Park by 2009, and use it to target and encourage programmes of survey and research. (HE1)	✓	Discussions have begun with the Yorkshire Dales Historic Environment Group regarding the scope and content of a historic environment research strategy. The existing Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Historic Environment Strategy has been reassessed
55.	By 2012 develop and update the Historic Environment Record for the Yorkshire Dales National Park to incorporate the results of all publicly-funded research projects, and to make the information widely available electronically, and the paper records easily accessible. (HE2)	✓	Almost 1,900 new monument records were created and added to the Historic Environment Record in 2007. All research project reports acquired since 2000 have been given HBSMR source numbers to improve access and retrieval.
56.	Develop and publish landscape character guidelines by December 2007	X	Responsibility for overseeing guidelines transferred to NPMP steering group. First draft of core guidelines completed for informal consultation.
57.	Increase the numbers of people who access information through National Park Centres to 670,000 by March 2008	☑	691,407 used National Park Centres in 2007/08

	Objective	Progress	Comment
58.	The four flagship National Park Centres have an average effectiveness rating of 90% by 2008	☑	90% in 2007/08 (down from 86% in 2006/07)
59.	Ensure that no more than 5% of open access land is subject to long-term restrictions	☑	0.1% in 2007/08
60.	Use publications, events and other opportunities to encourage businesses, residents and visitors to buy and source local food and products that support national park purposes. (EE9)	☑	Local events included 'Dales Harvest Food Festival' (Hawes) and 'Dales Festival of Food and Drink' (Leyburn). Several projects supported through the SDF.
61.	Develop an annual programme of Authority events, walks and activities based on the special qualities of the National Park to promote understanding and deliver wider benefits such as health and spiritual well-being. (UE9)	☑	Over 600 events on the Tourism Partnership database for 2008.
62.	Work with Natural England to complete and open the Pennine Bridleway through the Dales by 2009, and identify opportunities to develop additional recreational routes to and from it. (AR10)	✓	90% now open (up from 71% in 2006/07)
63.	Through sustainable travel partnerships increase the integration and use of sustainable transport modes for leisure and everyday life within and to the Park. (AR6)	☑	

Core

64.	Achieve at least 80% of the actions identified in the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) each year	☑	84% achieved (down from 88% 2006/07)
65.	Achieve the revised 'Investors in People' (IIP) standard by December 2007	☑	Revised standard achieved in November 2007
66.	Provide high quality, efficient and effective services to the public in a way that responds to the needs of users and ensures that they are widely accessible to those who live, visit or work in the National Park.	☑	Increased satisfaction with promoting understanding services, increased efficiency of development control service etc. Publicly accessible areas of all NPA buildings are accessible to disabled people.