Dales

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

A newspaper for the residents of the Yorkshire Dales National Park

Summer 2021

NATIONAL PARK 'OPEN FOR BUSINESS'

As Government Covid restrictions continue to ease, businesses and organisations across the Yorkshire Dales are finally declaring themselves 'open for business'.

Visitors are returning in numbers, accompanied by improving weather, and enjoying all that the National Park has to offer for their physical and mental well-being, as well as making a valuable contribution to the local economy.

The Yorkshire Dales has, over the last year, seen a dramatically different demographic of first-time visitors. Younger and more diverse groups have taken the opportunity to visit the National Park to clear their heads and get some long overdue fresh air.

Chief Executive David Butterworth said: "There has been an effort stretching back 20 years to try and broaden the visitor base of the National Park, and what has happened in the past year has been unprecedented.

"The challenge for 2021 is to capitalise on this trend and capture the hearts and minds of the people who have experienced the Dales for the first time to make sure they keep coming back, while at the same time continuing to offer a wonderful experience for our loyal visitors.

"We have continued to see our online audience grow with more people than ever engaging with us on social media. And, like many local businesses and organisations, we have taken the opportunity to amplify key messages coming from Government on handwashing, face masks and social distancing to help keep visitors and communities safe. Through the summer we'll continue to do our best to influence behaviour on the ground, helping to create an enjoyable experience for all, with advice on how to appreciate and enjoy the countryside safely."



Family day out: enjoying the bridleways around Clapham and Austwick in the southern part of the National Park

The National Park Authority had to find different and innovative ways to deliver its services when the country first went into lockdown in March 2020. We take a look at how we performed over the last fifteen months on the centre pages. We would like to hear how well you think our services have been delivered - we have included a survey on page 7, which you can also complete online.

So, while we look forward to something of a return to normality, we know there's much to do over the coming months.

We will be working with farmers to administer the Government's new grant scheme - Farming in Protected Landscapes - read more about this on page 3.

We are looking to expand our programme of school visits in 2021. There would normally be around 1,500 school pupils visiting the National Park each year, and this figure is planned to increase annually to 2,500 students once the current coronavirus restrictions are lifted.

And our longer term focus remains on tackling the climate emergency, assisting in nature recovery, and ensuring the National Park is accessible to all.

The work of the National Park Authority is guided by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan - the single most important statutory document for the National Park. The Plan sets out the aspirations and objectives for the many organisations that operate here.

For more information and to follow progress in achieving the Plan's objectives, visit **www.yorkshiredalesmanagementplan.org.uk**

'Generation Green' creates new upskilling opportunities for young people

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is connecting young people with nature while they learn new skills, with potential to launch them into a fulfilling career in the 'green economy'.

While the new project is focussing on those who are traditionally less likely - due to social, economic and cultural factors - to engage with nature conservation, there are also opportunities for young people living in the National Park.

Generation Green is an Access Unlimited coalition project, led by YHA (England & Wales) and involving all 10 English National Parks as well as The Outward Bound Trust, Scouts, Girlguiding, and Field Studies Council.



Generation Green will train young people in new skills suitable for a role in the green economy

The 16-month Generation Green project - funded though Defra's Green Recovery Challenge Fund - is creating jobs, volunteering and training opportunities, offering outdoor and online learning experiences, and connection with the environment. It aims to connect more than 100,000 young people in the UK to nature through individual projects delivered nationally by the coalition members.

In the Yorkshire Dales we will deliver 250 'youth action' opportunities for young people aged 14 to 30, plus, as part of the initiative, *Up Skill, Down Dale* is looking to recruit 10 skilled youth volunteers to become 'green leaders'. The programme is offering a suite of supported training opportunities across the ranger, conservation and engagement teams, from walling, bird ringing and bee surveys to helping deliver sessions to primary and secondary pupils. These volunteering roles will support a route to employment in the green economy.

The Generation Green project will also fund a wide range of free day sessions for schools, individuals and groups, with 500 young people invited to take part in the Dales.

