YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

Special Qualities, Special Experiences

(An integrated access, recreation, visitor management, diversity and tourism strategy)

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

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1. Introduction

1. The Yorkshire Dales National Park is a special place - an extensive landscape with diverse wildlife and cultural heritage of national importance. It is an environment, shaped by farming practices, where visitors and residents alike can readily experience expansive landscapes, wildlife, fascinating geology, local heritage and culture. The good rail and road links to the National Park, and the extensive network of public rights of way, open access land, and quieter roads within it mean that most parts of the Yorkshire Dales National Park are readily accessible. In addition, the area's natural features, heritage and beauty provide a unique sense of place and opportunities for outdoor recreation, learning and understanding.

2. The area caters for many different types of visitors and recreational users, from the annual family holiday to a wide range of shorter visits, weekend breaks and recreation-based day trips. There are over 5 million visitor days spent in the National Park each year (*Yorkshire Dales National Park Tourism Trends*, 2017) and most people come to enjoy the area's special qualities, particularly its outstanding landscape and natural beauty (84%), peace and tranquillity (33%), with over half undertaking a walk of over an hour during their visit (*Yorkshire Dales National Park Visitor Survey*, 2017). The area provides a contrast to the urban environment, where most visitors live. Many businesses depend on these visitors for their livelihood, which means the environment and its special qualities, accessibility, recreation, and the visitor economy of the area, are inextricably linked.

3. We all have favourite outdoor locations that we love to visit, and their sense of place and attachment has a profound and personal effect on each one of us. The Yorkshire Dales National Park may be a place of exhilaration and adventure, escape or simply one that brings back memories. Whether we visit alone or as a group, the National Park evokes inspiration, awe, enjoyment and fun.

4. This strategy - *Special Qualities, Special Experiences* - was first published in 2010. It sets out the policies and principles which underpin the work of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority in promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public. It has been updated to take account of significant changes, including policy and legislative changes nationally, the new areas of the National Park, and the recently revised National Park Management Plan. The National Park Management Plan outlines the Park's objectives and what we are intending to do over the next five years. This strategy explains ***how*** we will set about achieving those objectives that relate to access, recreation, public engagement and tourism.

2. About this strategy

This section covers:

- The statutory purposes of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
- The context for this strategy
- An explanation of the structure of this document.

2.1 Our statutory purposes

5. Our statutory purposes are to:
    - conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park;
    - promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

6. Everything we do must relate back to these purposes. In addition, other public organisations e.g. County Councils and District Councils amongst others, must have 'regard' to these purposes in undertaking their own work.

7. In pursuing these purposes we have a statutory duty 'to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park'.

8. Establishing the appropriate relationships between the conservation of the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage, the activities of visitors and the well-being of the local community is critical to the success of the National Park. The priorities of individuals and interest groups are naturally varied and any strategy must give proper weight to conflicting demands. The Environment Act 1995 makes it clear, however, that in accordance with the 'Sandford principle', where there is a conflict between the conservation of natural beauty, wildlife and/or cultural heritage and the promotion of enjoyment by the public, the former purpose shall be given greater weight.

2.2 The vision for National Parks in England and Wales

9. One of the key drivers for National Parks in England and Wales (demonstrated by the mass trespass on Kinder Scout in 1932) was the belief that visiting and enjoying the wildest, most beautiful landscapes was a positive, beneficial experience that should be enjoyed by many. John Dower in 1945, just before National Parks were established, wrote:

> 'National Parks should be in a true and full sense national if they are to be worthy of their name and purpose. This does not mean that local interests are to be disregarded. On the contrary, the well-being of those who live and work within them must always be a first consideration. But it does mean that their holiday and recreational use should be for people – and especially young people – of every class and kind and from every part of the country, indeed of the world.'
> 'National Parks are not for any privileged or otherwise restricted section of the population but for all who come to refresh their minds and spirit and to exercise their bodies in a peaceful setting of natural beauty.'

10. This is as much our belief today as it was 75 years ago. *The UK Government's vision for the English National Parks* (National Park Circular, 2010 para 10) adds that:

> By 2030 English National Parks and the Broads will be places where:
>
> …Everyone can discover the rich variety of England's natural and historical environment, and have the chance to value them as places for escape, adventure, enjoyment, inspiration and reflection, and a source of national pride, local distinctiveness and identity. They will be recognised as fundamental to our prosperity and well-being.

2.3 Our vision and the National Park Management Plan

11. At a local level The *Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan 2019–24* sets out seven equally-weighted elements of the vision for our National Park. By 2040, it will be:

A. A distinctive, living, working, cultural landscape that tells the ongoing story of generations of people interacting with their environment.

B. A friendly, open and welcoming place with outstanding opportunities to enjoy its special qualities.

C. Home to the finest variety of wildlife in England.

D. Resilient and responsive to the impacts of climate change, storing more carbon each year than it produces.

E. Providing an outstanding range of benefits for the nation based on its natural resources, landscape and cultural heritage, which underpin a flourishing local economy.

F. Home to strong, self-reliant and balanced communities with good access to the services they need.

12. A number of objectives sit under each of these elements. The integrated approach taken in developing the Management Plan means that every objective will help to deliver at least two, and often more, elements of the vision. In relation to experiencing the National Park's special qualities the following Management Plan objectives are significant, and further information can be found in this document as shown in blue:

A2 Maintain the National Park as a place where a true sense of tranquillity, remoteness and solitude can be found, and by 2021 obtain Dark Skies Reserve status to enhance and promote enjoyment of its night sky. (Paragraphs 40 to 42)

B1 Benefit a wide variety of users by raising the standard of all public rights of way so that 90% are 'easy to use' by 2023. (Paragraphs 49 to 52)

B2 Maintain and promote the Pennine Trails and other recognised long-distance routes, identify opportunities for new multi-user routes, and campaign for the Coast to Coast path to become a National Trail by 2024. (Paragraphs 53 to 61 and 170 to 171)

B3 Carry out works to improve access on appropriate public rights of way and established permissive routes so that 262 km (10%) are suitable for users of all ages and abilities by 2024. (Paragraphs 130 to 132)

B4 By 2024 provide 6,000 people from under-represented groups with activity days that enable them to access the special qualities of the National Park, and so increase their understanding, enjoyment, health and well-being. (Paragraphs 70 to 78 and 124 to 129)

B5 Through educational and skills-based activities inspire 6,000 young people from in and around the National Park to explore and enhance their environment each year. (Paragraphs 133 to 137)

B6 Run a cohesive programme of inspirational, participatory activities that attract at least 4,000 people each year to find out more about the National Park's special qualities. (Paragraphs 79 to 81, and 140 to 144)

