



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- A series of areas following the exposed Great Scar Limestone across the southern part of the National Park, separated by the southern dales.
- Exposed limestone features including cliffs, screes, gorges, pavements and scattered boulders dominate the landscape, creating a rugged, worn character. These combine with shallow soils cover, shakeholes, potholes and caves to form classic karst landscape.
- Panoramic views are available across the southern dales and southern dales fringes. In the western part of the area views are dominated by the Three Peaks landforms of Ingleborough, Wharfedale and Pen-y-ghent.
- Closely grazed, springy, flower-rich grasslands form a neat, continuous, bright green carpet between exposed rock features. Many areas are recognised as being of high nature conservation value.
- Woodland cover is sparse, being limited to occasional blocks of broadleaved species on the dale sides or small, isolated plantations at higher elevations. An exception to this is the more continuous pattern of woodland cover around Malham Tarn. Scattered trees or open woodland cover occurs on scree slopes and cliffs, with very occasional windblown trees or shrubs in pavements at higher levels.
- A general absence of streams and surface water features, with the exception of occasional small tarns and limited numbers of springs at the base of the limestone moors, mainly around Ingleborough. Malham Tarn is an atypical exception, forming a large waterbody in the central bowl of the Malham/Arncliffe area.
- Settlement is very limited, comprising mainly upland farmsteads in the Malham/Arncliffe area. Urban influences such as overhead wires and fences are scarce, tending to be concentrated around Malham Tarn.
- Quarries eat into the sides of the limestone moors but are often well hidden except in local views or views from opposing dale sides.
- An extensive network of historic routes and modern footpaths/tourist routes crosses the area. Former drove roads form wide, walled green lanes. Roads are mostly limited to minor lanes within the Malham/Arncliffe area, some are open whilst others are contained within high drystone walls, with verges of varying width and small roadside quarries.
- Drystone walls are frequent, forming medium size enclosures on the dales fringes giving way to larger enclosures or limited open areas. Wall pattern is strongly rectilinear, passing straight over and taking little or no account of natural features.

