Dales

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

A newspaper for the residents of the Yorkshire Dales National Park

Summer 2018

AMBITIOUS NATIONAL PARK PLAN TAKES ANOTHER STEP FORWARD



The draft National Park Management Plan includes an objective for a locally-tailored environmental land management scheme that will better reward farmers.

An ambitious new plan to deliver on the 30 year vision for the National Park was published for final comment this spring.

A year in the making, the draft National Park Management Plan 2019-24 proposes detailed objectives on farming and land management, economic regeneration, and public rights of way.

Shaped by an initial public consultation last summer and by the Government's 8-point plan for England's National Parks, the draft Plan was put together by a steering group made up of 16 public, private and voluntary sector organisations.

Comments were received from 118 organisations, residents, visitors and people working in the area. These covered a wide range of locally critical issues, such as the future of upland farming after Brexit, responsibility for public transport, and the future sustainability of communities.

Carl Lis, chair of the steering group, said: "This was a good response with lots of positive and helpful suggestions to improve the Plan. In general, there is support for its objectives, although, inevitably, also some very different views about the best way forward on certain issues."

The objectives that have received most support include ways to attract more families to live in the National Park, connection to superfast broadband, and measures to tackle illegal persecution of birds of prey. Promotion of the area's dark skies and cycling opportunities, working with operators to provide bus services, and general support for improving biodiversity and woodland planting were also considered key.

Objectives that attracted the most divergent views included wildlife crime, the use of 'green lanes' by recreational vehicles, and the provision of public transport.

Consultees also pointed to issues they consider to be missing from the Plan. It was suggested that there should be objectives to lobby Government to designate the Coast to Coast route as a national trail, raise the profile of caves and promote caving, recognise the risks of biosecurity and invasive species to wildlife, and about air pollution from vehicles, agricultural emissions and heather burning.

Carl Lis added: "Quite a number of the proposed objectives - for instance on peat bog restoration, tree planting and raising the standard of public rights of way - are designed to build on the successes of the past five years.

"Other objectives - on supporting farming, promoting our dark skies and attracting families - are new and very ambitious. For instance, within the next three years we want to see a new, locally-tailored and locally-delivered environmental land management scheme that better rewards farmers in the National Park.

"The 50 proposed objectives would be delivered by many different local bodies. For example, the County Councils will be leading on improving broadband, while the Environment Agency will lead proposals to deliver more natural flood management."

Steering group member Dan Hudson, who is Development Strategy and Housing Manager at South Lakeland District Council, said: "The plan is the result of genuine partnership working and 'joined-up thinking' across public, private and voluntary organisations. There are some big challenges that we need to face up to but there is also much in it to get excited about. I hope people will engage constructively to help us improve it further."

The steering group invited consultees to help deliver some of the Plan's objectives. That offer has kindly been taken up and a number of additional organisations can now be added to the list of implementing bodies.

The steering group is now considering all the responses and deciding how to improve the final version of the Plan, before launching it this autumn.

To see the draft National Park Management Plan for 2019-24, as well as to view the current one, visit
www.yorkshiredalesmanagementplan.org.uk

Westmorland Dales heritage celebration day marks new partnership

Over 50 local people and representatives from local organisations came together on a sunny Saturday in the Westmorland Dales in April to learn about the area's rich heritage.

Orton was the backdrop to the Westmorland Dales Landscape Forum - a key event in the development of the new Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership.

Morning talks, presentations and videos celebrated the features of this stunning landscape. On a walk after lunch, experts in local history, vernacular buildings, geology and archaeology, shared their knowledge of and enthusiasm for the area.

The walk finished at the archaeological test pit excavated by National Park Authority staff and Orton Primary School pupils the previous day.

Historic Environment Apprentice, Hannah Kingsbury, said: "All the children came out on site, about 70 in all, and had a go at both digging and sieving.

"They seemed to have a great time. Interestingly, small pieces of worked flint excavated from the test pits suggest that prehistoric activity has taken place in the area."

Senior Historic Environment Officer, Miles Johnson, said: "The Forum was a great day. People were very interested to see what the archaeological test pits had turned up.

"Hopefully, this demonstration will generate interest in developing similar work in the delivery phase of the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership."

These are exciting times in the north-west of the National Park as the initial development phase of the Partnership nears its end.

Led by Friends of the Lake District with the support of the National Park Authority and other partners, it brings together environmental, conservation, farming and archaeological organisations. The overall aim is to reveal and protect the heritage of the Westmorland Dales, enabling more people to connect with, enjoy and benefit from this inspirational landscape.

