Dales

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

A newspaper for the residents of the Yorkshire Dales National Park

Winter 2022

Coast to Coast path to become country's newest National Trail

The famous Coast to Coast path, which stretches from St. Bees in Cumbria to Robin Hood's Bay in the North York Moors National Park, is set to become England's newest National Trail.

The long-distance route was devised by fell walker, guidebook author and illustrator, Alfred Wainwright in 1972, with his guidebook published a year later. It is walked in its entirety by around 6,000 people every year with hikers passing through high fells, heather moorland and heath and experiencing some of England's richest history along the way, including iron age hillforts and medieval castles.

The designation of the Coast to Coast as a National Trail - announced in August - has been a key objective within the current National Park Management Plan.



From left to right, Ian Hewitt of the Burgoyne Hotel in Reeth, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Kathryn Beardmore, Director of Park Services at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, and Cllr Carl Les, leader of North Yorkshire County Council, celebrate the start of work to make Wainwright's Coast to Coast walk a National Trail

The Authority will work alongside Natural England - the Government's advisor on National Trails - and other partners to improve the popular route to meet the standard befitting of a National Trail. In total, £5.6 million has been committed by the Government to the 197-mile path. This includes funding to realise the 'wider benefits' of designation, including community engagement and working with businesses to maximise economic benefits.

The line of the National Trail has been published in the designation report and it follows closely the existing walked route.



Nine Standards Rigg on the Coast to Coast path: "Surely there cannot be a finer itinerary for a long-distance walk!" - Alfred Wainwright

Kathryn Beardmore, the Authority's Director of Park Services, said: "This is a hugely positive step. The route already contributes around £7 million to the tourism economy along its corridor. Our survey of businesses in the area revealed 86% see direct economic benefit from the route and National Trail status will generate more business opportunities, especially in places like Kirkby Stephen, Keld and Reeth.

"We are now planning the work and speaking directly with user groups, landowners and farmers, listening to their views and ensuring they're fully involved with the programme to deliver the route as a National Trail by 2025, including signposting alternatives sections for horse riders, cyclists, and those with disabilities where the walked route isn't suitable".

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan sets out the aspirations and objectives for the many organisations that operate in the National Park. For more information and to follow progress on achieving these objectives, visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/national-park-management-plan**

CALL OUT FOR DARK SKY LIGHT METER HOSTS

The Yorkshire Dales National Park was awarded Dark Sky Reserve Status from the International Dark Sky Association in December 2020 in recognition of its magical dark night skies.

With large areas free from light pollution, our dark skies bring amazing opportunities to look up and see the Milky Way, planets, shooting stars, and even the Northern Lights.

To help keep our Dark Sky Reserve status, we should all think about the type of lighting we use and the impact on our surroundings, lighting only to the extent necessary. This reduces unnecessary consumption of electricity, thereby reducing energy costs too. We have put together information on our website to help you choose when replacing lights.



The National Park's stunning night sky seen from Twistleton Scar. Credit: Danny Lawson

The Authority is required to submit regular light meter readings to the International Dark Sky Association to prove that our skies continue to be as dark as they were at designation. We have a team of dedicated volunteers who go out and take manual readings during the dark winter nights. As you can imagine this is an onerous task and one affected by the weather.

An alternative is permanent light meters located around the National Park and we are looking for 'hosts' for these meters in its darkest and most remote areas. You will need a good WiFi connection, and the meters will require an electrical plug-in.

If you are interested in being part of this exciting project or want to find out more, please contact our Dark Skies Project Manager, Hannah Kay, on 01969 652369 or **hannah.kay@yorkshiredales.org.uk**

Advice on the best dark sky friendly lighting to choose for your property - alongside how to enjoy the National Park's dark skies and how to become a dark sky-friendly business - can be found at **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/dark-sky**

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A warm welcome to the Winter edition of *Dales*

Things have certainly been busy in the nation since our last edition: three Prime Ministers, four Chancellors and three Secretaries of State at the Environment Department. Yes - quite busy!

Congratulations to Rishi Sunak in his new role as Prime Minister. It is good to see one of our local MPs being elevated to such a position. We wish him well as he gets to grips with some short and longer term issues affecting us all.

