

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK

The Yorkshire Dales is a very special place that attracts millions of visitors each year. But it is also home and workplace for its communities. The Dales landscape bears witness to successive generations of hunters, herdsman, farmers, foresters, monks and miners who, over thousands of years, exploited and managed the land of the Yorkshire Dales. Their occupation and endeavours have had a lasting effect on the natural landscape and helped create the scenic beauty that is now recognised as being of national importance. This varied and rich legacy gives the area a strong sense of identity and place and has commercial as well as conservation and recreational value.

The National Park Authority wants this evolutionary process of occupation and activity to continue. **It believes it to be essential that the Dales remains a vibrant, living and working environment**, where current and future generations respect the heritage of the past and make their own sympathetic contribution to the 'cultural landscape'.

Terms of Reference

The Environment Act, 1995, (amending the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949), confirms the purposes of National Parks to be:

- a) conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the areas; and
- b) promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public.

The National Park Authority is charged with pursuing these purposes. It is able to support and contribute to economic and community development **but cannot lead**. The National Park legislation leaves little doubt as to the intended scope of and priority for action by National Park Authorities. Their statutory functions allow them to record, safeguard and interpret the physical fabric and remains of communities as well as their traditions, customs, crafts and culture. However, the extent to which authorities can become involved in community and economic development activity is clearly defined by the 1995 Act. This requires that,

“A National Park Authority, in pursuing... National Park... purposes..., shall seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities within the National Park, but without incurring significant expenditure in doing so, and shall for that purpose co-operate with local authorities and public bodies whose functions include the promotion of economic or social development within the area of the National Park.”

What the legislation means by this statement and how National Park Authorities should balance conservation with the needs of the Parks' communities are explained in Circular 12/96. The following extracts from this help reveal the Act's intentions.

“The Government is concerned to ensure that there is no incompatibility between conserving the National Parks and their remaining as living and working communities. The qualities for which the Parks were designated are as much the product of man's hand as of nature. It is in the interests of the conservation of those qualities that the National Park Authorities have a duty to work with and for their local communities.”

“This...duty reinforces the need for the Parks to take a positive view of the well-being of their local communities, although it does not enable the National Park Authorities to make additional financial resources available and gives them no new powers.”

“The Government expects the National Park Authorities to ensure that they carry out the duty to foster the economic and social well-being of their local communities in ways that are compatible with their pursuit of National Park purposes and with the need for appropriate economic development.”

“...it is not appropriate for the National Park Authorities themselves to assume the role of promoting economic and social development in the Parks, nor to compete with those agencies that have the power to do so. The 1995 Act therefore prevents National Park Authorities from incurring significant expenditure in carrying out their duty towards the social and economic well-being of local communities. This ensures the financial resources of the National Park Authorities remain focussed on those purposes for which the Parks were created.”

“Expenditure in support of National Park purposes which has the indirect benefit of fostering the economic well-being of local communities is entirely proper provided that the expenditure is primarily incurred for those purposes.”

Policy Context

The Yorkshire Dales is part of a wider area for which policies and strategies are in place or are being formulated by a number of local, regional and national agencies. With the emergence of regionalism and major reviews of Government and European policy, a fresh framework of policy for the Yorkshire Dales National Park is emerging.

The National Park Authority has a number of recent policy documents. Of these most significant is the National Park Management Plan, published in April 2000, which establishes principles and sets out aspirations and strategic aims for the National Park. A number of more detailed policy documents are being prepared to complement the visionary framework provided by the Management Plan. The Traffic and Visitor Management Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan are examples of such policy complements. As local planning authority we are also required to prepare Development Plans for the National Park. The Authority has two adopted Local Plans and is currently participating in the work on preparation of a Joint North Yorkshire Structure Plan.

Of those documents prepared by other bodies the economic development plans and programmes prepared by the County and District Councils have greatest detailed relevance.

A list of some of the policy documents and strategies that are most likely to influence social and economic development in the Dales is attached as Annex 1.