The Partnership has already benefitted from a development grant of over £200,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The final grant application for over £2.5m will be submitted later this summer. Subject to a successful application, the delivery phase of the scheme is expected to run from spring 2019 to spring 2023.



Pupils get dug in: excavating a test pit in Orton (Image: Orton Primary School)

For more information on the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership, go to
www.thewestmorlanddales.org.uk

Welcome to this summer edition of *Dales*

There really is something glorious about being in the National Park at this time of year.

Newborn lambs, trees coming into bloom and some of the finest meadows all combine to turn this place into one of wonder. That's why it continues to attract so many people and provide a source of constant inspiration.

We've seen this recently with the Tour de Yorkshire coming to the area and also with the 'Yorkshire Dales' garden, carrying all before it, at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show.

What a weekend that was for the cycle race; glorious weather and huge crowds. Particular thanks to the residents and businesses of Wharfedale and Coverdale who did themselves, and the Yorkshire Dales, proud through their fantastic efforts.

Then we had the spectacle of that Chelsea show garden. We were delighted to sponsor it this year - and didn't Mark Gregory and his design team produce something truly special. Certainly the many thousands who visited thought so and the garden rightly carried off an armful of awards.

Many thanks to the inspirational Sir Gary Verity and his team at Welcome to Yorkshire for putting on both events. And thanks also to David Hartley and the wonderful staff at the Wensleydale Creamery who were very involved in the garden.

You'll see from this edition of *Dales* that there's a lot going on. This includes the final National Park Management Plan consultation - a process which will shape the area for years to come - and updates on a range of projects and activities.

Enjoy the summer.



David Butterworth
Chief Executive

Carl Lis OBE
Chairman

And they're off! 'Unique' mountain bike trail opens in Swaledale

Local school children - and their parents - hit the trail at the official opening in April of the National Park's first family friendly mountain bike route.

Pupils from Reeth and Gunnerside schools were joined at the ribbon-cutting event by local B&B owners, contractors and volunteers - as well as an enthusiastic group of riders from Stage 1 Cycles in Hawes.

The Swale Trail is a 20km (12 mile) valley bottom route between Reeth and Keld, designed specifically for young mountain bikers and families with older children who want to ride together.



The Swale Trail is designed for young mountain bikers and their families who want to ride together

Head of Access & Engagement Mark Allum said: "The National Park has plenty to offer experienced and fit cyclists, with challenging mountain bike trails and fantastic road cycling.

"But we've lacked an easier route for people with less experience.

"The Swale Trail changes that. It is a unique facility in the National Park, providing an outstanding opportunity for people to immerse themselves in the iconic landscape of Swaledale. A place that is already a mecca for cycling - the Tour de France Grand Départ came through here in 2014. The Trail is a mix of high quality tracks and quiet road sections with some lumps and bumps - this is the Dales after all.

"And, importantly, there are plenty of ice cream stops along the way!"

A Swale Trail leaflet is widely available and all the details can be found on the Authority's revamped cycling website **www.cyclethedales.org.uk**

People will also have the chance to discover more about the valley's Norse history and the lead miners who left their mark. An accompanying 'Viking Challenge' leaflet can be picked up free from Reeth National Park Centre.

The creation of the Swale Trail has involved considerable construction works to upgrade a number of bridleways and unsurfaced roads. A section of bridleway which had fallen into the river has been diverted, gates have been improved and new fingerposts installed.

The project, managed by the National Park Authority, has cost a total of £221,000, with funding coming from the Yorkshire Dales LEADER programme (£98,000), Richmondshire District Council's Economic Growth Fund (£50,000), National Park Authority (£60,000), and the Pennine Trails National Trails Partnership (£13,000).

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Dales is published twice a year by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. It reports on our work and is delivered to over 15,000 households in the National Park.

National park authorities have two purposes:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the parks by the public.

In carrying out these purposes, national park authorities also have a duty to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities.

To fulfill these purposes, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority offers services that provide help and advice on a wide range of issues, including environmental conservation and enhancement, planning, historic buildings and sites, tourist information, and footpath and bridleway management.

For specific enquiries about *Dales*, contact the editor, Sarah Nicholson, on 01756 751618 or sarah.nicholson@yorkshiredales.org.uk.

For general enquiries, please:

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The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority strives to be widely recognised as a centre of expertise and excellence in conservation and recreation policy and practice, and in the quality of the landscape, and to deliver efficient and welcoming services. We aim to inspire local communities and businesses to ensure it is a thriving area, one that is treasured by those who live here and those who visit. We welcome your comments and suggestions about our work.