What has not changed are the critical issues that we face as a National Park - indeed, as a society. It's important that a body like the National Park Authority doesn't see itself as 'all things to all people' and continues to focus on those issues over which we have some degree of influence and delivery .

For us, the priorities for action remain:

- Responding - and increasing the speed of that response - to the climate and nature emergencies. Unless these are properly addressed, and with more speed, we will not have a future worthy of the name
- The future of farming and land use in the National Park. This is intrinsically related to the first point and the ambition must be for a sustainable and profitable farming sector that can make a big contribution to the challenges around climate and nature
- A vibrant, welcoming and inclusive National Park that contributes to the health and well-being of society.

These are all tough issues to deliver against, but failure is not an option. Working together we can and must address them.

Enjoy this edition of *Dales*.



David Butterworth
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Neil Heseltine
CHAIR

'Mountain wool' tested in peatland restoration

A wool entrepreneur working with four upland farms has been awarded a Farming in Protected Landscapes grant to develop new uses for Swaledale sheep fleeces.

Ruth Lindsey, a Bradfordian settled in Hardraw in Upper Wensleydale, is making woollen logs for use in peatland restoration.

At the moment vast amounts of imported coconut husk, manufactured into coir logs, are being placed across eroding gullies on degraded peatlands in Yorkshire and Cumbria. The logs stop heavy rain washing away the exposed peat, allowing mosses and other vegetation to grow back. This not only supports biodiversity and helps to reduce downstream flooding but - over time - healthy peatland can pull in and store huge amounts of carbon from the atmosphere.

A small-scale trial of 30 woollen logs is taking place this winter at Fleet Moss in the Yorkshire Dales, as well as at two peatland sites in the North York Moors National Park. It's hoped the wool will prove to be an effective alternative to coir.

The National Park Authority administers Defra's three-year Farming in Protected Landscapes programme in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. So far it has awarded just over one million pounds in grants to 86 businesses. More than a million pounds remains in the pot and farmers are being invited to apply for it.

Mrs Lindsey, who is trading as Natural Dales Wool Products, said she began to think about new uses for wool when she learned from a farming friend that Swaledale fleeces, which are coarse and short stapled, were fetching only 8 pence a kilogram:

"It costs between £1.20 and £1.50 to pay someone to clip a sheep. If you get two kilos of wool from a Swaledale ewe you're doing well. Then the farmers have to transport it to the British Wool depots at Marrick or Ingleton. So they are making a massive loss. That's why mountain wool is being burned or buried or left in barns."

She said the idea to turn fleeces into logs came to her after reading an article on peatland restoration in the Northern Echo newspaper. Having previously worked in her family's former wool business in Bradford, The Multiple Fabric Company, she had contacts in West Yorkshire who could assist in the manufacturing process.

"For the past two years four farms have given me their wool, although in future I want to be able to pay for it. This year the fleeces were baled at Thwaite Bridge Farm and put into wool sheets and taken to Salts Mill [in Saltaire] to be stored. They will soon be going to Dewsbury for scouring," she said.

Once scoured, the wool will be stuffed into one metre-long logs made from felt. Mrs Lindsey is also selling the felt at a local business in Hawes for use as a mulch around trees or in garden beds.

She said: "From start to finish the wool travels 145 miles, whereas with coconut fibre it's travelled thousands of miles. The amount of wool that could be used on bogs is astonishing. But there are a lot of unknowns. We don't know whether the wool fibre will last as long as the coconut fibre. We don't know whether it's going to hold the water back. That's why we've got the trials going. The idea is to support the local community by using local wool for local peat.

"We want to be able to pay 50 pence per kilo of wool. That still wouldn't cover the cost of employing a shearer but it would be getting there."

The Authority's Member Champion for the Natural Environment, Mark Corner, said: "Farming in Protected Landscapes is there to support hill farms as they prepare for life without the Government's Basic Payment Scheme.

"It is vital that these businesses identify new income sources and prepare themselves for the transition to the new Environmental Land Management schemes. As a society, we need viable farm businesses that can help to tackle the nature and climate emergencies.

"The grant for Natural Dales Wool Products to test the idea of whether wool can be used in peatland restoration is exciting and eye-catching, and it is one of the more unusual awards.