Nature Discoverer days for 7 to 14-year-olds will include outdoor survival and navigation skills, while 14 to 18-year-olds can join Nature Explorer sessions, choosing from activities such as citizen science, woodland survival skills and climate change. Those taking part also have the chance to join free residentials at YHAs across the National Park.

Alongside these opportunities, we have recently recruited two new youth representatives to sit on the National Park Management Plan Steering Group and have a say in the National Park's future.

For more information, please contact us on learning@yorkshiredales.org.uk or visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/generation-green** or **www.yha.org.uk/generationgreen**

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LOCAL PLAN SHAPES UP

By Rosie Corner, Local Plan Officer



Preparation of the new Local Plan for the extended Yorkshire Dales National Park is continuing apace.

Consultation No.3 - Exploring our options: Building new homes at the beginning of the year generated a healthy response and 89 sites were submitted as potential locations for development. Officers are sifting through these sites and will be creating a shortlist for housing allocations later this year.



New housing under construction in West Witton

Housing strategy remains high on the agenda, and, at the Authority Meeting in June, Members will be making some crucial decisions about how much housing the Authority should plan for, where it should be built, and how we can ensure that the landscape and heritage of the National Park is protected when this happens.

As always, sustainability underlies every part of the Local Plan process and officers are taking a long term view, ensuring that the work done today benefits National Park communities into the future.

We are looking closely at how other National Parks are managing complex issues such as second home ownership, affordable housing, and making space for nature in the built environment, learning from best practice whilst ensuring that our approach is always fully tailored to the unique setting of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Our next *Exploring our options* consultation will ask whether the Local Plan's local occupancy policy remains fit for purpose and how our policies should seek to manage the National Park's many iconic field barns.

To read more about the Local Plan, visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/local-plan-2023-40**



Wallop Nine Pins (LAVC/PHO/P1740) by Werner Kissling. Reproduced with the permission of Special Collections, Leeds University Library under CC-BY-NC 4.0.

There's a word for that…

Do you know a cake stool from a cratch, a smout-hole from a stoup?

In Your Words - a University of Leeds project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund - is updating the most comprehensive survey of English dialects ever undertaken, and is inviting people right across the country to get involved and share their own words.

Researchers are looking for descendants of those who took part in the original Survey of English Dialects, which ran from 1946-1978, or with connections to the Institute of Dialect and Folk Life Studies, which was in operation between 1963 and 1983.

The project aims to encourage people to uncover their own dialect inheritance and cultural heritage, and to share their language and stories for the benefit of future generations.

The Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes is one of five partner museums working alongside the university.

Villages across the Yorkshire Dales and just beyond the boundary were involved in the original survey, including Muker, Askrigg, Dent, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, Grassington, Gargrave, Burton-in-Lonsdale and Soulby.

Three of the original fieldworkers who travelled the country in the 1950s have already been tracked down. These pioneers painstakingly recorded dialect variations, initially in handwritten notebooks, later with cumbersome reel-to-reel audio recorders that were sometimes hooked up to car batteries because of a lack of mains electricity.

Others to come forward include those who remember Werner Kissling, the famous ethnographic photographer who worked for the project in the Yorkshire Dales during the 1960s, capturing everything from sheep washing and wallops (a variant of skittles), to luck stones and Bartle burning.

The contents of the Leeds Archive of Vernacular Culture will be shared online and the project will run events and engagement programmes, as well as carrying out cutting-edge dialect research and training a new generation of community fieldworkers.

Follow the project and find out how to take part via Facebook @DialectHeritage or by contacting Engagement Officer Poppy Oldham on dcm@yorkshiredales.org.uk

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NEW GRANTS PROGRAMME OPENS FOR FARMERS



By Adrian Shepherd, Head of Land Management

Maintaining the use of land in the Dales for farming has always been a cornerstone National Park policy.

It is farming that has helped to produce the Dales landscape we know and love - but we also know that change is coming and there are massive opportunities to improve the way that land is used.

That is why the Government is funding a new three-year grants programme specifically for farmers in protected landscapes in England.

It has asked the National Park Authority to administer the programme here in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. We have more than a million pounds to allocate in grants this year.

I would like to invite farmers to get involved. All you need in the first place is a good idea. If you get in touch, we can help you work up the idea into a proposal.