What the National Park Authority Can Do

This document is about showing how the special qualities of the area as a National Park can be used as an asset in support of existing policies and programmes. It identifies in particular what the National Park Authority is able to do, within the confines of its precise remit, to help others achieve their economic and social goals whilst generating added environmental value. **The document is not intended to be an economic or community development strategy for the National Park.** The County and District Councils and other agencies have specific responsibilities for these activities, with expertise and resources to carry them out. The National Park Authority has no wish to duplicate these, even if it could.

The Authority aims to:

- encourage a vibrant and sustainable community;

- promote the importance of wise and sustainable use of the National Park's environmental assets, (its distinctive scenery, varied habitats, attractive villages, strong cultural identity, and nationally recognised image), so that these will continue to be capable of attracting suitable business and improving employment prospects;
- in particular, encourage economic and community development that relates to and would help achieve National Park purposes;
- encourage an integrated approach to tackling economic, social and environmental objectives in order to enhance quality of life and ensure the Dales' environment is properly cared for by communities, visitors and businesses alike;
- support farming so that it can retain a populated and maintained landscape in which valued features and habitats are sympathetically managed;
- make effective use of its planning function as a tool to achieve conservation objectives and as a means of looking after community interests and increasing business and social opportunities.

The Authority already supports, wherever it can, the activities of the County and District Councils and other agencies. But we believe it can do more, in more direct ways, to help the area's economy and its communities, by adding environmental or visitor value whilst remaining within the scope of its statutory terms of reference. With this in mind it will pursue the following objectives.

- 1) Ensure the needs of the National Park and its communities are recognised and understood and assist the area in contributing to the delivery of local, regional, national and European social development and regeneration policies and programmes.
- 1) Highlight existing and potential links and mutual dependencies between the local economy, communities and the environment of the Dales.
- 2) Encourage sustainable practices and demonstrate these in its own operations.
- 3) Encourage joint working and cross-sectoral co-operation in the National Park.
- 4) Support business advice and skills training that assists the National Park Authority in meeting its conservation objectives or that promotes wider sustainable development practices.
- 5) Promote environmentally and economically sustainable farming and traditional land management practices that maintain landscape character and quality.
- 6) Promote the concept of an integrated approach to development in the Dales.
- 7) Conserve the culture and traditions of the Yorkshire Dales and promote a sense of place.
- 8) Engage effectively with residents and the business community in order to improve mutual understanding, to bring about greater local ownership of environmental objectives and encourage fuller involvement in the National Park Authority's activities.
- 9) Establish a sound information base and monitoring arrangements that will allow the Authority to evaluate the effectiveness of its actions.

Strategic Objectives and Key Actions

1) Ensure the needs of the National Park and its communities are recognised and understood and assist the area in contributing to the delivery of local, regional, national and European social development and regeneration policies and programmes.

Regeneration policies and programmes at all levels influence, as well as opening up opportunities for, economic and community development in the Dales. The Authority will use its contacts and consultation opportunities to draw attention to key issues and suggest ways of resolving them. By taking this action we hope to avoid conflicts and influence the policy framework so that it supports the economic, social and environmental well-being of the National Park.

Equally, as a part of these wider programme areas, social and economic development in the Dales is capable of contributing to the delivery of regional and national strategic aims. It will be up to the many local partners, including the National Park Authority, to ensure this happens. The EU Objective 2 Programme will have particular influence in encouraging the area's economic and community potential to be realised. This Authority will hope to play its part in ensuring the benefits it brings to the area are maximised.

The National Park Authority will:

- work with agencies and other bodies that have responsibility for social or economic regeneration to encourage a sympathetic and balanced approach to the development of policies and programmes and to assist the delivery of these.

2) Highlight links and mutual dependencies between the local economy, communities and the environment of the Dales.

a) Image and Identity

Environmental quality and regional recognition are powerful assets to area promotion. The image of the Dales and the quality of life the area has to offer is likely to appeal to footloose industry, especially IT based businesses in the service sector. Its strong regional identity and high quality environment can also be used to help branding and marketing of products and to encourage development of regionally affiliated products.

The National Park Authority will:

- promote the links between environmental quality and business development,
- support, with partners, local marketing and other initiatives to enhance the value of local products that reinforce regional distinctiveness and help promote conservation and public understanding of the National Park, and
- lead by example and use local products wherever it can.

b) Conservation and Other Practical Works

Publicly sponsored capital works are capable of making a significant contribution to small businesses and to the wider local economy. They generate local employment, maintain the traditional skills base of the workforce, provide a market for local products, and draw external funding into the area.