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BIRDS OF PREY PERSECUTION: THE EVIDENCE

Despite legal protection, birds of prey, such as peregrine, hen harrier, buzzard, short-eared owl and red kite, continue to be illegally killed or injured in and around the National Park.

In fact, North Yorkshire has gained the unenviable reputation of the worst county in the UK for crimes against raptors, with birds killed by shooting, trapping or poisoning.

This March, the National Park Authority published a report of the evidence on bird of prey persecution. The report assesses the populations of a number of key upland species - nationally and in the National Park - and quantifies the confirmed incidents.

It states that: "The collation of breeding data, the number of confirmed persecution incidents and the absence of some species from large areas of potentially suitable habitat provide compelling evidence that illegal persecution is limiting the populations of peregrine and hen harrier in the National Park, and is preventing the colonisation of the area by red kites.

"There has not been a successful peregrine nesting attempt on any of the monitored grouse moor sites since 1997, with birds now absent from the majority of sites that were occupied in the 1990s. This is in stark contrast to the success of nest sites away from grouse moors. There is no natural explanation for this difference.

"Despite large areas of potentially suitable nesting habitat, there has not been a successful hen harrier nesting attempt in the National Park since 2007. In addition, 11 (19%) of the 59 hen harriers that were satellite-tagged by Natural England at sites across northern England and Scotland between 2002 and 2017 are classed as 'missing, fate unknown' in the Yorkshire Dales."

The report - which draws on a wide range of sources - was presented at a wildlife crime seminar organised by the National Park Authority and held at its offices in Bainbridge in February. More than 50 people attended the event, including police officers from the North Yorkshire, Cumbria and Lancashire forces.

Chief Executive David Butterworth said: "I need to be absolutely clear: bird of prey persecution is a criminal offence and is foremost a police matter. If you suspect it, or wish to report any information, you need to dial 101 or, in an emergency, 999.

"But it is also is a matter for us, as the Authority exists to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and wildlife of the National Park.

"The wildlife crime seminar has trained staff to know how to assess and deal with incidents - and when to report them to the police. This training will also be handed on to our Dales Volunteers, who will be briefed on how to spot and report suspected wildlife crime incidents."

He added: "North Yorkshire's problems as England's raptor persecution hotspot are well documented but, as yet, there are no widely accepted solutions.

"People need to understand that game shooting is a perfectly legal activity, and makes a relatively small but important contribution to the local economy. Looking after a grouse moor also involves the legal trapping of some predators - and this has real benefits for wider wildlife, not least our iconic wading birds like the curlew.

"However, there is a world of difference between this legal management activity and the illegal trapping, poisoning or shooting of birds of prey.

"The National Park Authority does not own any of the land, and has no legal powers itself to take action. But this does not mean that we are sitting idly by. We are helping North Yorkshire Police with 'Operation Owl' - a scheme to get people who are out and about enjoying the magnificent countryside to look out for and report suspected wildlife crime.

"We want birds of prey back in this iconic National Park."

The full report can be found at **www.natureinthedales.org.uk/bird-of-prey-evidence-report.pdf**

CRUEL AND DANGEROUS



Animal carcases laced with poison are sometimes deliberately used to kill other wildlife, particularly birds of prey. This is cruel and illegal, and such poisoned bait is also a serious risk to the health of members of the public and their children or pets, should they come into contact with it.

If you think an animal or bird has been illegally poisoned, keep your children and animals away, make a note of your location, and ring North Yorkshire Police immediately by dialling **101**, or call the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme: Telephone: **0800 321 600**

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JOIN THE LOCAL CONVERSATION

Parish councillors are being encouraged to share innovative ideas, activities and projects as part of an open dialogue at the National Park Authority's regular parish forums.

The Authority recognises the value of a strong relationship with parish councils - the most local democratic representation of opinion - to achieve the objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan.

The forums encourage a two-way discussion about any and all National Park issues relevant to parish councils.

Meetings are held twice a year for all parishes wholly or partially within the National Park. These are divided into three areas: north, south and west.

Chaired by the four parish-appointed Members of the Authority's board, agendas are agreed in advance to include items requested by parish councils. The next meetings will take place this autumn.