"We have previously highlighted how the programme has funded wildlife habitat creation and regenerative farming. There are many other ways the programme could be used to support new income streams and diversification options. Farmers with potential projects are warmly invited to get in touch."

To find out more about the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme and how to apply for a grant, visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/farming-in-protected-landscapes**



Ruth Lindsey with two of the woollen logs

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GRANTS TO ENHANCE BOTH ENVIRONMENT AND FARM BUSINESS

Farmers across the whole of the Yorkshire Dales National Park are now eligible to get free advice and access to grants to improve the quality of the water, air and soil on their land while enhancing their farm business.

The Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) programme - funded by Defra and led in partnership by Natural England and the Environment Agency - aims to work with farmers and local partner organisations in priority areas across England to reduce the amount of pollution in rivers, groundwater and other aquatic habitats and improve air quality especially near protected sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Within the National Park the CSF programme is being delivered by the National Park Authority. Our CSF Advisers can provide expert advice, training and grant support to enable farmers to improve the environment and boost their farm business.

We can help with advice on soil/nutrient, slurry and manure management, reduction of ammonia emissions, farm infrastructure and machinery, pesticide handling, and natural flood management, as well as advising on agricultural transition schemes and regulations such as the mandatory Farming Rules for Water.

We can also provide access to grants - through the Countryside Stewardship Scheme - for new farm infrastructure, like roofing, new concrete yards and drainage, guttering, new livestock and machinery tracks, and watercourse fencing.

Traditionally, these grants have only been available within designated Countryside Stewardship High Priority areas for water quality. However, eligibility has now been expanded to include Medium Priority areas - which means that all land within the National Park will be eligible. The priority areas are available to view on Defra's interactive map application at **magic.defra.gov.uk**

In addition, we can advise on the new Slurry Infrastructure Grant, which is making funding available to farmers to help them overcome current significant financial barriers to investing in slurry storage on their farms.

The grant helps dairy, beef and pig farmers in England improve or expand slurry storage capacity to 6 months and invest in future-proofed slurry infrastructure and nutrient management systems with an aim to reducing water and air pollution risk.

Available to both landowner and tenant farmers, applications open for the grant on 6 December and close on 31 January 2023.

If you are interested in Catchment Sensitive Farming opportunities for your farm, please contact us for free and confidential advice on 01756 751600 or farming@yorkshiredales.org.uk

Since 2006 across England, CSF has worked with nearly 20,000 farms and helped farmers take more than 70,000 positive actions to reduce pollution.

Working with farmers and landowners to improve the condition of rivers is one of the objectives agreed by the Authority and a wide range of local partner organisations in the National Park Management Plan 2019-24 (objective C3).

So far this year our CSF Advisers have approved capital items to a value of over £700,000 and engaged with 118 farmers. River water quality in the Dales has improved with 62% in good ecological status, compared to 47% five years ago. The national average is 14%.



A Catchment Sensitive Farming-funded roof covers the cow feed area on a Raydale farm, reducing dirty water generation.

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Check our website for our exciting range of courses at the Gallery in 2023.
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All projects great and small

Demand for support from the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) has been particularly strong this year.

The fund's 2022/23 budget of £175,000 was allocated by early December, although people with great local projects are still warmly invited to submit expressions of interest.

This year SDF has supported projects ranging from creating a vegetable growing space in Eastby in Craven, to slowing the flow of Ireby Beck in the Lancashire part of the National Park, to a community buyout of Dales Head Garage in Hawes in Richmondshire.

Renewable energy has been a key feature in several applications. Here three case studies are presented, with a view to inspiring other such projects in the National Park.

Hydro power at last for upland farm

The Frankland family in Ravenstonedale received an SDF grant to investigate the feasibility of a hydro-electric system on an upland ghyll at Needle House Farm. At the moment the tenanted farmhouse and other dwellings are heated mainly from burning fossil fuels.

Sam Frankland said he was trying to complete long-standing unfinished business.

"My family came here more than a hundred years ago and they were looking to put in a hydropower station way back then. I've found all the paperwork. Gilkes of Kendal came here and there is a beautiful catalogue of all the turbines. Incredibly the technology hasn't really changed," he said.