B7 Give people from all backgrounds an opportunity to enjoy and contribute to the National Park by providing at least 7,000 volunteer days per year, with 15% coming from under-represented groups. (Paragraphs 84 to 86)

B8 Work with organisers of large-scale events to ensure they are well run, benefit local businesses, and contribute to the maintenance of the Park's natural capital, for example funding the cost of maintaining the 'Three Peaks' route. (Paragraphs 45 to 48 and 82 to 83)

B9 Promote and encourage responsible cycling by supporting world class events that showcase the National Park, enabling the development of four 'cycle hubs', and creating at least one further family-friendly cycling route by 2023. (Paragraphs 158, and 182 to 184)

B10 Maintain 'green lanes' and, where appropriate, manage use by recreational motor vehicles, including enforcing any restrictions imposed by Traffic Regulation Orders. (Paragraphs 43 to 44)

B11 Develop and launch an annual farm and estate 'open day' programme by 2020 to enable more people to experience and understand the roles that farming, food production, woodland and moorland management play in looking after the distinctive landscape of the National Park. (Paragraphs 203 to 208 and 224 to 225)

E2 Improve the quality, variety and marketing of the tourism 'offer' to encourage more overnight stays and more visitors in the quieter months, so that the value of tourism grows by at least 5% in real terms by 2024. (Paragraphs 162, 185 to 195 and 209 to 225)

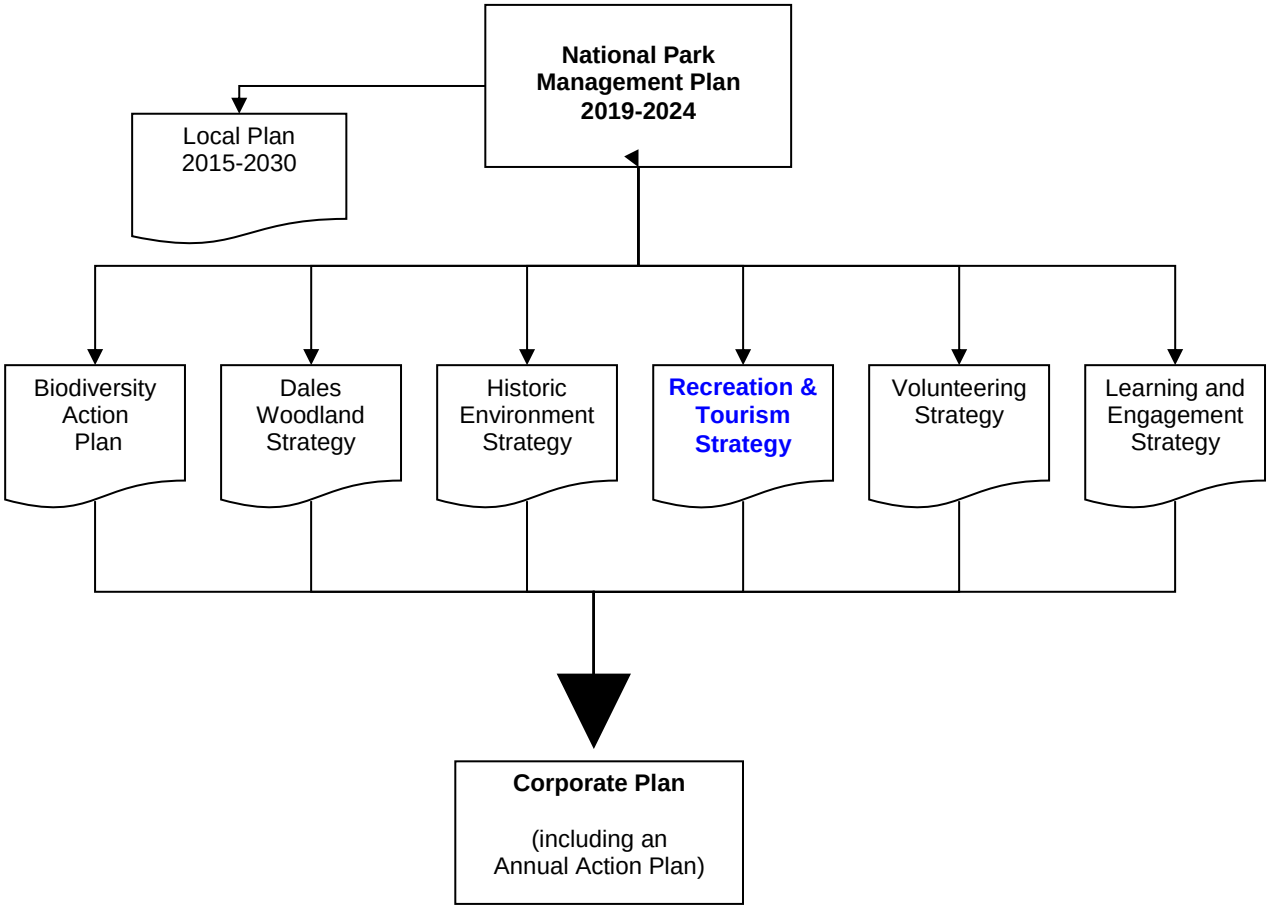
E3 Promote the Yorkshire Dales National Park as a leading sustainable tourism destination, including enhancing the locations of 4 National Park Centres to create 'visitor hubs' that promote local distinctiveness and assist destination promotion for local activities, accommodation, food and itineraries. (Paragraphs 167 to 171, 180 to 184 and 209 to 225)

E6 Develop and promote new events, festivals and attractions based on the National Park's special qualities and local distinctiveness so that at least 10% of visitors each year are coming for the first time. (Paragraphs 157 and 196 to 197)

13. This strategy provides the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's policies and principles for access, recreation, visitor management, diversity and tourism and will help deliver these objectives. It provides guidance primarily for the Authority, its staff and volunteers, but also explains our policies and rationale to others with an interest in the National Park and our work. It is underpinned by the aims and objectives in the *A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment: the 8-Point Plan for England's National Parks* and *The UK Government's vision for the English National Parks* (National Park Circular, 2010).

A full reference list is provided at the end of this strategy with hyperlinks (where available) to view documents on-line.

Figure 1 A diagram to show the relationship between this thematic strategy and other Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority strategic documents



14. In terms of measuring the success of this strategy, the *National Park Management Plan* and *Corporate Plan* objectives, related targets and actions are the reporting mechanisms and measures for our achievement (see **Figure 1**). Progress is reported annually to the National Park Authority.