The 'Farming In Protected Landscapes' (FiPL) programme will offer grants to projects with one or more of the following four themes: climate, nature, people or place.

Projects on the climate theme could be to do with reducing carbon emissions and costs. A grant could pay for a 'farm carbon audit', for instance, which could identify opportunities that could themselves then be funded. That could be investment in projects that help to reduce farm fuel use or fertiliser use, or which look at the management of inputs such as concentrates, feed and straw.

Nature projects might be about restoring habitats or changing pasture management. A farmer looking to practice 'regenerative farming' might apply for a grant to help purchase electric fencing, for instance. Grants would be available to pay for feasibility studies on habitat restoration or creation, or to help pay for a consultant to carry out a whole farm plan to identify all the opportunities on the farm for potential income from agri-environment schemes.

Turning to people, the Government has made it a priority to increase the nation's health and well-being by creating more opportunities for people to explore landscapes. I expect many farmers will have ideas about how access could be improved on their land. Grants could support the conversion of farm buildings or establishment of farm shops, farm tours or on-farm volunteering programmes. They could help pay for upgrading rights of way from footpaths to other uses, or for the creation of permissive access routes. Setting up such routes now might be a good idea, as they will be eligible for payments under the government's forthcoming Environmental Land Management schemes. It would be great to see groups of farmers come together to bring forward projects on this theme.



Farmers are invited to submit ideas for the new Farming in Protected Landscapes grants under the four themes of climate, nature, people or place.

Projects under the 'place' theme would be those which conserve or enhance the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Barns and walls maintenance, flood management, peat restoration and business advice are possible areas that farmers could think about.

The FiPL programme is flexible. Projects would need to add value to anything currently being done under a national agri-environment scheme, but we are ruling nothing out.

If no ideas immediately spring to mind, I recommend having a look at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan. This is a document put together by a range of partners, with input from farming representatives. It contains a set of objectives for our area. Projects which chime with those objectives would be supported.

I would also recommend taking a look at a new online mapping tool we published earlier this year. Re:Cover shows the location of important habitats in the Yorkshire Dales National Park and - as Craven farmer Anthony Bradley said at its launch earlier this year - 'shows you what you've got and the possibilities that can come from that'.

I know that farmers in the Dales want to farm in a way that works with nature and run resilient businesses. The FiPL programme is here to assist them to do both.

Get in touch with the Farm Conservation Team on farming@yorkshiredales.org.uk or Helen Keep on 01756 751611 to discuss your ideas.

Read about the objectives contained within the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan at **www.yorkshiredalesmanagementplan.org.uk**

Search for new online habitat mapping tool Re:Cover at **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk**



Craven farmer Anthony Bradley - pictured at the launch of habitat mapping tool Re:Cover - has been planting hedges to join up important habitats.

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HOW ARE WE DOING?

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority has two statutory purposes:

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

In carrying out these purposes, we also have a duty to try to do them in ways that help to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities.

To fulfil our purposes, the Authority offers services that provide help and advice on a range of issues, such as environmental conservation, planning, tourist information, and rights of way maintenance.

Against the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and three national lockdowns, we had to find new ways to deliver some of our services during the last 12 months. Here's a look at how we performed.

New affordable housing in pipeline

Providing new affordable housing for local people is one of the key objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan.

While the District Councils are responsible for supporting affordable house building, the Authority has a role in allocating enough land for new housing and granting permission for housing development.

Unsurprisingly, 2020 saw a sharp dip in applications for new housing. Planning permission was granted for 54 houses (compared to 118 the previous year). However, there are permissions for a further 74 houses in the pipeline. The Authority is working closely with Housing Associations on new sites for affordable housing, with a large scheme for around 50 houses in Sedbergh currently being considered.

Despite these difficulties it has been heartening to see good quality modern housing currently being built in West Witton and Long Preston.

Money supports local schemes

The last year was a successful one for the Authority's Sustainable Development Fund (SDF). A total of almost £163,000 was allocated to 30 projects across the National Park.