If you are a parish councillor, you can find out more - as well as putting forward a topic you would like to discuss at your next meeting - at **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/parishforums**

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PLANNING MATTERS

By Paul Martinson,
Principal Planning Officer



It has been a busy twelve months in the National Park planning team. During the last year we have determined more planning applications than ever before. This is set against the background of a rise in application numbers every year for the past four years.

Despite the high numbers of planning applications, our rate of approval has remained high, with 94% of all applications approved over the past year.

We adopted a new Local Plan for the pre-extension area of the National Park 18 months ago and have seen the changes in the applications coming forward.

Some of the most notable have been the barn conversions dealt with through policy L2.

For the Authority, there have been real challenges in terms of balancing the need to provide more local housing against the impact these conversions can have on the National Park's landscape, which has the highest status of protection nationally. However, we have still approved a total of 74 applications for the conversion of barns to residential since adoption.

This has been supplemented by a number of barn conversions approved in the new area of the National Park, which has separate planning policies at present. A large number of the barn conversions approved have been for 'local occupancy' housing - for people with a need to live in the National Park.

Supporting the new Local Plan is the Yorkshire Dales Design Guide, which was adopted around six months ago. This provides useful guidance to all forms of development within the National Park, from householders planning an extension to farmers planning a new agricultural shed and housing builders planning a new development.

Housing

The new homes soon to be appearing in the National Park have not been limited to barn conversions. The Authority recently approved an application for 17 new dwellings at West Witton - of which eight were classified as affordable housing - and an application for 13 new dwellings at Long Preston, of which six were affordable housing.

All affordable housing is restricted to either affordable rents or an affordable sale price in perpetuity to be occupied only by those in housing need that meet the local connection criteria set out in the Local Plan.

Authority Member Champion for Development Management Robert Heseltine said of the West Witton development: "Our message to developers is simple: if you bring forward high quality schemes for the sites allocated in the Local Plan, we will approve them.

"Half of the homes in this development will be affordable and for local people. That is good news. As an Authority, we wish to help local young men and women, and hopefully their families, stay put in the Dales."



An artist's impression of the new West Witton development, of which half will be affordable housing for local people.

Tourism

One of the statutory purposes of the National Park is to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities by the public, and planning has a key role to play in fulfilling this purpose.

The Local Plan includes new polices that are supportive of sustainable forms of self-catering visitor accommodation, such as camping pods, shepherds' huts and yurts, where they are well screened at the time of application and have an acceptable impact on the National Park landscape.

Allied to this, we have recently approved applications for bell tents at the Black Swan in Ravenstonedale, camping pods and bell tents in woodland at Catgill Farm, Bolton Abbey, and yurts in woodland at Berry's Farm, Swinithwaite.



The new yurts at Berry's Farm, Swinithwaite

The Authority also approved an application for the Dales Bike Centre in Fremington in May. This was for a new accommodation block and ancillary building, new car park and extension to the café.

The café extension was deliberately designed to have minimal impact on the former barn to which it is attached, while the new accommodation block and ancillary building have a modern 'agricultural' style that works well within this setting.



Dales Bike Centre, Fremington, has received planning permission for an extension

Of this development, Member Champion Robert Heseltine said: "The owners and staff of the Dales Bike Centre have worked consistently hard to make the business a success in the past ten years.

"They've helped introduce many people to the delights of the National Park - its landscape, heritage and communities - and have provided a great boost to the local economy.

"When all the work is done, the Dales Bike Centre will be one of the Yorkshire Dales National Park's best visitor destinations."

Business

One development that is nearing completion following approval is the Sports Hall which will serve Sedbergh School.

This new 2,000 square metre multi-court sports centre, with associated changing and hospitality facilities, will provide the school with an all-weather leisure facility that is also available for community use.

The Authority has worked with the agents, JMP Architects, to pursue a new building with a contemporary design. The external walls are predominantly constructed from local natural stone, with aluminium panels to break up the mass and add interest. The building has an over sailing green roof and is built into a mound which minimises its impact on the immediate street scene.



Sedbergh's new sports centre is nearing completion

Infrastructure

In the past six months, the Home Office has applied to build seven telecommunications masts in some of the most remote parts of the National Park as part of a new 'Emergency Services Network' (ESN).

EE was contracted to build the masts and it has been our job to work with both bodies to make sure the masts are designed and sited in such a way as to bring about maximum benefit, while minimising their visual impact where we can.

The masts will provide voice and data reception to areas that previously lacked coverage, as well as enabling applications such as sending patient details to a hospital for staff to prepare for their arrival, video recording arrests on a police officer's body camera, and live streaming to nearby officers. And there is an opportunity for these masts to provide commercial services, once completed.