2.4 The structure of this strategy

15. In each of the four main sections the issues and scope of the topic are introduced:

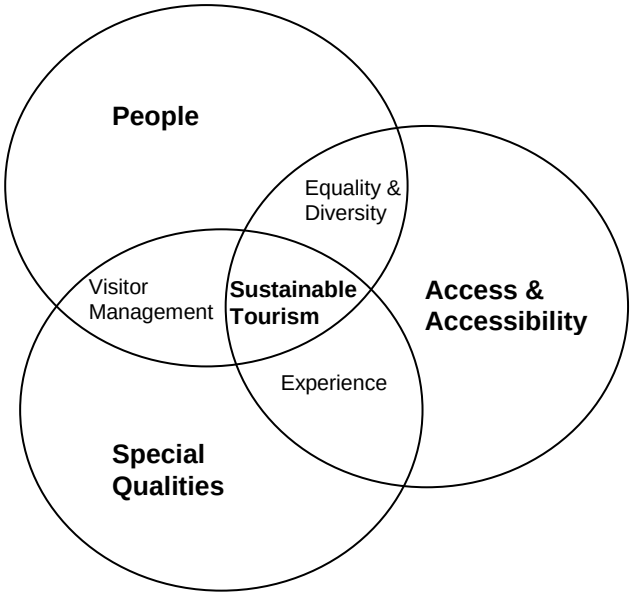
- **The special qualities and experience of the Dales.** The experiences the National Park has to offer through its special qualities, access and recreation opportunities, and the contribution they make to health and well-being.
- **A spatial approach.** Based on the units that make up the landscape (the main dales, tributary dales, dale heads, open upland) this tells us about the quality of experience and visitor facilities.
- **Accessibility and Access for All.** Equality and diversity; ways of increasing the diversity of our visitor profile; learning and engagement; information and signing to help visitors find their way around; interpretation and new technology.

- **Tourism.** Ensuring that tourism provides economic opportunities and exceptional visitor experiences that strengthen the socio-economic wellbeing of our communities, while respecting the special qualities of our landscape.

Guiding principles give our rationale; they shape our policy and overall approach to what we do in relation to each subject. They should be read together with the future strategy.

16. People, places and the special qualities of the National Park are strongly connected and interdependent as shown in the Venn diagram below. The landscape, habitats, wildlife and archaeological features that are actively shaped by land management and local communities give the area its special qualities. In turn, these special qualities are key attractors to visitors, who access and experience this environment. Visitor management techniques are used, where appropriate, to safeguard the special qualities and reduce the impact of visitors. There needs to be equality of opportunity to access the area, and this should result in the diversity of the National Park's visitor profile reflecting the diversity of the population as a whole. Visitors coming to the area sustain the tourism economy and the overall economic well-being of the area.

Some of the relationships explored through this strategy



2.5 The role of the National Park Authority

17. We have a direct involvement in many of the topics covered by this strategy and under statute we have a number of responsibilities. As the National Park Authority we are the Planning Authority (under the Town and Country Planning Acts) and Access and Relevant Authority (under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act). We are also the delegated Highway Authority for rights of way (on behalf of the county councils). However, we take a partnership approach wherever possible, as outlined in the National Park Management Plan. We believe our role is to facilitate, co-ordinate and add value to the work of others within the National Park, in line with our statutory purposes.

3. The special qualities and experiences of the Dales

This section covers:

- The special qualities, opportunities and motivations for outdoor recreation
- Enjoying the special qualities - open access, rights of way, recreation, multi-day routes
- Wider benefits of the special qualities – health and well being
- Putting something back – user payback, volunteering.

3.1 What is unique to the Dales? – our special qualities

18. In the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the interaction of people with nature has produced a landscape of remarkable beauty and distinctive character that is cherished and enjoyed by the nation. It is a home for over 24,000 people, with 95% of the land in private ownership, but also a place that millions of people visit every year.

19. The area's unique landscape character is created by the particular combination of many elements – the managed moorland, pastures and valley grasslands; small woodlands; dispersed villages and farmsteads; the local building materials; strong field patterns; drystone walls and field barns. This is what makes it such a special place.

20. This unique landscape has been created through a combination of geology, moulded by natural forces and the influence of human activity, through farming and moorland management for grouse shooting. It has expression in high fells and heather moors, with generally more isolated dale heads and 'tributary' dales, above the broader and steep sided 'main' dales. The dales have traditional upland hay meadows, with barns and walls as defining characteristics of the scenery. Limestone cliffs, wooded scars and caves are landscape features that can be seen throughout the Yorkshire Dales, and add drama and mystery to the farmed landscape. The banding of hard and softer rocks gives rise to numerous waterfalls along the becks and rivers. The traditional architecture of local stone-built farms, hamlets, and villages, with stone slate roofs, gives the area a distinctive look that has developed in harmony with the topography and materials of the landscape setting.

21. The Yorkshire Dales has many special qualities, which are summarised under the headings natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage and enjoying the experience of being here. These are all listed in full in the *Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan 2019–24.* The 'experience of being here' is central to this strategy and reproduced below in paragraph 22.

The experience of being here (extract from the National Park Management Plan)

22. Most of the people who spend any time in the National Park will experience a range of emotions, triggered by its beauty, grandeur and other, less tangible qualities. These all help create the 'spirit of place' that is unique to the Yorkshire Dales National Park:

- **Extensive areas where a true sense of tranquillity, remoteness and solitude** can still be found, which is rare in England today.

People enjoying the special qualities











- **The natural sounds of wind, water and birdsong** which are important to the recreational experience; the 'spiritual exercise and enjoyment' that lies at the heart of National Park designation.
- **Expansive views** that show to advantage the area's beauty and variety.
- **Ever-changing light, seasonal change and occasional severe weather** which create visual drama and contrast that enhance personal experience.
- **Strong, self-reliant communities,** each with its own special character, but all with a very close sense of community, reflected in the wide range of local village shows, festivals, social activities, traditional pubs and entertainment.
- **Dark night skies**; as it suffers little from light pollution, the moon, night sky and atmospheric effects can be fully appreciated.
- **An historical and extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and tracks**, including the Pennine Trails, Coast to Coast, Yorkshire Three Peaks, and Malham Landscape Trail, some of the best known and loved routes in the country.
- **Extensive areas of public access, rivers, crags and caves** offering outstanding opportunities for outdoor recreation from paragliding to caving, with some of the hardest sport climbing in the world at Malham Cove.

23. These special qualities mean the outdoor recreational experiences that the National Park has to offer are of a kind and a quality not found in ordinary countryside. They are celebrated and cherished all the more because of this. These experiences allow people to connect with the National Park and gain a deeper understanding and enjoyment of it.