This included Hyperfast community broadband schemes in Mallerstang and Cotterdale, improvements to town and village halls in Dent, Grassington, Hebden and Long Preston, and helping a local farm business get its 'raw milk' to customers.

The fund also supported initiatives by Swaledale Mountain Rescue, Upper Wharfedale Rural Watch and the Grassington Mines Appreciation Group to ensure the safety of visitors and communities alike, as well as tourism business workshops to help with the post-Covid recovery.

And grants helped improve access to the countryside, supporting the reopening of the Smardale Viaduct, a map guide to the Pennine Bridleway, and a local business offering guided walks.



An SDF grant supported the installation of a water treatment system to serve new camping pods at Flakebridge Farm, Tebay, as part of a farm diversification scheme (Photo: E Skidmore)

To find out how SDF grants can help get your project off the ground, visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/sdf**



Stone being lifted out of Hanson UK's Horton Quarry for use on the Ingleborough path repairs

Ensuring easy access to green spaces

With access to the countryside playing an increasingly crucial role in health and well-being this last year, the Authority's work in maintaining public rights of way is more important than ever.

Since March 2020, we have carried out 1,084 repairs to infrastructure on footpaths and bridleways throughout the National Park. The larger projects - such as the new stone flagging on the Three Peaks path on Ingleborough in April - are well publicised. But the everyday mending of a gate latch or the erecting of a waymarker is just as vital in giving the public confidence that they are on the right route and that it is well looked after.

'Ease of Use' means that a member of the public should be able to follow a route easily and not encounter anything that detracts from their enjoyment of it whether on foot, horse, bicycle or using a mobility aid. Our aim is to have 90% of all our routes in this condition by 2023. The current figure is 88%.

Grants help reduce farm pollution

Some of our work with local farmers was able to continue almost uninterrupted.

The Authority has been running Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) in the National Park on behalf of Natural England since 2009. Our approach has been to work collaboratively with organisations like the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust and The Farmer Network (the Yorkshire Dales Catchment Partnership) to try to provide 'joined up' advice, training and grant support that helps farmers and land managers to reduce water and air pollution from agriculture.

The partnership is working with approximately 350 farms across High Priority Areas, including the whole of the River Swale and Ure catchments and parts of the Aire and Wharfe.

Although we had to take our farming events online last year - and these were a bit less well-attended - we were still able to help over 40 farmers to secure CSF grants (of £10,000 on average) to carry out works to reduce pollution.

Challenges for Planning Service

It's fair to say that the last 12 months has been a really difficult period for the Development Management Service.

Initially, staff had to find ways to continue to deal with planning applications whilst working from home, unable to use the office to produce consultation letters, print plans, hold meetings or visit sites. We adopted some smart workarounds and, with the help and understanding of applicants, agents and residents, managed to continue the service.

One novel feature of the new way of working was holding planning committee meetings by video conference. These live streams included contributions from the public and proved to be highly effective.

As a result of the pandemic, we thought that application numbers would fall - a prediction that proved completely wrong. Initially, numbers were about the same as normal, but since November they've been at unprecedented levels. Combined with the difficulties of working through the second and third lockdowns, this put extreme pressure on the service. We were forced to suspend parts of the service and it has taken a lot longer than normal to process some applications.

On a more positive note, 93% of applications were approved. That included two significant business developments: a modern hotel complex at Linton Camp near Grassington, and new business units at Langcliffe. 2020 also saw the introduction of a new planning computer software system. Despite some serious teething problems, this is now providing a better way for people to access and comment on planning applications.

Apprentices acquire 'Skills for the Future'

Four countryside trainees completed their apprenticeships this spring in a mark of their resilience in adapting to classroom sessions going online and practical days curtailed.

'Skills for the Future' is one of a number of projects forming the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership Scheme, grant funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and administered by the National Park Authority.

The apprenticeships - we recently put a call out for four new recruits to start in August - are helping to provide young people with the training needed to address skills shortages.

The 18-month programme saw the trainees achieve chainsaw, quad bike and first aid qualifications, alongside work-based experience in fencing, archaeological surveys and just about everything in between.

Billy Capstick was a school leaver when he joined the team: "I didn't have any qualifications and now I've got loads. I put them on my CV and got four job offers".