The National Park Authority will:

- where opportunities permit, maximise the opportunities for owners, local contractors and businesses to derive benefit from such work,
- investigate funding sources for conservation works identified in the Corporate Plan and explore opportunities for partnership working, and
- use capital works and projects to promote interest in local skills and crafts to show their ongoing relevance, to encourage their application in new business initiatives, and to encourage establishment of apprenticeship schemes.

c) Sustainable Tourism

Tourism is a vital and valuable part of the Dales' economy, with many businesses and services capitalising on visitor trade. In addition to those meeting directly visitors' needs, the potential of the tourism trade can be a foundation and incentive for development and marketing of local foods, crafts and other locally derived products.

With increased leisure time and disposable income the industry is expected to continue to grow. The National Park's scenic beauty and environmental richness are the infrastructure of the industry and the main reason why over 8 million visits are made to the National Park each year. Yet hardly any of the economic value derived from these visits is invested back into conserving the area's special qualities, despite the increasing recreational pressures being imposed on the Dales' environment.

Affording the environment adequate protection and promoting sustainable tourism are in the economic interests of this sector. We believe there is a case for considering ways in which the visiting public and local businesses might contribute to the costs of conservation. Equitable ways by which contributions might be made needs to be explored further with the tourist industry.

The National Park Authority will:

- promote 'green tourism' principles through its work with the Yorkshire Dales Tourism Forum and the Yorkshire Dales Joint Tourism Initiative,
- encourage, in collaboration with partners, links between the tourist industry and other sectors developing local products,
- promote environmental awareness amongst businesses catering for tourism as well as amongst tourists, and
- explore ways of encouraging local businesses and the visiting public to contribute to the costs of conservation.

3) *Encourage and demonstrate sustainable practices*

The Government is committed to the principle of sustainable development and National Parks are seen as a vehicle for delivering sustainability objectives in a number of key areas. This influences the way we fulfil our statutory purposes and gives the Authority a role in promoting the prudent use of natural resources. This promotion of sustainability principles extends to the Authority's own operational practices.

In terms of business development, we would encourage businesses to build up an association with and, where possible, derive benefit from the National Park's special qualities and local resources. We also believe that economic development can support conservation objectives and should like to see businesses in the Dales actively looking for ways in which they can make some contribution to these. For this to happen there needs to be evidence to dispel any doubts that development and conservation need not be mutually exclusive and are capable of being mutually reinforcing. In order to generate a positive relationship between development and conservation there needs to be two-way understanding and support between this Authority and those authorities and agencies with business advice and economic development responsibilities.

The National Park Authority will:

- in meeting its statutory responsibilities, including those towards social and economic well-being, adopt and in collaboration with others promote the principles of sustainability and sustainable development as a critical success factor,
- demonstrate good practice in its own operations and activities, and
- use its own practices and activities to encourage others to work towards and help identify projects that apply principles of sustainability.

4) Encourage joint working and cross-sectoral co-operation.

Examples of joint marketing exist but further scope for joint working under a Yorkshire Dales banner should be explored. With over eight million visits a year, the Yorkshire Dales is a ready made shop window and market place for the promotion, sale and consumption of local products. For commercial opportunities to be seized, however, collaboration is needed both amongst producers and between different sectors, to strengthen links in the supply and marketing chains. Such collaboration should not necessarily be restricted to the National Park area.

The Authority's National Park Centres are local facilities that could perform a broader function. We are already investigating whether, in collaboration with other agencies with environmental responsibilities, they might operate as a 'one-stop-shop' for information and advice on environmental issues, policies and regulations. We also need to discuss with other authorities and organisations if there would be advantage for the centres to offer IT facilities as part of the development a co-ordinated communication network for local communities and businesses. The regional 'Market Towns Initiative', developed by the Countryside Agency and Yorkshire Forward and seeking to reinforce the function of local service centres, has relevance here and could be used to help develop networks centred on the market towns but incorporating more local access points. Auction marts are potential components of such networks. They are established meeting places and developing a more diverse role for them could assist their long-term survival.

