

Foreword

Over the last few decades the natural heritage of England has diminished and the Yorkshire Dales National Park has been no exception. A few species and habitats in the Dales are close to being lost forever. We urgently need to rise to the challenge of conserving our precious natural heritage before this happens.

Nature in the Dales represents a significant step forward in the conservation of wildlife in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The publication of this plan demonstrates how all those who live, work, enjoy and study in the Park can work together in partnership to conserve the natural heritage of the Yorkshire Dales.

It has been extremely encouraging to see how all those with an interest in the management of land in the National Park, be they conservationists, farmers, foresters or game-keepers, have sat round the same table to work to achieve the same goal – conserving biodiversity. We all believe that the broad support for the actions outlined in *Nature in the Dales* means they are more likely to succeed.

Nature in the Dales takes the national priorities from the UK biodiversity action plan and converts them into practical actions at a local level. But, just as importantly, the opinions of

local individuals and organisations have been listened to and actions for local biodiversity included. *Nature in the Dales*, therefore, delivers everything that the UK biodiversity action plan envisaged from a local plan. This link between national and local aspirations is very much what National Parks are about.

We are at an important and exciting stage for biodiversity in the Dales – converting the biodiversity action plan into practical action. The successful implementation of *Nature in the Dales* over the next ten years will lead to major positive changes in the fortunes of most of the National Park's wildlife and habitats. The working partnerships that have been created so far will help to make this possible, and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is happy to continue to work with these partners to make this happen.

Heather Hancock
Chief Executive

Nature in the Dales was written and co-ordinated by Tim Thom and Ian Court of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. The production of the plan was steered, advised and supported by the Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum composed of the organisations listed in Appendix 2. This Forum will be responsible for ensuring that the actions and targets in *Nature in the Dales* are achieved.

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