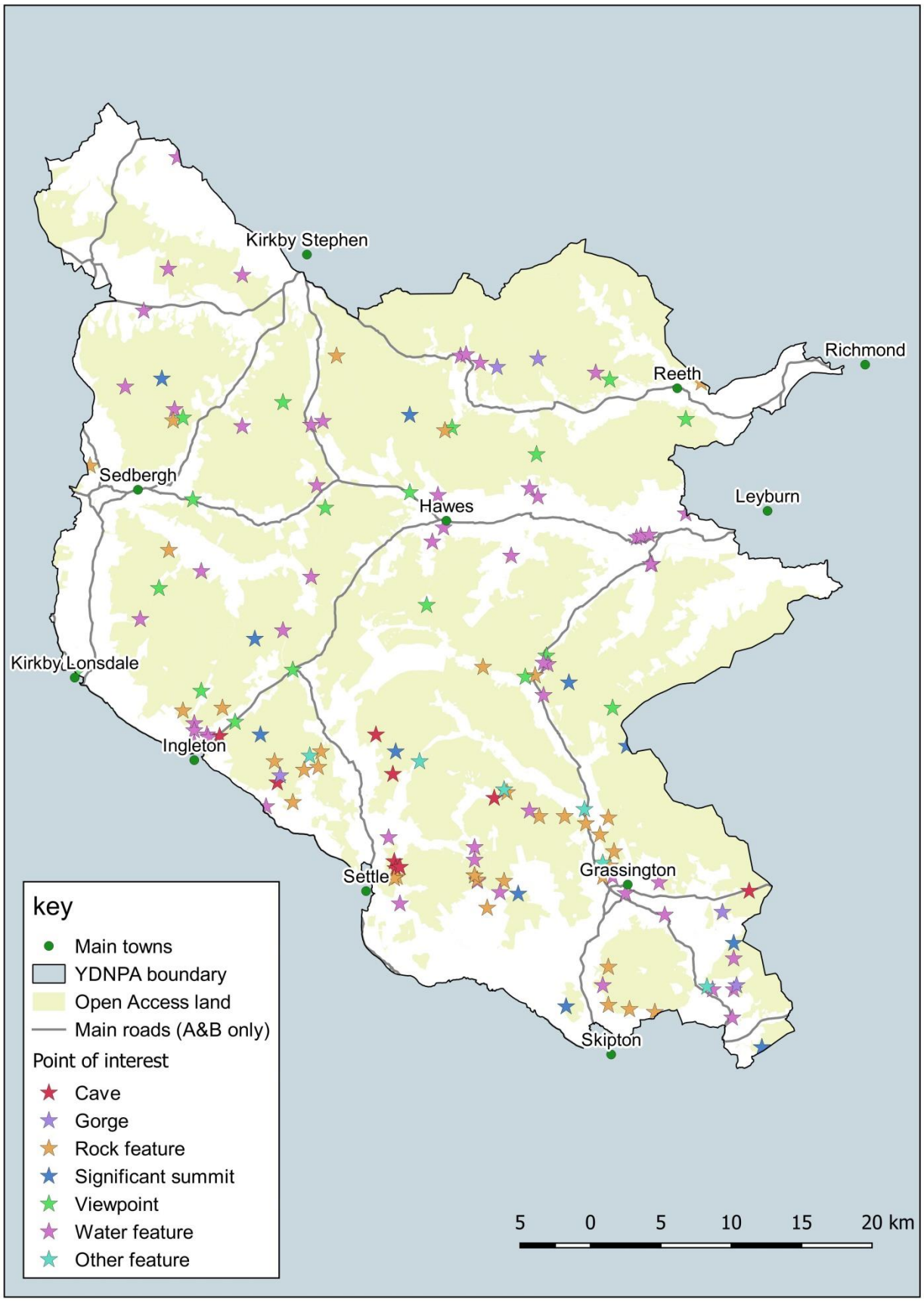
Opportunities for outdoor activities

24. The environmental assets and special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park provide a wide range of natural attractions (see **Figure 2**) throughout the area for a range of outdoor activities, as well as nationally renowned recreational pursuits.

25. The area's historical and extensive network of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways, BOATS (byways open to all traffic) and other routes with public access, extensive areas of Open Access land, rivers, crags and caves, mean that it has some of the best opportunities for outdoor activities to be found anywhere in England.

- There is a network of over 2,500km (1,500 miles) of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and BOATS to enjoy, and over 60% of the whole area is Open Access land (defined by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) for recreation on foot. In addition, there are also over 100km of unsealed un-surfaced roads (green lanes) that complement the rights of way network. These make the features of the Dales readily accessible and a great venue for activities such as **walking, horse riding, mountain biking, running** and **cross country skiing**.
- The network of bridleways, green lanes and tracks through Open Access land provide **'miles without stiles'** routes that are well surfaced and free from stiles, steps and narrow gates. These provide easier access for people with limited mobility, including wheelchair users, families with pushchairs, and people who are visually impaired to experience the Yorkshire Dales.

Figure 2 Location of natural attractions (lakes, cliffs, waterfalls, caves)



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- The National Park is criss-crossed by a variety of well known **long-distance routes**, such as the Pennine Way National Trail, the Dales Way and the Coast to Coast route, which can be walked as complete journeys over several days or in short sections, as well as the **Three Peaks walk** (Ingleborough, Whernside, and Pen-y-Ghent). These are all of national significance.
- **Exploration** and **sightseeing** are important activities for many. The area is a rich cultural landscape with many sites to explore, ranging from ancient stone circles, monastic houses and churches, to industrial sites as well as displays of impressive engineering and architecture such as the Settle Carlisle Railway. The varied wildlife habitats provide great opportunities for bird watching and botany.

26. The Dales has a network of meandering valley roads, bordered by drystone walls or hedgerows and flower-rich verges. These have a particular charm and add to the strong sense of place. This network of roads provides wonderful **cycling** for people with a reasonable level of fitness or alternatively by electric bike! Higher up the dale sides, unfenced roads cross heather moorland and offer dramatic panoramas across the open landscape. **Field sports** are of local significance, and much heather moorland is actively managed for **grouse shooting**.

27. Opportunities for **mountain biking**, **horse riding** and **carriage driving** are extensive, using the well-maintained network of beautiful bridleways, byways and other routes with public access. Many trails are part of the cultural heritage, following historical routes such as Roman roads, monastic highways, mining tracks and drovers' roads, as well as being great fun to ride.

- The Pennine Bridleway National Trail runs through the National Park and is specifically for **horse riders**, but also benefits **cyclists** and **walkers**. As part of the Trail the 10-mile Settle Loop continues to be very popular.
- The multi-user **Swale Trail** was opened in 2017; this low-level relatively easy 12-mile mainly traffic-free route has already become a popular mountain bike and walking trail.
- **Recreational motor vehicle** use of byways open to all traffic is a legitimate activity, but is controversial, and requires very special care to be taken by those undertaking the activity. The area has a long history of well organised **motor trials** such as the Barbon Hill Climb or Scott Trial for motorbikes which take place with landowner's consent.