The National Park Authority will:

- encourage development of joint initiatives based on local products that are derived from environmentally sound practices and that give support to principles of sustainable development,
- use its visitor services to promote value added, local products that support sound environmental practices and principles,
- encourage, with partners, the development of markets for local products that help promote local skills, crafts and culture, and
- collaborate with other authorities, organisations, communities and business interests to investigate whether National Park Centres could offer IT access as part of local networks, as well as providing 'one-stop-shop' facilities providing environmental information and guidance to communities and businesses.

5) *Promote environmentally and economically sustainable farming and traditional land management practices that maintain landscape character and quality.*

Farming has been the principal influence in shaping the Dales landscape as well as a major contributor to dales culture. Agricultural practice will continue to be of fundamental importance to the future of the area and therefore warrants special consideration.

Both the Objective 2 Single Programming Document and England Rural Development Plan recognise the distinct and beautiful character of the National Parks, and other internationally important areas in the region, as major assets to economic regeneration. They acknowledge that sensitive and sustainable land management and more traditional farming are critical to safeguarding these areas as special places. These documents make clear that conserving 'the resource' and keeping the land 'in good heart' is essential if land managers and rural businesses are to have the opportunity to generate sustainable economic growth.

At this time of change and uncertainty every effort needs to be made to identify and secure a future for upland farming. Expansion of agri-environmental schemes and the conservation works these generate, combined with development of on and off farm income-generation opportunities for farming households, offer a way forward. However, there can be no single universal solution to the industry's current problems and continuing investigation is needed.

The National Park Authority will:

- assess the implications of trends in upland farming and how best to offset those that would have a damaging effect on National Park interests and on the farming community,
- continue to lobby the UK Government and the EC, both independently and in association with others, for further increases in resourcing of agri-environmental schemes in order to retain a sympathetic farming structure and pattern of land management practice in the Dales,
- continue to lobby for additional resources for those measures in the England Rural Development Plan that would help farm businesses to broaden their economic bases, enhance the value and marketability of production and conserve the fabric of the traditional farming landscape at the same time,

- support the work of other organisations to develop and brand natural products and develop market interest, where the products are produced using sustainable methods and practices and the products' association with the local area helps promote the importance of regional distinctiveness and environmental conservation, and
- work with partners to promote acceptable forms of farm diversification.

6) *Support business advice and skills training that assists the National Park Authority in meeting its conservation objectives or that promotes wider sustainable development practices.*

The Dales workforce possesses a range of traditional skills that are essential to maintaining the landscape of the National Park. The retention of these will be encouraged. Shows and local events are opportunities for traditional skills to be demonstrated and promoted.

New skills must be added to these so that the local workforce is equipped to benefit from job opportunities created by new business development. This re-skilling needs to anticipate future requirements as well as catering for current ones and should embrace sustainable development best practice. Programmes of skill acquisition should make use of information and advice in addition to formal training and all should be accessible through co-ordinated delivery arrangements. The EU Objective 3 Programme is a major potential funding source for training together with the vocational training scheme to be offered under the England Rural Development Plan.

Access to training remains an issue in the Dales. Training agencies are aware of the problems and EU funding has helped provide remote facilities supported by emerging information and communications technology networks. More work is needed not only to develop facilities that allow local delivery but also to ensure there is a good ICT infrastructure on which much of the success of remote training will depend. We hope the new Learning and Skills Council and the Small Business Service will fully address these issues. Having a robust and reliable infrastructure with adequate capacity is also a fundamental prerequisite if the area is to stand any chance of capitalising on footloose industries attracted by the Dales' special qualities.

The communities of the Dales need to be viewed as a valuable resource. Training should extend to developing community capabilities and resourcefulness so that they are better equipped to help forge sustainable futures for themselves. Measures in the Objective 2 Programme will help this process.

The National Park Authority will:

- support events and programmes that promote traditional Dales skills,
- assist organisations with training responsibilities and capabilities, including local colleges, to establish co-ordinated structures for providing information, advice and training in the Dales, to aid environmentally sound business development, employment potential and community capacity, and
- investigate with partners whether it should have a role in contributing to environmental awareness training to businesses, employees and communities.