Inspired by the conservation work she undertook, Sarah Clarke has secured a traineeship with West Cumbria Rivers Trust, while Rebekah Alison has gone on to study Environmental Science at Newcastle University.

A job with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust caught Abbi Woof's eye and she is now working on the Wild Ingleborough project: "Applying for this apprenticeship was one of the best decisions I made. We've got a broad range of countryside and communications skills, and we've built amazing contacts".

The Authority aims to provide at least 20 apprenticeships by 2023. Initially this was solely countryside management, but now includes four 'internal' apprentices in the planning, historic environment, land management and communications teams.

Communications apprentice Sam Cage took up his role in January: "I've had the chance to do work I enjoy by creating content for the Authority.

"Within my first few weeks I was able to create a blog that revolves around one of my hobbies, stargazing.

"Since then I've learnt a lot, like how to do professional website updates, read analytics to study the performance of a post, and understand what does and doesn't work to help make our social media channel the best it can be."

And in a final piece of good news, Ian Colledge, who was a Dales Apprentice in 2018/19, has been appointed as the new Three Peaks Ranger and will be starting back with us on 14 June.



Abbi, Billy, Rebekah and Sarah completed their countryside apprenticeships in March



Education Officer Rebecca Swift leads an outdoor learning session with a local school at Grass Wood, Grassington

Your Yorkshire Dales: Learn. Love. Explore

Never has access to the National Park and connecting with nature been so important as over the last year. But, with programmed education and outreach activities stopped as lockdown hit, the Authority's objective to provide activity days for 1,000 people per year from under-represented groups meant that the actual figure in 2020 was just 17.

The Learning & Engagement team had to turn their hand to finding new ways to engage. They ran weekly online quizzes and sent bat boxes (and flapjacks) out to elderly and younger residents in and around the National Park so that they could remain connected despite their physical isolation. Our Young Rangers groups moved to running 'virtually', but headed back outdoors as soon as restrictions eased. Once permitted, we ran a slimmed down version of our 'Go Wild' events in the National Park to help unprecedented numbers of new visitors learn about, love and explore it responsibly.

Working from home, staff redesigned our offer to provide fresh opportunities for the landscape of the National Park to be at the heart of Covid recovery. New programmes, including Generation Green, have launched in 2021, but the first - our new education programme for schools - hit the ground running in October 2020 and has already made a positive impact.

Despite the third lockdown coming almost immediately after its launch, nearly 850 school children have already attended live or online lessons, investigated woodlands, and marvelled at our dark sky, with a target to reach 1,500 more over this coming year.



The trainees gained a range of skills in woodland management and wildlife surveying, as well as achieving qualifications that included chainsawing, pesticides and off-road vehicles.

99% of invoices paid within 30 days

1.5m views of the '9 red squirrels' social distancing infographic in the first week

22 out of 23 committee meetings held 'virtually' since March 2020

Highest number of attendees at a virtual meeting: 58 (Planning, 9 Feb)

Helped over **40 farmers** secure grants averaging **£10,000** to carry out works to reduce pollution

93% of planning applications approved

Permission granted to build 54 new houses (with a further 74 in pipeline)

838 children took part in our new education programme for schools

Supported **9** apprenticeships

1,084 repairs to infrastructure on footpaths and bridleways throughout the National Park

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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.

NATURE RECOVERY WORK 'ACCELERATING'

The aim is simple: for the Yorkshire Dales National Park to be home to the finest variety of wildlife in England by 2040.

A group called the Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum, which includes Natural England and Environment Agency staff, as well as people from charities such as the RSPB and National Trust, re-committed itself to that goal this spring, 10 years on from the launch of its second nature recovery plan.

Since 2011 some important and nationally endangered species have thrived in the National Park, such as curlew, red squirrel and dormouse, owing largely to conservation work carried out by farmers and others.

Overall, however, the two very ambitious targets in 'Nature in the Dales: 2020 Vision' - to get 95% of the area of priority habitats in the National Park in "good" condition, and 95% of the populations of priority species in the National Park into a stable or increasing condition - have not been met.