28. The rivers respond quickly to rainfall and there are spectacular waterfalls after heavy rain. Some rivers have placid pools perfect for **wild swimming**, others provide challenging white water kayaking opportunities. C**anoeists** have informal access to sites and rivers through a history of tolerated use over many years. The post-glacial lake Semerwater, and reservoirs at Embsay and Grimwith offer regionally important opportunities for **sailing** and **wind surfing**.

29. A number of sites in the Dales are of national significance for **paragliding** and **hang gliding**. The numerous steep, but smooth ridges that form the Dales are orientated to suit a variety of wind directions and make the area particularly attractive. All of the sites used have a formal agreement with the landowner.

30. The south and west of the National Park have some of the best examples in Britain of classic limestone scenery, with crags, pavements, and extensive **cave systems**. This complex 3D network of passages is the best of its type in Britain, providing many long and challenging caving trips. The Three Counties cave system is the longest and most complicated system in Britain - it is currently thought to be around 89km long with over 40 different entrances. For the more casual visitor there are show caves at White Scar Cave which is near Ingleton, Ingleborough Cave near Clapham and Stump Cross Caverns between Grassington and Greenhow. For **rock climbing** the massive limestone crags of Malham, Gordale and Kilnsey are justifiably famous, supporting some of the hardest sport climbing routes in the world. There are, however, many other limestone and gritstone crags in the area and some disused quarries with worthwhile, easier traditional and sport climbing routes as well as bouldering.

31. The National Park also hosts other activities that provide quiet enjoyment: painting, photography, dog walking, geocaching etc. to name a few. It is a peaceful setting for individual relaxation and spiritual refreshment.

3.2 Enjoying and safeguarding the special qualities

32. People visit from many different places, with different interests and levels of knowledge about the area. However, most have one thing in common: they recognise the National Park's special qualities - its natural beauty (84% of all visitors) walks and walking (35%) and the peace and tranquillity (33%). In addition, one in four visitors comes to the Yorkshire Dales specifically to enjoy a recreational activity.

33. In 2015, Sport England with the Outdoor Industries Association undertook a pioneering study looking at what motivated 10,000 people to get outdoors and undertake activities in the natural environment (previous studies only looked at specific activities eg climbing or mountain biking, not an individual's motivations). It examined the activities that met individuals' needs and important ancillary facilities, as well as the potential demand and appeal of activities to those not currently participating.

34. Not surprisingly, motivations vary across ages and life stages. For some, participation in outdoor recreation is about health, fitness and looking good. However for others, participation is about having fun; connecting with nature; enjoying the feeling of accomplishment; escaping the pressures of everyday life; feeling young; connecting with themselves and those close to them; and allowing them to physically challenge themselves. The study identified eight outdoor participant segments, groups of current and potential participants, who desire differing experiences from their involvement with the outdoors (see **Table 1**). Each segment is built around the motivations of each participant group, as well as the factors that restrict involvement and present barriers. The study also looked at demographic characteristics (the who), locational preferences (the where), participation patterns (the when) and the type of activity preferences (the what).

35. **Table 1** is particularly important in understanding how to attract younger age groups. For those aged18 to 24 years relaxation and exercise are the top motivators for outdoor activities, Those aged over 35 are more likely to fit the 'explorer' or 'fitness in nature' profile, while those under 35 are more likely to be 'adventurers' 'freestylers' and 'thrillseekers', drawn to more adventurous activities such as mountain biking or climbing.

Table 1: The motivations of current and potential outdoor activity participants

Segment	Motivation profile	Who	Likely activities
The Explorer (33%)	Sense of being part of and exploring the natural world. Physical activity is driven by emotional purposes and revolves around exploring and learning. May be secondary to other hobbies such as bird watching, painting or photography.	• Mainly 25-44 years • More likely to have children under 18 • More likely to be higher socio-economic group. • Higher than average proportion of females	Hill walking (31% highest proportion of all segments) Swimming Camping Mountaineering Other hobbies 60% National Trust members
The Challenger (21%)	Puts their body on the line and controls the battle against nature. Pushes self and focused on personal achievement/reaching a goal. They probably don't enjoy the majority of the experience; enjoyment comes from gaining a sense of control and learning about themselves (not motivated by competition). Lessons learnt are applied to life.	• Even age split across 24-54 range • Likely to have started at older age • Higher proportion at management level • Higher male participation (74%)	A range of 4 or 5 different activities and challenge events e.g. 10k run, 3 Peaks walk, cycling coast to coast, Great North swim
Fitness in Nature (17%)	Chooses to keep fit outdoors for the fresh air and freedom. Prefers to be exercising outdoors and generally doesn't like the gym or indoor sports. Sense of physical and mental wellbeing and challenging self is important. Competing is not important.	• Equal proportion of male and female • majority over 35 yrs • Higher proportion at management level or retired.	Hill walking Mountain biking Running 50% outdoor fitness class Often by water
The Tribe Member (9%)	Committed to their sport or activity and take it very seriously. Training and skill improvement is important to them, as is competing and winning. Likely to be part of a specific club.	• Mainly male 25-44 yrs • includes those qualified to lead others	Camping Hill walking Mountain biking Angling, Rowing Canoe/kayaking
The Learner (7%)	Primary purpose of visit to outdoors is for learning/personal development, may discover a love of a sport or an activity along the way.	• Mainly 24-54 yrs • Less likely with under 18s	Camping; Hill walking; mountain biking
The Adventurer (7%)	Lives life to the full. Enjoys the sense of adventure and pushing themselves physically. Personal achievement as well as having a good time with their friends or family is important to them. The countryside is a giant playground for Adventurers.	• All ages and gender • 37%first participate with family • For teenagers 'wild' adventure provides outlet for energy that could become anti-social behaviour	Camping; Hill walking; mountain biking Water sports Climbing Collecting experiences – as anecdotes of life
The Freestyler (4%)	Predominantly young people who are motivated to take part in alternative freestyle sports for the lifestyle and culture that's associated with it. Activities are perceived as 'cool' and play a role in defining who they are and their lifestyle. Music and fashion are fundamental elements of this lifestyle choice.	• Mainly male 25-34 yrs, but growth in older age men, women and girls • across all socio-economic groups • turned back on traditional sports	Individualised activities, from climbing, skate-boarding, to parkour, wakeboarding and kite surfing
The Thrill Seeker (3%)	Enjoys taking part in extreme sports and other activities involving physical risk. The experience is all about the adrenaline rush. They enjoy being out of control, but are willing for someone/ thing else to manage the risk.	• Mainly male 25-34 yrs higher than average male participation (80%) overall	participate in an average of six wide-ranging activities

Source: *Getting Active Outdoors: A study of Demography, Motivation, Participation and Provision in Outdoor Sport and Recreation in England* (2015).