"I am renovating one of the houses on site and hydropower is the obvious choice. The £2,970 SDF grant helped us understand what we have, so that we can manage the resource well.

"The ghyll flows all year round. There may be times when the water level drops too low for the hydro, but it is a reliable water source with a large catchment. There will be very little visual impact and it will give us carbon neutral, cheap electricity.

"These big old houses take a lot to heat and we don't want to be burning fossil fuels any more. The hydro will provide enough electricity for all our needs, and we also have an air source heat pump and storage heaters."

The grant helped pay for specialist assessments on hydrology, water framework directive requirements, fisheries impact, habitats and geomorphology. Plans are being developed to install the hydro-electric system in 2023.



Waterfall on the ghyll at Needle House Farm, near where the hydro system will go



Cultura staff, friends and volunteers outside Gayle Mill

Pioneering mill leads way again

An SDF grant has supported the Grade II* listed Gayle Mill in Upper Wensleydale. In December 2020, owners Cultura Trust took over the day to day running of the mill. The trust has carried out internal and external repairs and held open days and events.

The £6,000 grant helped pay for a specialist energy efficiency audit.

Graham Bell of Cultura Trust, who is into his fourth decade of guardianship of the mill, said: "When the 'perfect storm' of climate change, the pandemic and energy bills collided, Cultura had help from the SDF to look at how it performed against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals - the benchmarks of everything sustainable.

"The mill has been ahead of its time for over two centuries; that's why it has heritage significance and protection, which means it can't be messed with. But it leaks like a sieve. The energy/carbon audit found that it doesn't need double glazing, but the gaps plugged.

"A range of relatively simple improvements will make this eighteenth century factory pretty close to carbon neutral. When the beck is in flood and we can use renewable energy, we'll be carbon positive.

"When Cultura began this journey in the 1990s, hydro-power and biomass were niche interests. Reality has caught up with all of us, through need or conscience. We don't have to sacrifice the character of the Dales to do our bit for the planet; one old friend of a mill up dale is showing the way."

Bike Centre pumped about air source

Dales Bike Centre in Fremington in lower Swaledale serves as a hub for road cycling and an extensive network of mountain bike trails, including the Swale Trail.

The Centre has recently expanded with the creation of a new accessible café and additional visitor accommodation. It used a £9,995 SDF grant to help pay for the installation of air source heat pumps.





Dales Bike Centre (above) and part of its new air source heat pump system (bottom left)

Stu Price from Dales Bike Centre said: "Sustainability was always a high priority in the development of the expanded café and bike hire hub. A renewable heat source was top of our list because it would reduce our carbon footprint and reduce running costs - and because it was the right thing to do.

"We worked with local heating engineer Frank Shields and Sons of Redmire. An air source heat pump and underfloor heating system for many reasons came out as our best option. We have two units which have proved so far to be very effective, very efficient and incredibly quiet.

"We are frequently asked by customers how our new buildings are heated as they are cosy warm. Once the air source heating system is explained, and then if they stand next to the units, customers have a real light bulb moment about renewables for heating. The financial support from the SDF was a major key that enabled us to invest in our futures."

Want to find out more?
Contact us on 01969 652337 or visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/sustainable-development-fund**

GOT A QUESTION ABOUT TREES?

Whatever your query, our Trees & Woodlands Team will be happy to advise you.

To discuss woodland creation within the National Park and get advice on available grant schemes, please contact **woodlandcreation@yorkshiredales.org.uk**

For questions relating to protected trees and general enquiries, please email **trees@yorkshiredales.org.uk**

For more information on the contribution trees and woodlands make to the landscape character of the Dales, as well as our programmes of work aimed at improving and expanding tree and woodland cover, driven by the Dales Woodland Strategy, visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/trees-and-woodlands**



This new native woodland at Aysgarth - a mix of young rowan, hawthorn and hazel, with some individual, mature ash trees - was planted in 2010 to add to and strengthen existing woodland in the area.

Housing key issue for new Local Plan

By Carl Lis, Member Champion for Sustainable Development



The Authority is preparing a new Local Plan that will guide future decisions on development in the National Park.