Five applications have been approved so far and all the masts are capable of providing commercial mobile phone coverage, if EE choose to do so.

The Authority's Local Plan and Design Guide, as well as guidelines for applying for planning permission and information on our planning advice service and surgeries, can be found on our website at **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/planning**

Help get Whernside back into the peak of health



By Kate Hilditch,
Area Manager South

We are asking everyone to 'Pitch in for Whernside' this July as we kick off a crowdfunding campaign to repair a seriously eroded footpath on one of the best-loved walking routes in the National Park.

The steep, remote summit part of the path on Yorkshire's highest mountain has become badly damaged, with an estimated 100,000 people using it every year - many of them on sponsored walks or runs.

The 12-month-long fundraising project began late last year and is aiming to reach the £46,000 needed to create a new 200 metre section of stone pitching on the route known as Bruntscar.



Dairying: it's the Wensleydale whey

A big two-year project exploring Wensleydale's dairying heritage is urging people who have memories, photos and artefacts to share to get involved.

'Dairy Days' will research the history of milking in the dale, as well as cheese, cream and butter making. It will look at archaeological sites linked to cattle farming - holding a community 'Big Dig' excavation at one - and train volunteers to undertake archaeological field survey work and 3D recordings of buildings.

The project will carry out oral history interviews with local people and former residents, hold workshops for schools and visitors, and create new interpretation for local organisations and tourism businesses, including a new 'Milky Way' three-day walking trail and a series of short walk leaflets.

A summer 2019 exhibition at the Dales Countryside Museum, Hawes, will take a fresh look at the collections and local archives.

Dairy Days Project Officer, Karen Griffiths, said: "Dairying has been at the heart of the Wensleydale economy since records began and is still thriving today. The Dairy Days project aims to research and then share the story of this unbroken thread.



Leading milk in the 1930s: Mr Heseltine on the horse and Matt Heseltine with donkey, at Hogra Farm near Redmire Station (Ann Holubecki collection)

"We already have a wonderful resource of historic dairying artefacts and archive photographs, thanks to historians such as Marie Hartley, Ella Pontefract and Joan Ingilby. Their collections were the foundation of the Dales Countryside Museum.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for local farming families to re-engage with the artefacts collected from their distant and not-so distant relatives - and to provide a much fuller historical picture, as well as a more human story, to go with the collections.

"If you or your family have been involved in dairy farming or processing milk in Wensleydale and would like to share your memories, old photographs or dairying utensils, then we'd love to hear from you.

"There are also volunteering opportunities, from learning how to do oral history interviews to training in archaeology field work and researching the stories behind our Museum collections".

Dairy Days is being run by the National Park Authority with support from National Lottery players via a £37,700 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Dairy Days project will cover two of the themes identified in last year's strategy document for the broader partnership Wensleydale Project: providing opportunities to celebrate the dale's hill farming traditions and offering a wide range of outstanding opportunities to understand and enjoy its special qualities.

For more information - or to sign up to a regular Dairy Days newsletter - contact Karen Griffiths on 01756 751619 or karen.griffiths@yorkshiredales.org.uk

Follow the project as it happens by visiting **blog.yorkshiredales.org.uk/dairy-days**

Find out more about the Wensleydale Project: Yore Past, Ure Future at **wensleydaleproject.com**



Look out for our crowdfunding campaign this July or donate today at **mendmountains.thebmc.co.uk/yorkshire-dales**

It is part of the British Mountaineering Council's national 'Mend Our Mountains: Make One Million' scheme, which is supporting projects in each of the UK's 15 National Parks.

In the first months, potential corporate donors and charitable trusts were approached - resulting in donations totalling more than £8,000 for Whernside. Now the emphasis has switched to asking members of the public for their support.

Bill Brennan, who farms Bruntscar and supports the campaign, was at our launch event in March: "There are thousands and thousands of people who come here on sponsored walks. The state of the path makes people go off to the side and make new paths. Bogs have been created all the way up. We need a path that people can stick to."

One of our biggest donations to date has come from HF Holidays, who gave £4,000.

Our message is simple: if you love Yorkshire's Three Peaks and walk on the paths, could you help look after them? Give money, sponsor part of the project, donate a prize to the crowdfunding bit of the campaign, or spread the word - it all helps and is gratefully received.

We think Whernside's worth it.