36. This research provides high quality insight, which is essential to inform decisions about where to apply and focus resources for outdoor activities. As such it shows the importance of the National Park's special qualities and the quiet enjoyment associated with them to help motivate individuals to get active in the outdoors and benefit their health and wellbeing. Significantly, most visitors undertake some sort of physical activity – usually a walk, during their visit. Based on the research managed thrill-seeking activities, such as bungee jumping, high ropes courses and zip wires, while they do have their place, are of limited appeal.

Responsible use

37. Many outdoor activities take place without formal management or intervention by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. This is as it should be. To this end we encourage understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities, and the responsible use of the area, with the aim of avoiding problems. Our key messages are:

- The Yorkshire Dales National Park is a special place
- Everyone can benefit from the National Park
- Many of the special qualities of the National Park can be susceptible to unfavourable impacts from certain activities
- The National Park Authority helps to look after the National Park and its special qualities
- Everyone can help to look after the National Park and its special qualities.

38. We are committed to working with other organisations (from national governing bodies to clubs and interest groups), to provide high quality recreational experiences based on the special qualities of the National Park as outlined in our *Recreation Charter*. Intervention is only necessary where activities cause problems with other users or interests, such as threats to wildlife or damage to archaeological sites. It is possible to influence visitor behaviour through various management techniques including:

- Promoting or non-promotion of areas or activities.
- Targeting particular audiences, and/or type of promotion.
- Raising awareness amongst users regarding the impact of visiting or activities, and developing codes of conduct, where appropriate.
- Considering the type, number, and locations of facilities provided and their opening times (where relevant).
- Restricting what activities are allowed (if possible), where and when, or seeking voluntary restraint.
- Considering how amenable the environment is for different activities.

39. Visitor management usually involves identifying the level of recreational use or development beyond which unacceptable consequences will occur, and managing this as far as possible by matching the provision of recreational opportunities and conservation of the environment with visitors' needs and aspirations. It is important to consider, on the basis of evidence, the 'impact' an activity is having, or is likely to have, on the environment and amenity of the area. Where this has, or is likely to have, an adverse effect on the special qualities of the National Park, then we consider the best management option available to achieve the outcome required. However, encouraging 'self-policing' through education and peer group pressure is often the most effective method.

Responsible use - guiding principles

- *The Yorkshire Dales National Park provides high quality recreational experiences based on its special qualities that cannot be found in ordinary countryside.*
- *Users and visitors are encouraged to act responsibly to minimise the impact of their actions on others, the special qualities of the area, and on the National Park as a whole.*

Tranquillity and honeypot sites

40. Some places are valued for being wild and remote, whilst others are valued for being readily accessible honeypot sites, often with extensive visitor facilities and infrastructure. This in itself can be part of the attraction that makes these locations a focus for large numbers of people at any one time. This diversity helps to cater for all tastes.

41. Tranquillity is promoted by visual, aural and to a lesser extent other sensory stimuli. Low noise areas, where there is an opportunity to hear birdsong, wildlife, natural sounds, or to experience 'silence', 'peace and quiet' and 'no human sounds' represents one of the elements that contribute to tranquillity that people most value. Similarly, light pollution can also have an impact on an individual's tranquillity and enjoyment of the night sky.

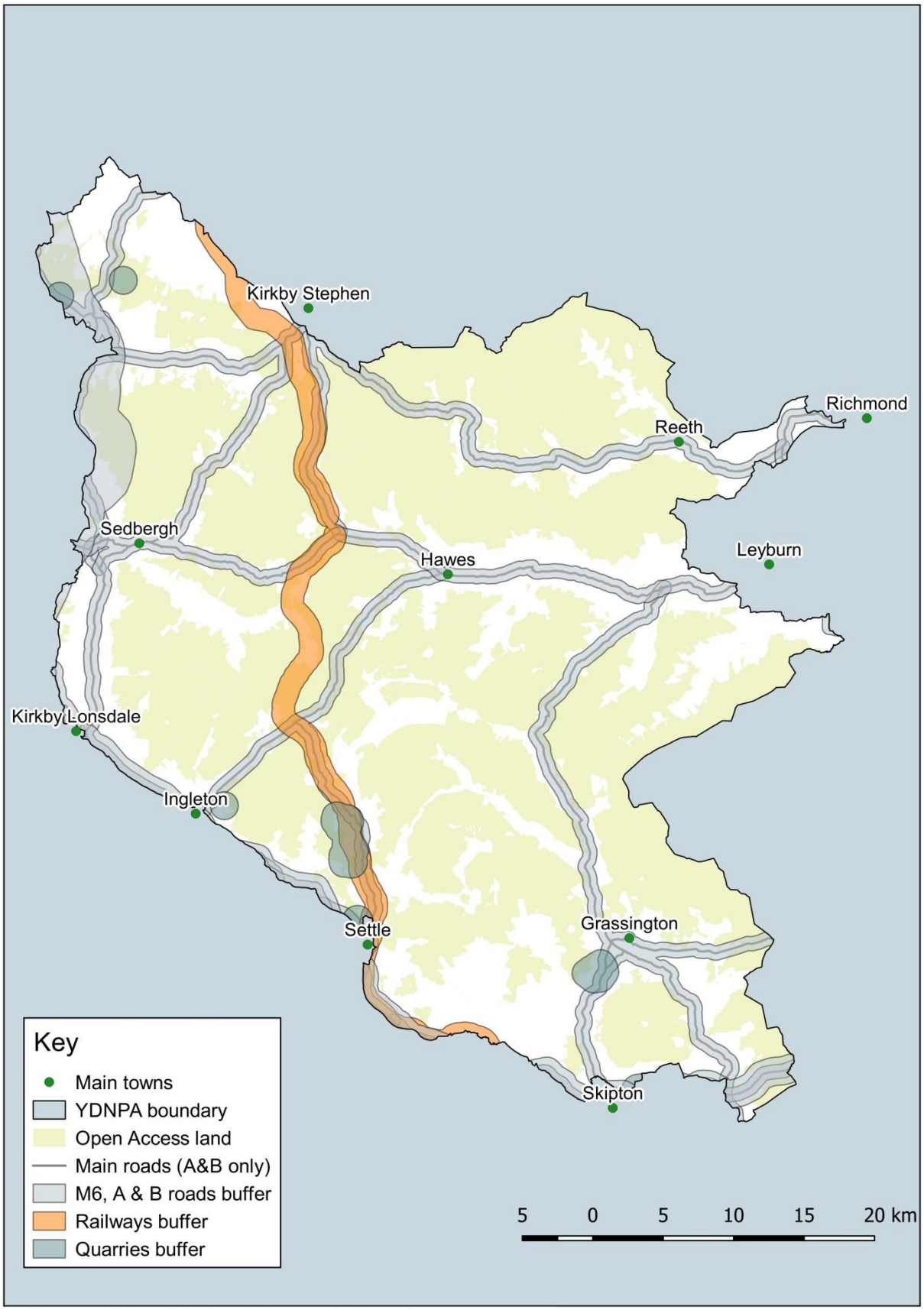
42. Tranquillity is also personal, and so subjective to some extent. Based on extensive consultation undertaken for CPRE in 2006, Northumbria University looked at relative tranquillity across the country; 4000 individuals were asked to weight various factors, either positive or negative. This research shows there is a lot of commonality, but context is important. Seeing a natural landscape, hearing birdsong and seeing the stars at night scored highly in enhancing feelings of tranquillity. While hearing noise from cars, motorbikes, or low flying aircraft was a major detractor. Seeing and or hearing lots of people were also detractors, but depended on context. **Figure 3** is a map of detractors from tranquillity in the National Park (CPRE, 1995 methodology). It shows significant areas of tranquillity, but also areas that are not - related to the proximity to roads, railways and quarries. The cluster of detractors in the Three Peaks area shows that an area can have iconic scenery, but this in itself does not make it tranquil.