Over the summer our fifth public consultation - 'Preferred Options' - provided an opportunity for comment on a first draft of the Local Plan's policies. A total of 77 responses were received and the points raised are now being carefully considered as we continue to refine the policies.

One of the biggest issues that the Local Plan needs to address is housing.



New affordable housing development at Hill Croft, Long Preston

Studies have shown that at least 50 new dwellings need to be provided each year in the National Park in order to sustain the population. Without this additional housing the National Park's population is likely to go into decline and this will prove damaging for the sustainability of local businesses, services, and the viability of communities as a whole.

So, the new Local Plan - which will cover 2023-40 - will need to identify where a supply of at least 850 houses is going to come from. Conversions of barns and other existing buildings will continue to play a role in housing supply, but won't provide the amount of housing needed in the locations it is needed most. For this we need to see more new build housing in our towns and larger villages.

The next stage in the Local Plan process will be a public consultation on the potential sites that might be suitable for new build housing. This will take place early in 2023.

These will be sites capable of accommodating at least five houses each. A range of potential locations have been assessed in terms of their suitability for development, and the consultation will focus on a shortlist of those that appear to be the best candidates.

The new Local Plan will continue to allow smaller new build housing developments of four or fewer houses through infilling and rounding off of towns and villages. The consultation will include maps of over 90 towns and villages showing boundaries and protected green spaces that will determine where these smaller developments might take place.

The new build housing sites consultation will have a big influence on which sites are taken forward for further consideration, so that the Authority can assess them in more detail, before deciding which are included in the final version of the Local Plan.

The Local Plan 2023-40 will set out the policies that guide what development can and can't take place in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It looks at the 'big picture', considering what kind of development Dales communities will need in the future and how to protect the National Park's special qualities. For more information, visit **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/local-plan-2023-40**

NEW WOODLAND IN THE NATIONAL PARK RECEIVES A BOOST

A grant from the £6 million Trees Call to Action Fund - led by Defra, the Forestry Commission and The National Lottery Heritage Fund - is supporting landowners to increase and manage tree cover across Cumbria and Durham.

The Heart of the Pennines Forest project will be delivered by North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust.

The team is using the £500,000 grant to increase woodland advisor capacity in the Westmorland Dales area of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and in the Durham and Cumbria areas of the North Pennines AONB. In addition to supporting landowners wishing to create more woodland, wood pasture and scrub, the grant will help establish a community tree nursery, employ four woodland trainees, and develop a regional deer monitoring and control strategy to address damage caused by browsing.

Woodland Creation Officer for the Heart of the Pennines Forest Niki Child said: "For the Yorkshire Dales National Park this means having a dedicated woodland advisor for land owners and land managers in the Westmorland Dales area.

"We can carry out land assessments and provide guidance on the most appropriate areas for woodland, wood pasture or scrub. We can also advise on the best available capital works funding and woodland-related income streams, and draft funding applications, and, if needed, help with finding and instructing contractors."

"A key element is that we link up with other projects and partners to maximise landscape scale benefits as part of our wider nature recovery strategies."

Sarah Tooze, Nature Recovery Manager for the North Pennines AONB Partnership, said: "This project will focus on the kinds of tree cover which are a good fit for our landscape and work alongside nature-friendly farming systems. Small-scale woodlands and low-density wood pasture with scrub and scattered canopy trees will improve the landscape for biodiversity and other public goods.

"In particular, we'd like to support more ancient woodland connectivity and clough planting, as well as projects supporting water quality."

For sites in the Westmorland Dales, please email **nicola.child@yorkshiredales.org.uk**. If you have land in the North Pennines AONB, contact Simon O'Hare, Woodland and Tree Officer (Cumbria AONB), on **sohare@northpenninesaonb.org.uk**



It's a wrap! Our **Summit for Nothing** scheme has sadly come to an end but what a success (and much fun) it was.

144 people who wouldn't usually have access to the countryside came to the Yorkshire Dales National Park on supported walks.

With thanks to Sports Shoes for funding the transport and Due North for running the events with us.

Public access created in Greenfield Forest

Extensive public rights of way have been created in the largest area of woodland in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

New bridleways of nearly 12 kilometres (7 miles) in length, as well as footpaths of nearly 700 metres (half a mile), now exist at High and Low Greenfield in Langstrothdale and the adjacent Cam Woodlands.