7) *Promote the concept of an integrated approach to development in the Dales.*

Integrated development is not a new concept but remains relevant as a way of maximising benefits across a range of objectives. With so much current policy development work, this is an ideal opportunity to ensure the inter-relationships between economy, community and environment are recognised and embodied in programme development. An integrated approach to rural development would allow better co-ordination of funding streams and the setting up of simplified delivery mechanisms. Besides the Peak District's Integrated Rural Development experiment the Countryside Agency's current Land Management Initiatives are helping, through capacity building and partnership development, to generate broader and more positive outlook amongst the farming community to new schemes and initiatives. There are also lessons to be learnt from European examples of where more holistic approaches have been taken to achieve sustainable rural development.

Development of a sub-regional plan for Objective 2 delivery in North Yorkshire and work on engaging communities and developing community based action plans are opportunities to put integrated development philosophy into practice.

The National Park Authority will:

- continue to urge those bodies formulating policy and developing programmes for areas that include the Dales to take a broader perspective and consider rural issues more holistically,
- consider with other authorities and agencies the scope for establishing a pilot integrated rural development initiative in the Dales, and
- as part of such an approach, encourage the investigation of combining and making more effective use of public and private sector funding for rural development.

8) *To conserve the culture and traditions of the Yorkshire Dales and promote a sense of place.*

Customs, traditions, local dialects, festivals, and other expressions of Dales culture link the present with the past. They are, in part, a record of social history and still have relevance in engendering a sense of community and belonging. They need to be recorded, interpreted and understood. They are assets to today's society and have market potential. Local culture is not fixed and continues to be added to. We need to recognise what today's society is contributing as well as the value of what has gone before.

Villages, buildings, structures, open spaces and the rest of the man-made landscape fabric traditionally reflected geology, natural conditions and local history. They all combine to create the distinct character and identity of the Dales. These valued qualities also need to be understood, so that new development respects and enhances the sense of place.

The National Park Authority's building and archaeological conservation and communication programmes are essential contributors to this objective. But involvement of the communities in the Dales is fundamental to its achievement. Only by listening to and engaging local people will it be possible to gauge the local perspective of what is valued and to ensure actions to conserve and promote culture and distinctiveness have local ownership.

The National Park Authority, in collaboration with local communities, will:

- collect artefacts, records and other material registering the culture and social history of the Dales,
- develop programmes of local events, activities and initiatives that conserve the area's culture and identity,
- provide interpretation, in a variety of forms, to promote understanding of the cultural heritage of the Dales,
- listen to local people and help them identify, record, investigate and conserve their local culture and historic fabric, and
- give encouragement to projects that maintain and enhance local knowledge and continuation of community identity, culture and traditions.

9) *Engage more effectively with residents and the business community in order to improve mutual understanding and support and in particular to ensure local ownership of environmental objectives and involvement in the National Park Authority's activities.*

The Authority's statutory purposes set the scope and priorities of its agenda, but we want to explore with communities, other authorities and agencies how, within the context of bringing about environmental benefits and enhanced visitor experience, the quality of life of residents can be enhanced and local employment prospects improved. By working together the chances of building a sustainable future for the Dales are greater. This should include encouragement and support for the community to be better equipped to help itself.

The area's designation as a National Park is a critical factor and we believe the benefits this status brings are capable of making a significant contribution to this wider agenda. We also believe that the community and local business are essential partners and are their support is vital to the achievement of National Park purposes, and of wider environmental aims. Encouragement and help will be given to community and business interests and groups to be more involved in drawing up and delivering local environmental action programmes.

Many aspects of our work will touch on this issue and the Authority's Consultation Strategy will provide a steer on how the issue is approached.

The National Park Authority will:

- identify specific actions to bring about fuller engagement with residents and the business community,
- help the District Councils, where they consider it appropriate, to promote Local Agenda 21 strategies amongst communities,
- as part of its preparation of Area Action Plans, support communities in assessing what they need for them to be thriving and vibrant, and
- help communities carry out local environmental appraisals and Village Design Statements, and work in partnership with them to implement actions that fall within the scope of the Authority's responsibilities.