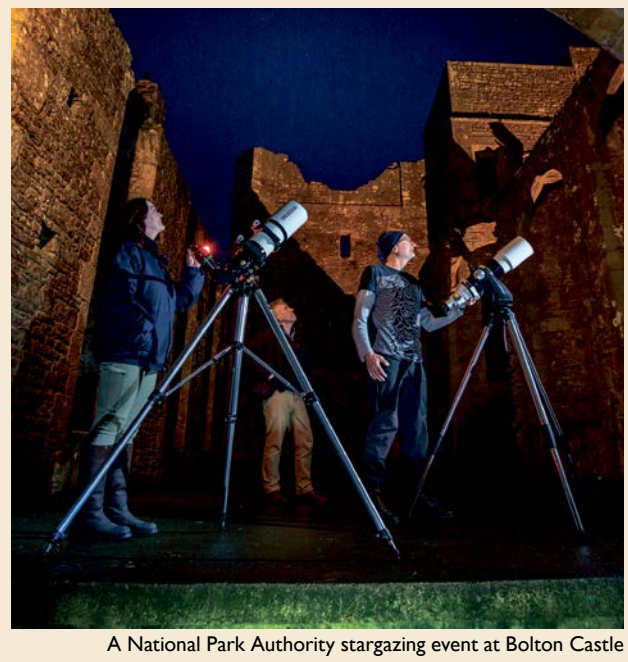
Overseas visitors to be offered new 'experiences'

Local people in the tourism trade are working together to see how their business could benefit from - and be part of - an exciting new campaign to market the Yorkshire Dales overseas.

The government's tourism agency, VisitEngland, is funding nine National Park Authorities - including the Yorkshire Dales - to develop new and easily-bookable 'immersive visitor experiences' to attract overseas visitors, with Germany and Australia identified as the key target markets.

More than 50 local businesses attended two free workshops on 'The English National Park Experience Collection' this spring. The events were open to people who offer accommodation, attractions, experiences or activities in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, as well as to those who want to collaborate to showcase its landscape, history and culture to visitors from overseas.

Each session provided some examples of the experiences being developed and the actions required to reach a global audience.



A National Park Authority stargazing event at Bolton Castle

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and North York Moors National Park Authority jointly commissioned industry expert Susan Briggs, of the Tourism Network, to lead the workshops. She said: "This project is a great opportunity for local businesses in and around the Park.

"The idea is that, together, we develop world-class bookable tourism products, targeted at the right international customers, at the right time and through the right channels."

The project is being funded by an award of £1.2m from VisitEngland's 'Discover England Fund'. The money is being split between the Dartmoor, Exmoor, Lake District, Northumberland, Peak District, North York Moors, South Downs, Broads and Yorkshire Dales National Parks.

She added: "More workshops will follow this September and October, when we'll be offering advice about attracting, and catering for, overseas visitors and targeting overseas travel trade.

"We would encourage any tourism business wanting to find out more to come along".

For more information about the English National Park Experience Collection in the Yorkshire Dales and how to get involved, visit **www.dalestourism.com**

'PAYMENT BY RESULTS' SCHEME LOOKS TO EXPAND

By Helen Keep, Senior Farm Conservation Officer



Natural England and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority are nearly at the end of the three year 'Payment by Results' project, funded by the EU and project partners.

It has been piloting an alternative way of awarding payments to farmers based on them producing either species-rich meadows or good habitat for breeding waders such as curlew, snipe, lapwing and redshank.

Nineteen farms in Wensleydale have taken up the opportunity to trial this new approach and are being paid based on the 'results' they produce for these two habitats. The better the habitat, the higher the payment.

Since the start of their two year agreements in 2016, farmers have attended various training courses on habitat assessment, management and species identification to give them additional skills to maintain or improve the meadows and rush pastures.

They have been determined to enhance the condition of their habitats - for example, hand collecting wildflower seed, spreading seed and, in one case, planting small plug plants in their meadows in order to increase the range of plant species. More muddy wet features have been created and rush cover reduced, so the wader chicks have better feeding habitat.

In 2017, farmers undertook the first annual assessment of the habitats' well-being against a set of agreed indicators in order to generate an overall 'health' score. There was naturally a certain amount of trepidation about whether they would be able to assess the habitats correctly. Despite their worry, the results we have in for the first year are impressive.

On average, for the meadows there was little variation in scoring between farmer and project advisor, which is fantastic given that this was probably the most challenging assessment in the project. Out of 19 meadows, five had improved in the variety and number of plant species, resulting in the awarding of a higher payment for the first agreement year.

The habitat for breeding wader assessments proved to be more challenging in getting a consensus on the condition of the habitat between the farmer and the project advisor.