The conifer woodlands are in the geographical centre of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and were once a subject of local and national debate - including mention in the House of Commons in 1965, and prompting celebrated author J B Priestley to write a letter to *The Times*.

They are currently managed by the forest management company, Tihill, on behalf of Gresham House Timberland LP which has welcomed and supported the new public access.

The new bridleway and footpaths are the longest lengths of public rights of way to be created in the Yorkshire Dales National Park since 2010, when 12km of new bridleways were created as part of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail.

The new bridleways in fact link directly to the Pennine Bridleway, providing a loop for cyclists and horse riders that weaves a way through plantations covering 1,258 hectares.

Dylan Cammack, Senior Forest Manager, Tilhill said: "The new access at Greenfield will allow people to enjoy this woodland, allowing them to appreciate and learn about sustainably managed productive forestry within the National Park, and at the same enjoy the health benefits associated with being outdoors."



Dylan Cammack and Nick Cotton on one of the new public bridleways into Cam and Greenfield Woodlands

Member Champion for Recreation Management at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Nick Cotton, said: "Any new public rights of way creation in the Yorkshire Dales National Park is a cause for celebration. In this case it's especially significant because of the scale of these new bridleways and the interesting history of the land use change from farming to forestry.

"Some people might turn up their noses at access through a vast conifer plantation. If they did, they would be missing out on the red squirrels, the star-lit dark skies and the opportunity for some of the freshest air in the country. It's great news that Greenfield Forest and Cam Woodlands has become yet another place to discover on foot, bike or horse in the Yorkshire Dales National Park."

The new rights of way were created following the signing of a deed of dedication on 31 March 2017. The signatories were the then owners of Greenfield Forest and Cam Woodlands and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. Work on the routes was completed earlier this year.

Strong public support for Hawes-Garsdale multi-user route



The line of the former railway as it approaches Hawes

Nearly four out of five members of the public who responded to a survey have backed a proposal for a new family-friendly, wheelchair-accessible route along the disused railway line between the town of Hawes and Garsdale Station.

Currently there is no public access along the former branch line, which closed more than sixty years ago.

In one of the most engaged surveys ever conducted by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, a total of 2,261 individual responses were received, with people identifying as parents, grandparents, as well as those with limited mobility, expressing strong support for a safe and off-road recreational route through Upper Wensleydale.

Members of the National Park Authority confirmed their support for the route at their meeting in June allowing staff to start approaching potential partners. Creating the multi-user route is a significant capital project expected to cost around £5 million. It can only be achieved through a partnership approach, and would likely take five years to complete, after funding for the legal work is secured.

Authority Chair Neil Heseltine said: "Support from local people for a Hawes-Garsdale bridleway is particularly strong owing to a desire to create a safe place for children to cycle or go horse riding away from the A684, a need for a direct, car-and-motorcycle-free route between Hawes and Garsdale Station, and a need to support economic development, which the route would likely stimulate.

"The former railway is a monument to Victorian engineering, but now is a largely wasted - and deteriorating - asset. So we can either look to work with partners and others to develop a multi-use route or we can do nothing other than try to protect the route in the hope that, at some future date, the political will and the finance might be available to reinstate the railway.

"Decades have now passed since trains ran over this line which means the benefits that might accrue to the area from finding another use are now worth exploring"

A feasibility study into the creation of a Hawes-Garsdale multi-user route, commissioned by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Richmondshire District Council, can be found on our website at **www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/hawes-garsdale-proposal**

Commoners gather sheep from Ingleborough

Upland farmers looking to raise awareness of the ancient yet threatened practice of commoning had one of their sheep 'gathers' documented in November.

A dozen 'graziers' - farmers with rights to graze sheep on the common - and their dogs drove sheep from a vast area of common land on the west side of Ingleborough mountain into brand new sorting pens at Cod Bank.

It was the fifth and final gather of the year from Ingleborough Common, intended to bring all the breeding ewes still on the fell to lower ground for tupping.

Watching were storytellers Rob and Harriet Fraser from the Our Upland Commons Project, who are producing 'Commons Stories' and supporting commoners to make video diaries.