The Biodiversity Forum, working with similar forums that deal with trees and woodlands issues as well as the Farming and Land Management Forum, has agreed to prepare a new nature recovery plan by the end of March next year.

Looking back over 10 years of the Forum's work, Chairman Peter Welsh, said: "A huge amount has been achieved for nature in the Dales in recent years.

"In the limestone dale sides of Wharfedale, for instance, where farmers have moved to light grazing with cattle, there has been a very impressive recovery of flowers such as rockrose and bird's-eye primrose as well as of butterflies such as northern brown argus and dark green fritillary and birds such as skylark and barn owl - all benefiting from the more varied flora and structure of the vegetation.

"However, we are not immune from the wider changes causing the biodiversity and climate emergencies. Further effort and financial support is urgently needed."

Tony Serjeant, the Authority's Senior Wildlife Conservation Officer, said: "The key is to create patches of wildlife habitat that are bigger, of better quality, and more joined up.

"It's going to be more like a cross country run than a quick sprint, lots of ups and downs, but I'm confident we can get there. Support from farmers, moorland managers and others who own and work the land will be crucial to success."

Member Champion for the Natural Environment Ian McPherson, describes the 2040 ambition as "a realistic one". He said: "The Yorkshire Dales has become a stronghold for some species that have sadly disappeared elsewhere, while peatlands and rivers are generally being restored to good ecological health rather than declining in condition.

"It appears that the nature recovery work in the National Park that has been gaining momentum for the past twenty years is accelerating. Big projects are being developed, or in some cases are beginning, such as the Tees-Swale: Naturally Connected programme.

"The great hope for wider nature recovery is the government's proposed Environmental Land Management scheme. If we can align the right resources with the opportunities, we know that farming in the National Park can support an abundance of plant and animal life."

To find out more visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/biodiversity-action-plan**

Improving habitats



- The proportion of rivers in a good ecological state has increased from 47% in 2017 to 62% in 2020 (the average figure for England in 2020 was just 14%)
- The National Park contains 30,000ha of peat bog of which 72% is in good condition or is recovering. Peatlands with actively growing bog mosses capture carbon and help fight climate change
- Yorkshire Dales is one of the least wooded National Parks, so a target has been set to create 6,000ha of new native woodland (pictured) over the next ten years, increasing this habitat by three times the amount existing now.

Challenges



- Outside nationally-designated sites, some key habitats are not faring so well. It is estimated that only 43% of limestone grassland outside SSSIs is in 'good condition' and the figures are worse for heathland (40%), lowland meadows (39%), upland hay meadows (29%) (pictured), native woodland (15%) and wetland habitats (6%)
- Although hen harriers are now breeding successfully in the Yorkshire Dales, with six pairs fledging 22 young in 2020 (including one pair that were brood managed), instances of illegal persecution of birds of prey are still being reported within the National Park
- Ash dieback disease jeopardises a major component of our landscapes that supports a suite of associated species.

Winners



- Among the species that have maintained stable or increasing populations are curlew, red squirrel and lady's slipper orchid
- Dormice (pictured) and water vole have been successfully re-introduced.

...and losers



- Juniper (pictured) is declining, as trees are lost to fungal disease
- Climate change threatens some alpine flowers and animals adapted to a northern climate
- The loss of wet meadows and increase in frequency of droughts is implicated in the reductions seen in species like yellow wagtail and yellow marsh saxifrage
- An outbreak of crayfish plague in the River Ure is decimating populations of native white-clawed crayfish.



A stunning night sky at Twistleton Scar (Danny Lawson/PA Wire)

Thousands enjoy celebration of National Park's dark skies

In the last edition, we announced the Yorkshire Dales National Park's designation as one of the UK's newest - and its largest - Dark Sky Reserves, with the exceptional quality of its night sky being formally recognised by the US-based International Dark-Sky Association.

Overwhelmingly supported by parishes, with 71 endorsing the bid (representing 84% of the National Park's population), the Yorkshire Dales joins a select global family of 150 Dark Sky Places across 21 countries.

Obtaining Reserve status will help develop astro-tourism in the National Park, encouraging visitors to stay out of season.