The better the habitat for breeding waders, such as curlew, the higher the payment to farmers

The assessment questions and results are more subjective in nature, dealing with percentage cover of a feature like rushes. Difference of opinion can easily occur, but this difference could cost the farmer points on the score sheet, which in turn could reduce the amount of money the farmer receives. The problem is more with the detail of the assessment rather than the management of the habitat.

The second assessment period has started in earnest and we are really looking forward to seeing what the results will look like.

The pilot continues to attract attention from organisations like the National Farmers Union, RSPB and Defra. The farmers have become the stars of the project and great advocates for the payment by results approach, with one appearing on the BBC Radio 4 programme 'On Your Farm'.

Defra, in particular, are showing an increasing interest in the project and are considering how the approach could fit into a post-Brexit agri-environment scheme.

The Wensleydale pilot finishes in December, although it is understood that Defra is actively considering the National Park Authority's submission to extend and expand it.

For more information on the 'Payment by Results' pilot, contact Helen Keep on 01756 751611. For advice on the grants and schemes available to farmers and landowners, visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/farming**

Visitor centre gets makeover

Aysgarth Falls National Park Centre - which last year welcomed more than a hundred thousand visitors - reopened on 30 March after a full refurbishment.

With new display space, modern flooring and better lighting, the visitor centre has taken on a clean, flexible and accessible look.

Centre Manager Cathy Bergs said: "We want to encourage residents, as well as visitors, to call in and the best way to do that is to let people know - and improve - what's on offer.

"The centre is set in an area which is a haven for wildlife. As well as the amazing waterfalls on the River Ure, there is nearby Freeholders' Wood - an ancient woodland with rare flowers and butterflies such as the Northern Brown Argus. There is something wonderful to see in it every time you come - and by popping into the centre first you can find out what to look for.



Information Advisor Marnie Peacock and Claire Hodgson in the refurbished centre

"We've put a lot of thought into the retail part. As well as our 'Distinctly Dales' products, we're planning seasonal changes to our stock, reflecting what's happening around us, such as the Tour de Yorkshire, our special dark skies, and bat walks."

Next door is the Coppice Café which serves a great selection of food and drink, including home-made cakes with locally-sourced ingredients.

The centre is open seven days a week until the end of October.

For more information on Aysgarth Falls and all our National Park Centres, visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/nationalparkcentres**



The most gruelling day of the **Tour de Yorkshire 2018** came through the National Park on 6 May, when Stage 4 saw the elite cyclists take on the challenging climbs of both Barden Moor and Park Rash. The National Park Authority worked alongside all the race partners to prepare the route and ensure cyclists and spectators had a safe and thrilling day.

NEWS IN BRIEF

A £175k pot of money is helping innovative local projects, that benefit both the National Park's landscape and its communities, to get off the ground.

Now in its 15th year of operation, the Authority's Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) - which is open to community groups, businesses and individuals - supported 36 worthwhile schemes in 2017.

To find out more and how to apply, contact Andrea Burden on 01969 652337 or visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/sdf**

Stories from the National Park are at the heart of the Authority's new blog, which offers an alternative take on our work and people, and a different way to connect with us.

This year has already seen posts ranging from an interview with a unique 'scratch card' artist exhibiting at our Bainbridge office to Chief Executive David Butterworth writing on the serious issue of raptor persecution in the National Park.

We also have two specialist blogs on Dales Archaeology and the new Dairy Days project (see page 5).

Follow the National Park blog at **blog.yorkshiredales.org.uk**

A MASTERPIECE CELEBRATED: LIFE AND TRADITION AT 50

A book which captured the last days of a disappearing way of life is being celebrated in an exhibition at the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes from now until 3 July.

On display are original notes, photographs, sketches and objects relating to Marie Hartley and Joan Ingilby's groundbreaking work, *Life and Tradition in the Yorkshire Dales*, which was published 50 years ago.

The exhibition is part of a wider project involving a programme of walks, talks, demonstrations and workshops, and the re-issuing of the book by the Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society.

"For those of us who work to conserve and interpret the cultural heritage of the Dales, *Life and Tradition* is our bible," said Museum manager, Fiona Rosher.

"Its 50th anniversary deserves celebrating because the book is a unique chronicle of a centuries-old way of life which has now gone. As the authors themselves wrote, they carried out their research 'just and only just in the nick of time'.

"Marie and Joan founded the Dales Countryside Museum, and many of the artefacts held here are illustrated or described within the book. We would like to use the anniversary to inspire people to start engaging actively with their local heritage - and recording what they find out."