Our Upland Commons funded the construction of the £11,000 new sorting pens. As well as celebrating the traditions of commoning, the project is helping to secure their future through work to enhance biodiversity, improve flood mitigation and restore peat. It's working in Dartmoor, Shropshire and the Lake District, as well as the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Commoners of Brant Fell in the Howgills near Sedbergh in the South Lakeland District and of Grassington Moor in the Craven District are the other project participants in the Dales.

Chair of the Ingleborough Graziers, John Dawson from Bleak Bank Farm, said: "I'm a big fan of the project. It's raised the profile of what we do - it's as simple as that. We were so long under the radar.

"Some aspects of commoning and the agricultural life are under-valued by society. The question is whether people want food to be produced by the family farm. These are farms who you know will always do their best and that you can trust.

"Some lambs gathered off Ingleborough this year have already been sold into the food chain. And all those lambs sucked their mother's milk and ate grass. It doesn't get any closer to nature than that, or any more pure than that."



Ingleborough Graziers look for sheep during a gather, as the mist lifts. Credit: Rob Fraser/somewhere-nowhere

John's son William Dawson, who was also on the gather, said the funding for the new sorting pens had boosted morale:

"Often all farmers think about is that we're constantly being weakened. Only about 12 gatherers use the common now. Twenty years ago that would have been about 30. As small farms have sold up because they are no longer viable, the number of gatherers has come down. So it's nice to see investment being made in commoning.

"The pens will make the job easier and safer because the old pens had been built in the 60s and they were held together by bits of baler twine, old pallets and zinc sheets."

The Authority's Member Champion for Cultural Heritage, Derek Twine, said: "Commoning survives in only a handful of places in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, yet it is an outstanding feature of our cultural heritage.

"The viability of commoning is being further threatened during this period of agricultural transition that we are seeing in England. Supporting commons through this period of change is vital. One of the ways we can do that is to help people understand the benefits that come from traditional management of commons: good food, wildlife habitats, carbon sequestration and water storage."

Our Upland Commons Project is led by the Cumbria-based Foundation For Common Land, with funding from National Lottery players and grants from Esmée Fairbairn and Garfield Weston Foundations.

ANOTHER BRIE-LLIANT YEAR PUTS CHEESE FESTIVAL ON THE MAP

By Helen Dalton, Tourism Officer



The fifth Yorkshire Dales Cheese Festival took place this autumn - with a colourful food map helping more people than ever enjoy a 'taste' of the area over the weekend.

In the Dales we are lucky to have an abundance of businesses producing, supplying and selling fresh local food and drink right on our doorstep. This, combined with a strong dairying heritage (with cheesemaking at its centre), is why its produce is one of the National Park's very special qualities.

The concept of the festival is to showcase businesses in and around the National Park as they host a unique event or create a themed menu to demonstrate their offer. We want to include as wide a range of businesses as possible, so we created and distributed a map showing the best places to experience or buy local produce, and promoted the festival through our digital channels and local and national press.



Taste the difference: Curlew Dairy's Ben Spence - holding their award-winning Old Roan cheese - talks to participants about the cheesemaking process on a Muddy Boots-organised walk in Wensleydale during the 2022 Cheese Festival

Jenny Thirsk at Helwith Tea Garden near Richmond said: "I know for a fact that the event has 'put me on the map' if the number of views on the Facebook page is anything to go by!

"I've had loads of positive response - everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves.

"It was a lot of hard work, but I think worth it. Of the 50 tastings we sold, 11 were customers we'd seen before - and all the new faces said they'd come again. I suspect it's not often that a marketing exercise makes money quite so directly, rather than costing it!

"Thank you to the tourism team for your help and support. I hope you will count me in on similar initiatives in the future."

The Yorkshire Dales Cheese Festival will return from 6-9 October 2023. If you are a business who would like to host an event, please email us at **tourism@yorkshiredales.org.uk**



Dialect exhibition shares Dales heritage

In Your Words, an exhibition celebrating the rich dialect heritage of the Yorkshire Dales, is now open at the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes.

Rare interviews with local people gathered by researchers in the 1950s can be heard, alongside snippets from twenty new oral histories recorded by volunteers. Fieldbooks, word maps and objects which illustrate dialect words, such as a sheep cratch and a havercake board, are on display.