Tranquillity and honeypot sites – guiding principles

Tranquillity and quiet enjoyment is at the heart of the designation of the National Park. Conserving this tranquillity underpins consideration of the capacity of different areas of the National Park to accommodate numbers and types of recreation activities. This recognises:

- *The most tranquil and remote areas of the National Park are an essential part of the Dales' character ,and the amenity they offer must be preserved.*
- *Tranquillity is diminished by roads, quarries and other detractors such as light pollution.*
- *Honeypot sites are important as they offer a different experience of the National Park.*

Figure 3 Tranquillity detractors in the National Park



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Recreational motor vehicles

43. The level of use of recreational motor vehicles on some routes had been an area of concern for many years, both affecting the enjoyment of other users and undermining the special qualities of the area. However, since the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and our proactive approach, use is much reduced in the area.

44. The framework outlining our management approach to recreational motor vehicles' use of green lanes is *Management of the use of green lanes (unsealed routes) in the Yorkshire Dales National Park*. We always ensure that any management is evidence-based with on-going monitoring. This includes extensive field surveys with detailed reports of the findings before any management solutions are decided.

Organised recreational events

45. The area's special qualities make it a very attractive location for recreational 'challenge' events across the National Park. These events come in all forms, including charity walks, fell races, mountain biking challenges, triathlons, motor vehicle rallies and trials, and adventure racing. While it is easy to identify the possible adverse impacts on the environment, or possible disturbance to the local community, for the participants it should be a positive experience. For some participants the event will have encouraged a first visit to the National Park, which may lead to return visits in the future. Some recreational events have beneficial effects for the local economy, other users and facilities.

46. It is difficult to gauge how many 'large scale' events (defined here as greater than 100 participants) take place in the National Park. Based on our log of events, there are about 100 events a year involving a total of 25,000-30,000 participants. Most events do not need any 'authorisation' to take place, so there is no way of collecting exact numbers. The promotion of good practice and actively engaging with event organisers is essential, if negative effects are to be avoided, and to promote positive outcomes for participants e.g. raise awareness of the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

47. The event organiser is responsible for all aspects of the event including the health and safety of the people attending their event, as well as that of any employees, contractors or sub-contractors working there; securing landowner permission where an event takes place on private land, or other permissions as necessary, for example agreement for motorbikes to use an unsurfaced right of way as part of a motor trial. Each event is judged individually in terms of our level of involvement, but where specific guidance is required for an event this will be developed with local communities, partners and user organisations. In some cases events will also be directed to the relevant District Council Safety Advisory Group (SAG) to give advice and minimise any safety risks.

48. The scale and number of large events around the Three Peaks area are such that their impact on the National Park requires special attention, and an on-line notification scheme has been set up to help us engage with users. Through a notification scheme people can access information that helps them plan their event - whatever the size, and promote the Three Peaks Code of Conduct to participants, with the aim of ensuring individuals know what is expected of them before coming to the area. It is made clear to those registering this is not an authorisation scheme. In addition, we continue to work with the community in Horton, and event organisers directly, to encourage responsible use.

Organised recreational events - guiding principles

- *Responsible use of the National Park by recreational events should be achieved by promoting the appropriate use, at the right size and intensity, at the right time of year, or day of the week, and in the best place (where any likely impact will be minimal).*
- *On-line guidance is available for event organisers, and we will help them access other information that assists them in planning their event - whatever the size, so good practice is promoted.*
- *Organisers will be requested to ask competitors to contribute to the upkeep of the area in line with user payback principles (see section 3.4).*

The rights of way network

49. The vast majority of visitors make use of the extensive network of rights of way during their visit (70 – 90 % depending on location). The Definitive Map provides a legal record of the exact location of public rights of way and the public rights known to exist at any point in time. Within the National Park, an area of 2,178 sq. km, there are 1,748 km of footpaths, 786 km of bridleways, 20 km of restricted byway and 69 km of byways open to all traffic (BOATS). These figures do not include unsealed unclassified roads which are known to have public access rights, but are not shown as public rights of way on the Definitive Map at the present time. Through the continuous review of the Definitive Map, some may be designated as public rights of way in the future.

50. In recognition of the importance of the rights of way network to the enjoyment of the special qualities, we have taken on the role of delegated Highway Authority in the National Park, on behalf of Cumbria and North Yorkshire County Councils. There are two main elements to this work:

- the physical maintenance and improvement of the rights of way network
- working with the relevant County Council to help them keep the legal record of rights of way up to date.

51. Unsealed unclassified roads remain the responsibility of the County Councils, but we continue to work with them to improve and enhance these additional routes (over 100 km in total) because of their value as linking routes into the rights of way network. Over the years, we have developed a sustainable and well maintained network of routes, appropriate to each route's status on the Definitive Map, to enable users' enjoyment of the National Park. In some circumstances this means undertaking sympathetic engineering works to the route so it can carry this use.

52. In August 2016, with the increase in area of the National Park a further figure of 478 km (463 km in Cumbria and 15 km in Lancashire) was added to the rights of way network making a total of 2,623 km in the National Park. We are already seeing the benefits of managing this new network in Cumbria (Lancashire have not delegated this responsibility to us) with an increase in its 'ease of use' levels from the original baseline of 67%. Improvement will need to continue, year on year, over the next 5 years across the whole rights of way network to reach the new National Park Management Plan target of

90%‘easy to use’ by 2023. This work is detailed in the Rights of Way Maintenance Plan. This plan, which gives maintenance standards and Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resourced and Time-bound (SMART) targets on an area-by-area basis, is reviewed every 5 years.