Life and Tradition in the Yorkshire Dales covers topics such as dairy work, farm buildings and implements, sheep, peat-cutting, hay-making, thatching and sport and games. Tools and objects used in these activities are on display, alongside the photographs the authors took of local people at work.

And the exhibition which follows it this summer is equally inspiring - and close to home.

'Twenty Years of the Calendar Girls' - running from 6 July to 30 September - looks back at the fundraising phenomenon of a very alternative WI calendar and the tragic story that inspired it.

Angela Baker's friends came up with the idea when her husband John - an Assistant National Park Officer with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority - became seriously ill. Follow their story in the exhibition hall that has been named in his memory.

The Dales Countryside Museum is open from 10am to 5pm daily. Visit **www.dalescountrysidemuseum.org.uk** for more information.



Marie Hartley (left) and Joan Ingilby in their workroom (Marie Hartley Archive, University of Leeds Special Collection)

DON'T MISS...

Our summer touring exhibition, celebrating the stunning species-rich roadside verges of Orton through the photography of the late Judy Dunford, is at the Dales Countryside Museum, Hawes, until 10 July.

'The Roadside Wildflower' started out at the Old Courthouse Gallery, Shap, and moves on to the National Park Authority offices in Bainbridge from 18 July to 29 August.

The exhibition marks the start of a project to involve local people in bringing these special habitats into better management. To find out more, visit our website at **www.natureinthedales.org.uk/roadverges**



Meadow cranesbill







Ranger helps take the Dales to Chelsea



The gold-medal winning 'Yorkshire Dales' show garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show; Access Ranger Tom Hickey who helped install it.

A garden, which authentically recreated the Dales iconic drystone walls from genuine Yorkshire stone on loan from the Bolton Estate, won both the People's Choice Award and Best Construction Award at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show - as well as a coveted gold medal.

Welcome to Yorkshire's 2018 show garden promised to bring the sights, smells and tastes of the Yorkshire Dales to a global audience, and featured woodland, lush pastures, a cultivated cottage garden, flowing beck and a stone bothy.

And the National Park Authority's newest ranger - until recently an apprentice - joined a team of seasoned landscapers and horticulturalists in London to help create it.

24-year-old Tom Hickey from Earby landed his Access Ranger job in May, after spending two years gaining a wealth of practical skills and experience through a Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust Rural Apprenticeship, supported by National Lottery players through the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund.

Tom was invited to join the show garden team by its designer, Mark Gregory, Managing Director of Landform Consultants.

Chief Executive, David Butterworth, said: "The 'Yorkshire Garden' has been a feature at Chelsea Flower Show for the past eight years. This year it is particularly special, because it has been inspired by the very best of Yorkshire - the Yorkshire Dales.

"We were pleased to become one of the sponsors for the show garden, as it will keep the Yorkshire Dales in the public eye at a time when growing visitor numbers is a priority. And, of course, delighted to see it win three of the top four accolades.

"It's even better that one of our own staff was on site to help create it. Tom Hickey is the latest in a line of top notch rangers to emerge from the Rural Apprenticeship programme."

Read more about creating the award-winning garden at **www.yorkshire.com/chelsea**

Cheese Festival looks forward to second brie-lliant year

Get your taste buds ready - our second Yorkshire Dales Cheese Festival, celebrating Yorkshire's fantastic local produce, is looking to be an absolute cracker.

From 15 to 23 September 2018, food producers and local businesses will be inviting you to more than 50 delicious happenings throughout Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Razan Alsous of Yorkshire Dama Cheese puts the finishing touches to her dish at last year's festival

Sample truly sumptuous food and drink at amazing restaurants, tearooms and delis throughout the festival week, as well as a host of related activities.

On offer are special cheese and Yorkshire produce-based menus, forest school and bushcraft experiences, cheese and wine tasting, visits into the depths of caves, cheese making courses and demonstrations - as well as the Cheese Wedge cycle ride and guided walks with a dairying twist to help you work up an appetite (or work it all off).

We'll be kicking off with a two-day mini festival at the Wensleydale Creamery, in Hawes - home of Wallace and Grommit's beloved cheesy nibble (15 & 16 Sept). And finishing with a meaty banger - Whole Roast Ox Co's Beer & Beef Festival at Brymor Ice Cream, Jervaulx (22 Sept).

The project is part funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas.

Check out our festival website over the coming months for full details **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/cheese-festival**

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