10) Establish a sound information base and monitoring arrangements that will allow the Authority to evaluate the effectiveness of its actions.

Many of the recommendations made in this paper involve the Authority acting in an advocacy role. This is inevitable when the main responsibilities for social and economic well-being rest with other authorities and agencies. Monitoring our own performance in helping 'to foster well-being', particularly with the limited amount of baseline information available, would be difficult.

Experience in assembling information for EU and other programmes has shown how little comparable and up to date information exists for rural areas and how difficult it is to translate any data so that it corresponds to the National Park. Information is available from other agencies but this usually reflects the areas and topics being addressed at a particular time, whilst nationally produced data are likely to be out of date, (such as population census material), or are assembled in such a way as to make results for a local area such as the Dales of limited value, (as is the case with the Annual Census of Employment).

In these circumstances and with the limited resources at our disposal we intend to target our data collection to monitor those actions where the Authority has a clear remit and where it believes it would be most effective. One aspect that needs further investigation is how the Dales economy and community can benefit from the area's status as a National Park. Using the Yorkshire Dales as a model to examine the positive aspects of designation will be suggested to the Countryside Agency as a possible topic for future investigation.

The National Park Authority will:

- undertake a trawl of existing available sources to build up a general picture of economic structure and prosperity and of social welfare and opportunity,
- establish baselines, meaningful targets and monitoring arrangements for those activities where the Authority's actions can make a difference to well-being as part of its work towards fulfilling statutory purposes,
- in particular, examine the economic impact of National Park designation on the Dales,
- use National Park Management Plan panel meetings and policy development discussions to review the appropriateness and effectiveness of these objectives and will report on progress in achieving relevant National Park Management Plan aims, and
- ensure commitment and compliance with this statement by conducting one pilot project or audit each year.

Conclusion

We recognise that the National Park Authority is a minor player amongst those seeking to bring economic and community regeneration to the Dales. As this document has already made clear, we have limited resources and specific responsibilities that preclude interference in activities that are the domain and areas of expertise of other bodies. It is not the intention of the Authority to duplicate or compete with this effort. Nor do we wish to raise expectations that we are unable to deliver.

What the Authority can offer is a breadth of specialist knowledge of the National Park's natural and cultural resources and a depth of experience in managing these resources so that they can be protected and enjoyed. Economic strategies recognise the environmental character and quality of the Dales as a valued national asset that is capable of generating business opportunities. We believe our strength and the role we can play is in helping to reveal economic opportunities that draw on the Dales as a special place and that offer the Dales something in return.

The actions listed above touch on those issues on which the Authority believes it has something to offer. But success will depend on collaboration. We hope the proposals in this document encourage development of effective partnerships, which include local representation, that will stimulate imaginative thinking and stretch the boundaries of current activity.

July 2000

i) **‘The Yorkshire Dales: Today and Tomorrow 2000-2005’, National Park Management Plan** Published in May 2000, this is the major policy document for the National Park. It sets out the over-arching principles and objectives for achieving National Park purposes. In recognition of the essential inter-dependency of interests, the plan includes sections on ‘economy and employment’ and ‘community and culture’. Aims for these sectors are:

“The conservation of the special qualities of the National Park will be achieved with a local economy which provides diverse employment and maintains thriving, balanced communities. The local economy will be stronger for having its foundations in the special qualities and uniqueness of the National Park.” and

“Thriving communities in the Yorkshire Dales will continue to develop their strong cultural heritage. Services for Yorkshire Dales National Park communities will be available and accessible. These communities will take an active role in shaping their own sustainable and prosperous future and will recognise and take responsibility for the impact they have.”

ii) **‘Economic Regeneration – The Framework for Action in North Yorkshire’** Produced by North Yorkshire County Council, is the common foundation for District Councils’ economic development programmes. The document sets out generic aims that include: promoting a positive image; creating balanced, viable communities; ensuring environmental sustainability; and adopting a holistic and partnership approach.

iii) **Richmondshire District Council Economic Development Programme** This programme recognises the commercial value of the Dales’ ‘rural green image and wholesome appeal’. Its policies include acknowledgement of the need for re-direction of agricultural support, diversification and importance of ‘value added’ food products, and a commitment to ensuring sustainability across all of the programme’s aims.

