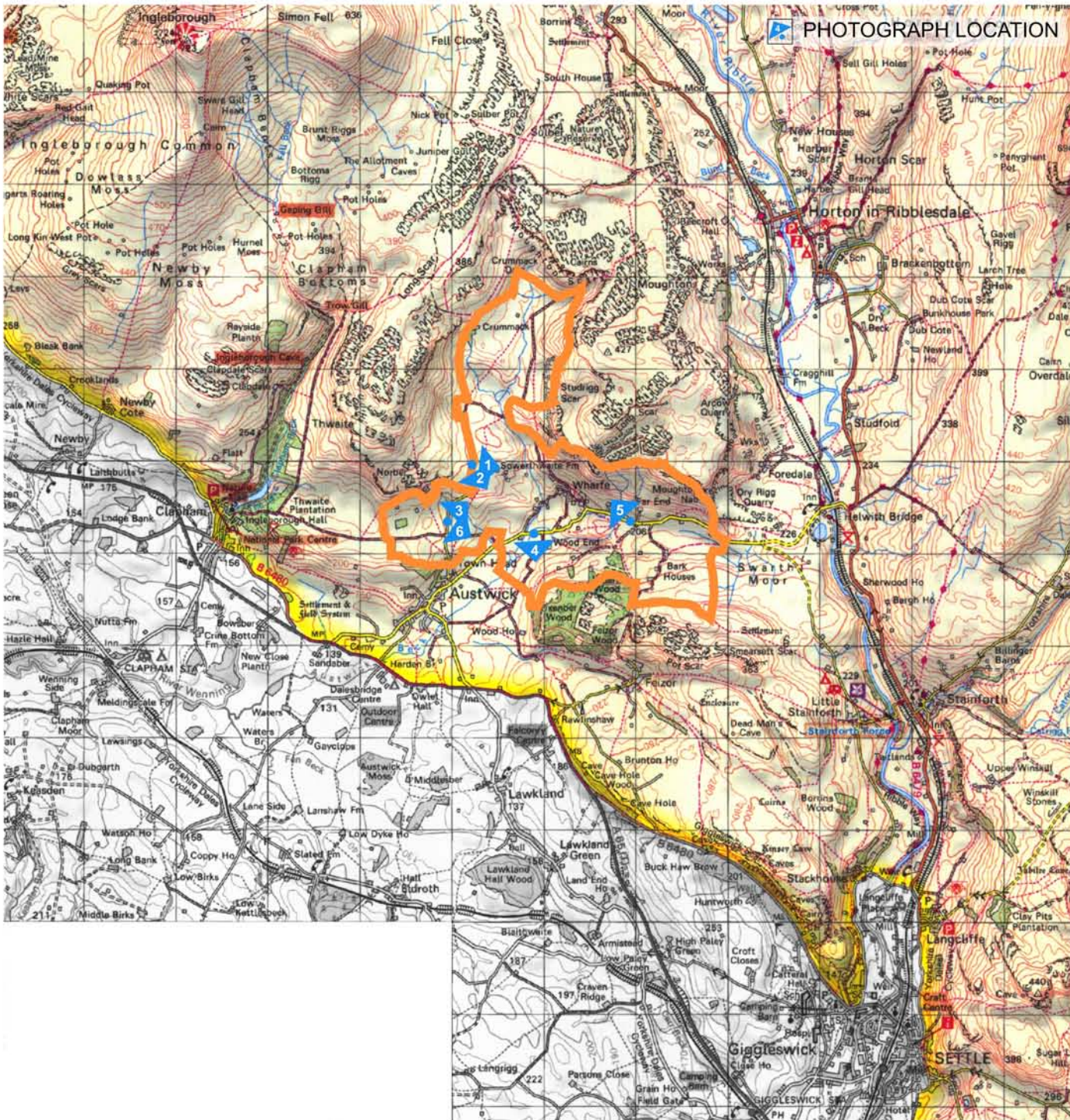
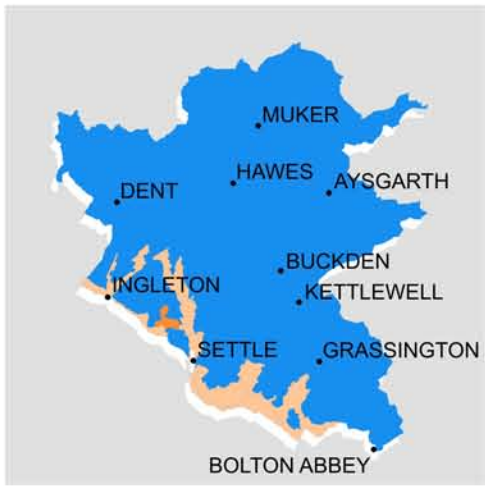


**YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK**



**KEY CHARACTERISTICS**

- A quiet dale, isolated in its upper reaches, overlying Silurian rock, its dale head enclosed by an impressive amphitheatre of limestone pavement and scars of Moughton and Norber, above which the summit of Pen-y-ghent is visible.
- A shallow v-shape in the upper reaches of the dale and its main tributary, the dale broadens, opens up and flattens out to the north of Austwick into a broad u-shape.
- The dale head of the tributary has been breached and connects via a narrow gap into Mid Ribblesdale.
- The steep enclosing valley sides are strongly patterned by limestone scars and pavements and by the ancient woodlands of Wharfe Wood and Oxenburgh Wood. Upon the enclosing pavements, erratic rocks of Silurian stone are visible.
- The winding course of Austwick Beck drains the dale, following a deeply incised course above Wharfe, joined by the frequent springs that drain the dale sides, a major unnamed tributary to the east and the steeply incised, wooded Wharfe Gill Slice.
- Well treed valley floor, trees following the line of becks and gills, marking the hamlet and farms and present as individual specimens on field boundaries. Valley sides generally more open with occasional small mixed or deciduous woodlands and scattered trees present on scars.
- Strong pattern of walls, particularly in the lower dale where the valley floor is more open and expansive with simpler form. Valley floor field sizes are small to medium; in the upper dale, a more recent pattern of large enclosures extend up the valley sides.
- Settlement within the dale limited to the isolated hamlet of Wharfe and small farms situated mainly on the lower valley sides, mostly constructed in limestone rubble with gritstone cornerstones and slate roofs.
- Much of the dale is inaccessible by road; a dense network of walled green lanes and tracks provide the only access to Wharfe, the dale head and many of the scattered farms.
- Free from detractors, other than overhead electricity lines.