At the heart of that effort is our annual Dark Skies Festival. Due to the pandemic we took the festival online in February and it proved to be such a huge hit that 'virtual' sessions will feature in future festivals.

More than 178,000 people worldwide tuned into our programme of over 40 events organised on platforms like Facebook, Zoom and YouTube. Viewers from as far afield as Brazil, Sweden and Trinidad and Tobago watched as astronomers, researchers, wildlife experts, photographers, artists and Authority staff shared their passion for all things stargazing and space.

One of the highlights included a live stream, by festival supporter Go Stargazing, of NASA's Perseverance Rover landing on Mars, and a talk on the historic event which attracted a whopping 46,000 people.

Building on the first virtual festival's success, a second 'fringe' festival is planned for the autumn. Look out for details and ways to get involved at **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/dark-skies-festival**

Our services: your views

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority exists to secure for the public good the conservation, enhancement, enjoyment and better understanding of the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales: its landscape, wildlife, and cultural heritage.

We strive to deliver high quality, efficient and welcoming services that are effective in helping ourselves and others to achieve that aim.

If you live or work in the National Park, I would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes to give me your impressions of the service currently being provided by the Authority: what's going well and what could be improved.

David Butterworth, Chief Executive

1. Have you ever needed to access services provided by the Authority?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you haven't needed to access Authority services in the last twelve months, please jump to question 6.

2. If you've ever needed to access services provided by the Authority, when was this?

☐ 0 to 12 months ☐ 1 to 2 years

☐ 2 to 5 years ☐ 5 years+

3. In the last twelve months which service(s) provided by the Authority have you used?

☐ Development management (planning, Local Plan)

☐ Land management (farming, trees, wildlife)

☐ Park management (rangers, trails)

☐ Visitor services (tourism, National Park Visitor Centres, Dales Countryside Museum)

☐ Access and engagement (education, interpretation, volunteers)

☐ Other (specify) . . . . . .

4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of the service you received from the Authority?

☐ Very satisfied

☐ Fairly satisfied

☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

☐ Fairly dissatisfied

☐ Very dissatisfied

5. Have you noticed any changes in the quality of the service in the last 12 months?

☐ The service has improved

☐ The service has stayed the same

☐ The service is worse

If you answered that the service has improved or is worse, can you tell us why?

Please specify . . . . . .

6. Which best describes you?

☐ I live in the National Park

☐ I work in the National Park

☐ I live and work in the National Park

☐ Other, please specify . . . . . .

7. How do you normally contact officers at the Authority?

☐ Telephone ☐ Email

☐ By post ☐ Website

☐ In person

☐ Other, please specify . . . . . .

8. How easy is it to contact officers at the Authority?

☐ Very easy

☐ Easy

☐ Hard

☐ Very hard

If you answered Hard or Very hard, can you tell us why?

Please specify . . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

9. Has contacting officers at the Authority been easier or harder for you in the last twelve months?

☐ Easier

☐ About the same

☐ Harder

☐ Not applicable

10. Do you have any suggestions as to how we can improve our service(s) in the coming months?

Please specify . . . . . .

. . . . . .

Please return your questionnaire to us by end of July 2021, writing simply 'Freepost YORKSHIREDALES' only on the envelope - no address needed.

You can also complete the survey online at **www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MKS5C5P**

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OUR COMMON CAUSE: COMMONING IN THE DALES



Few will be aware that Ingleborough, one of Yorkshire's Three Peaks, is Common Land

Every year, thousands of people walk up Ingleborough, probably the best known peak in the National Park.

Few of them will be aware that this is Common Land, and even fewer will know what this means. However, over a quarter of the Yorkshire Dales National Park is Common Land. First enshrined in law in the Magna Carta in 1215, Common Land is land which is privately owned, but over which Commoners have rights - primarily to graze livestock, sometimes to gather firewood or cut bracken.

Commoners work collaboratively to manage the land, such as when they gather their flocks of sheep in from the fell. Upland Commons also provide important habitats (nationally, 50% are Sites of Special Scientific Interest), environmental benefits, such as clean drinking water, flood prevention, and soaking up carbon, plus 39% of open access land is on Commons.