iv) **Craven District Council Economic Development Plan** Craven’s plan proposes: capitalising on the status of the Yorkshire Dales as a holiday destination; continued support for branding and marketing of local products; raising awareness of environmental issues amongst local firms; and continuing to work in partnership on community regeneration strategies.

v) **South Lakeland’s Economic Development and Tourism Action Plans** The plans refer to the South Lakeland’s distinctive, high quality environment and recognise this as an economic asset and to the Council’s support for initiatives to promote local produce and reduce ‘leakage’ from the local economy. The plans’ policies also include a commitment to targeted support for farming families, to undertaking of environmental improvement schemes and to promotion of schemes that improve the environmental experience of tourists.

vi) **Traffic and Visitor Management Strategy for the Yorkshire Dales National Park** The document concentrates on traffic issues that affect character and qualities of the National Park and the movement of visitors to and within the Dales. A main element of the strategy is an Advisory Hierarchy of Roads that uses environmental and physical carrying capacity of routes to guide traffic types and standards of maintenance. The strategy has played a part in the preparation of transport package bids and production of the Local Transport Plan.

vii) **Yorkshire Dales Local Plan** Adopted in 1996, the plan contains development and land use policies for the National Park. Inevitably it exerts influence on proposals affecting business and community interests. Of particular relevance are its policies on:

- local employment and community services, which
- allocate specific land for industrial and business uses and provide for small-scale employment generating development within or adjacent to settlements,
- protect existing employment land and buildings,
- allow conversion of suitable buildings within settlements and groups of buildings and in some circumstances outside these, and
- safeguard existing and support the provision of new services and facilities that provide for locals;
- farm diversification;
- provision of affordable housing for local people;
- protection of village character and important open spaces, and
- visitor facilities, where these support National Park purposes and are of benefit to the local economy.

viii) **Minerals and Waste Local Plan** Contains policies for quarrying, other mineral working and for waste disposal. It was adopted in 1998.

ix) **Joint Structure Plan for North Yorkshire** The plan is currently being prepared by North Yorkshire's strategic planning authorities. It complements the Local Plans for the Park, setting out the development strategy, and thereby the pattern of investment, for the county.

x) **EU Objective 2 Programming Documents** for the Yorkshire The Humber, and the North West regions. In Yorkshire and The Humber the programme priorities will focus attention on – growing sustainable new jobs; improving competitiveness; allowing communities to contribute to and share in local development and employment initiatives; and 'celebrating diversity' in the region.

xi) **EU LEADER + Programme** This will promote locally driven integrated schemes that encourage new ways of enhancing natural and cultural heritage, reinforce the economic environment to contribute to job creation, and improve organisational abilities of communities.

xii) **Rural Development Plan** Prepared by MAFF, the plan will deliver the new EU Rural Development Regulation. Besides extra money for agri-environmental schemes, funding is also being provided for: a Rural Enterprise Scheme, to help adapt and diversify the rural economy; a Processing and Marketing Grant Scheme, to provide capital support for businesses wishing to improve their competitiveness; and targeted skills training to ensure the Plan is able to be delivered.

xiii) **Regional Economic Strategies** for Yorkshire and Humber and the North West. These ten-year strategies are of major importance as they exert major influence on Objective 2 Programmes and the regional chapters of the Rural Development Plans. The strategy for Yorkshire and Humber is based on six objectives, one of which is "to get the best out of the region's physical assets and conserving and enhancing its environmental assets".

xiv) **Regional Planning Guidance** for both regions sets the wider spatial context for structure and local plans and establishes the regional transport strategy. In Yorkshire and Humber the RPG's vision seeks to provide, "A world class region where the economic, environmental and social well-being of all our people is advancing more rapidly and more sustainably than our competitors".

- xv) **Community Development Strategy** being prepared for North Yorkshire by the County Council and its partners. The Yorkshire Dales is included in six of the 29 'community areas' being used as the basis of the strategy. Area needs and aspirations will be translated into action plans delivered by local groups.
- xvi) **'Commitment to Quality', the Regional Tourism Strategy**
- xvii) **Rural Development Programme** strategy documents.
- xviii) The Government's **Rural White Paper**.