The special exhibition - which will run until 20 April 2023 - is part of the Dialect and Heritage Project in partnership with University of Leeds and funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Local farmers, such as Cooper Peacock from Muker in Swaledale, contributed seventy years ago to the original Survey of English Dialects, sharing words and ways of life with the fieldworkers from Leeds. Words documented included gully (carving knife), brig hebble (side of bridge) and bink (a bench outside a farmhouse).

More recently, the project spoke to A. R Calvert from Preston Under Scar, born in 1928, who reflected on changes during his lifetime. He noted how the dialect would differ from village to village - for example, the plant that he would call a kelk being known as a kexi elsewhere.

The exhibition reflects on the central Dales industries of dairying, sheep faming, lead mining and the wool trade, which have all added to the local vocabulary. The project has taken pride in ensuring a wide range of individuals have had the opportunity to contribute their adopted and inherited words and for people's stories to be looked after into the future.

Following in the creative footsteps of the Museum founder - author Marie Hartley - local printmaker Hester Cox was asked to contribute her perspective to the exhibition. Her works reflect on the bird species that Marie Hartley recorded in her 'Life and Tradition' book series that are now sadly on the endangered list.

The Dales Countryside Museum has commissioned a second series of its 'Voices From The Dales' podcast. Six episodes, to be published fortnightly from 2 December, will explore dialect as spoken by the people of Hawes and the neighbouring village of Gayle. Both series are available on all podcast platforms and via the Museum website.

The team of volunteer oral history fieldworkers are also inviting people who have a rich history in the area - particularly families - to come forward and have their stories documented. To take part in the research, email **dcm@dalescountrysidemusuem.org.uk**

The Dales Countryside Museum is open seven days a week. Entry to the special exhibition is included in the admission price. For more information, visit **www.dalescountrysidemuseum.org.uk**



1950s University of Leeds Survey of English Dialects fieldworker Stanley Ellis with Tom Mason. (Reproduced with the permission of Special Collections, Leeds University Library under CC-BY-NC 4.0)

Guardian of the Dales

A new book has been published that tells the story of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and how the National Park itself has evolved over eight decades.

'Guardian of the Dales', by Nigel Watson, features vintage photography, maps and news articles from the archives, and is an insightful and entertaining look at how the National Park came into being, capturing the personal recollections of staff, Members, volunteers and others who have been a part of the Dales story.

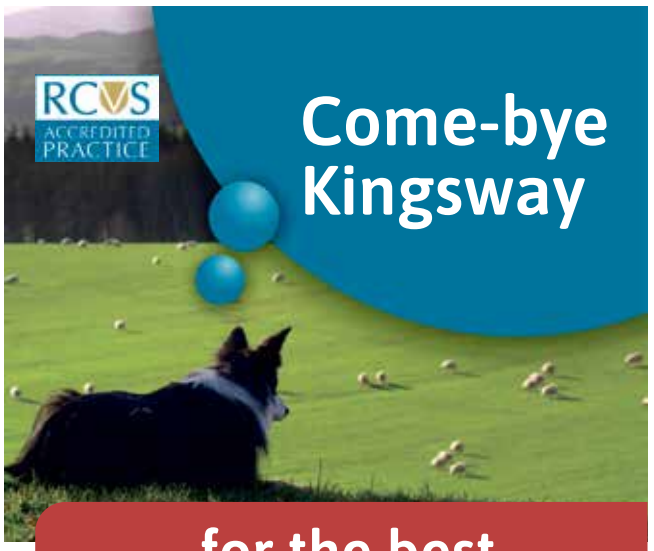
John Dower, one of the leaders of a long-running campaign to establish National Parks in England and Wales, spoke in 1942 of his passion for the area: "To visitors and residents alike, the Dales are a reservoir of physical, mental and spiritual refreshment - a natural refuge of priceless worth from the strain, clatter, congestion and artificiality of our machine-ridden civilisation.

"It is a beautiful country, which must be kept beautiful."



Wilf Proctor (left) beat off more than 500 applicants to become the National Park's first warden

'Guardian of the Dales' is available to buy from any National Park Visitor Centre or our online shop at **www.retail.yorkshiredales.org.uk**



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