Ingleborough - along with Brant Fell, near Sedbergh, and Grassington Moor - is one of the Commons in *Our Common Cause: Our Common Uplands*, a National Lottery Heritage Fund project protecting the heritage and future of Commons and Commoning in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, Lake District, Shropshire Hills and Dartmoor.

The project will conserve, enhance and broaden understanding of the cultural and natural heritage of Commons and Commoning - building on the traditional heritage of the commons to secure a sustainable future for those who work on the land and to all the public benefits healthy commons provide.

Claire Hodgson, Project Officer, Our Common Cause (Yorkshire Dales), said: "Over the three years of the project I'll be working with graziers, conservation organisations, volunteers and the public to build on the collaborative tradition of Commoning to demonstrate how farming and nature can work together to produce the food, landscapes and habitats we all know and love."

To find out more, contact Claire Hodgson on 07890 028022 or claire@foundationforcommonland.org.uk

Reducing carbon emissions on our sites



Estates Manager Jon Tighe explains how the National Park Authority is carrying out its carbon reduction plan.

Since the last edition of Dales landed on doormats, engineers have installed solar panels, air source heat pumps and LED lighting in the Authority's buildings, while electric vehicle charging points have gone in at all ten of the Authority's public car parks.

The renewable energy installations will result in a 40% reduction in the annual amount of carbon dioxide emitted from running the Authority's properties.

Solar panels have gone on the roofs of Aysgarth Falls and Malham National Park Visitor Centres, the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes, and the Authority's Colvend offices in Grassington. Additional solar panels have been put on the Authority's other offices, Yoredale in Bainbridge.

Air source heat pumps have also been installed at the Aysgarth Falls and Malham visitor centres. Each property is generating electricity for the National Grid outside business hours or during long sunny spells.

Seven new electric vehicle chargers have been installed in the Authority's car parks, to add to the three installed last year. Each unit is a Podpoint 7kw dual charger, dispensing energy costing 25 pence per kilowatt hour. Charging a car for one hour at one of the new points adds about 30 miles of range.

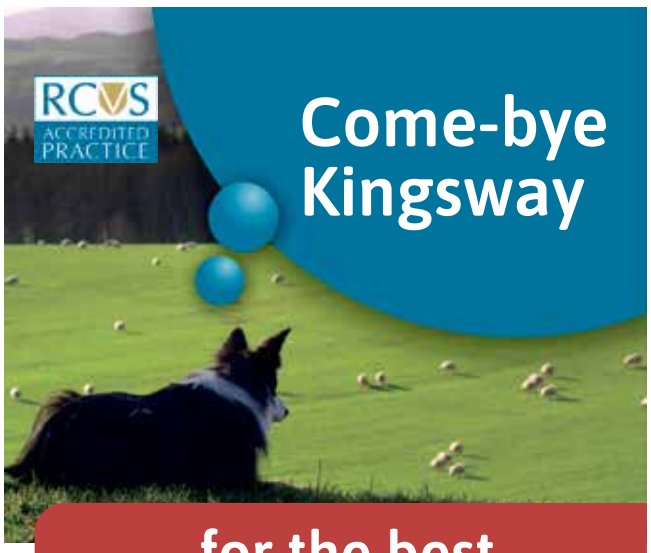
As Authority Member Carl Lis has said, we can take encouragement from the progress being made, but we must not let up. By March last year, the National Park Authority had reduced its own carbon dioxide emissions by 64% compared with 2005. The latest work will reduce our emissions further. But we know we still have a long way to go.

Our Carbon Reduction Plan sets the Authority on a course to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from operations by at least 95% by 2030 compared with the 2005 baseline.

Clearly, we are but one organisation among many operating in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Richmondshire District Council is one of the local councils flagging up information for businesses starting on the road to reducing their carbon footprint. For smaller businesses, they recommend trying the Carbon Trust's Emissions Calculator, Benchmarking Tool or Energy Management Self-Assessment Tool - visit **www.carbontrust.com** for more information.



A rainbow over the roof of the new solar panels at the Dales Countryside Museum, Hawes



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