Repair of route erosion - guiding principles

Where repair and/or maintenance of a route is necessary for environmental or recreational reasons, it should be subject to the following:

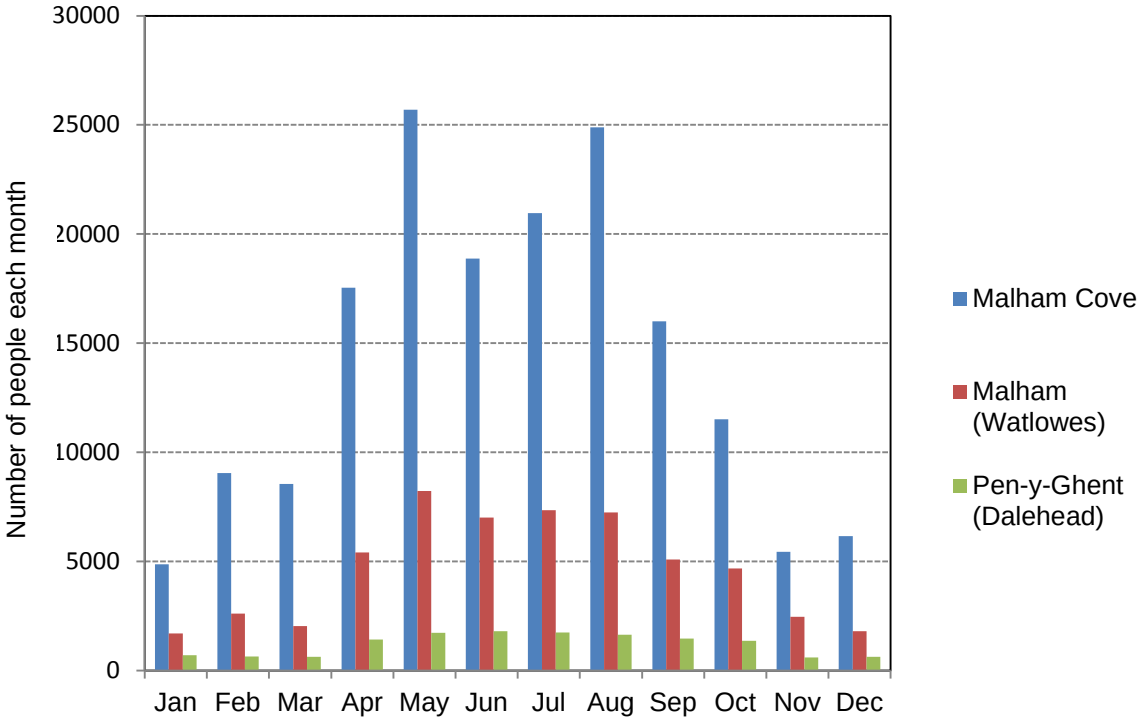
- *Works will be of a high standard of design, having minimal impact on setting and character, and implemented, where possible, using indigenous materials, sympathetic in colour and texture to the immediate surrounding area, and consideration will be given to the environmental sustainability of the materials used. Traditional techniques will be used and uniformity of construction avoided where possible.*
- *Techniques used will protect existing vegetation and, normally, only locally occurring plant species will be used in restoration. Non-local species will be acceptable only where necessary as a nurse crop.*
- *The more remote the route, the more stringently these criteria will be applied. This will be a matter of judgement, but in general the more remote or wild the location, the less acceptable an obviously engineered route will be.*
- *Repairs will be suitable for the route’s use and undertaken on a scale appropriate to the route’s status as a footpath, bridleway, restricted byway or byway open to all traffic (BOAT).*

Multi-day routes (long distance routes)

53. The National Park is criss-crossed by a variety of named long distance, multi-day routes of varying national and regional recognition and importance. Some of these multi-day routes are National Trails, such as the Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway. Others are of regional importance, but have no ‘official’ status, for example the Dales Way, and the Coast to Coast; they are nevertheless popular. Some are more commercially orientated, e.g. the Inn Way, while others are more esoteric such as the Pennine Journey.

54. The Pennine Way user data below (**Figure 4**) show that over 150,000 people a year walk the most accessible sections of the route in the Yorkshire Dales to Malham Cove, while the numbers of people accessing more remote mountainous sections e.g. the Pennine Way route up Pen-y-Ghent are 15,000 people a year.

Figure 4 Use of the Pennine Way at three locations in the Yorkshire Dales (2018)



55. In any one year the number of users following the more popular trails for their full length is much fewer. It varies from an estimated 3,000 people walking the Dales Way, 2,500 the Pennine Way (Pennine Bridleway fewer than 1,000) and 5,000 walking the Coast to Coast route. The Coast to Coast is the best known UK long distance route, both in this country and abroad, attracting many overseas visitors to walk it end to end. Yet it does not have National Trail status. The *Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan* (2019-2024) recognises this anomaly and seeks National Trail status for the route.

56. For any multi-day route to be popular, it must capture the imagination of potential users as a worthwhile achievement or journey. The long distance routes through the Dales provide some of the country's best known iconic walking, cycling and riding and for many people provide a highly memorable and positive experience, because the journey **is** the experience. They also provide a truly sustainable tourism product, many people accessing the routes using public transport, and then moving under their own steam, spending money locally (particularly significant in more remote areas). Established long distance routes generate a high visitor spend compared to many other activities, because participants stay overnight and often take little with them, so buy everything en-route.

57. We receive several requests each year from individuals and/or organisations to promote and sign a 'new' multi-day route. The Local Access Forum (LAF) have raised concerns about whether these were adding value, or were confusing - The Dales Highway, Lady Anne's Way, A Pennine Journey coinciding for some stretches with the Pennine Way, and Pennine Bridleway, for example (**Figure 5**). While such routes, in principle, support sustainable tourism, given the large potential number we have to be clear how any new route adds to those already on offer in the area, and how it will be supported financially in the future. To that end, it was agreed that only those routes which met the criteria in **Table 2** would be waymarked by us and neighbouring authorities, using promotional discs.

Table 2: Criteria for way marking of long distance routes

National Trails	The Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway are recognised and promoted as National Trails by Natural England. All National Trails will be waymarked to an agreed standard.
Regional importance	Routes which are long enough that they are completed over several days and which attract significant numbers of visitors to the National Park will be considered favourably. For routes which have sections in neighbouring authorities, the support of those authorities will also be a factor taken into account.
Permanence	Routes must be expected to last (i.e. to be actively inspected and promoted) for a minimum of 5 years. Routes which have been in existence for less than five years would only be waymarked in exceptional circumstances.
Length of route	Routes designed to be completed in the course of a day will not normally be waymarked as long distance walks. This would not prevent shorter routes being waymarked for other reasons, such as with the Red Squirrel Trail, and short routes aimed at increasing participation etc.
Responsibility	There must be a specific group or organisation prepared to take responsibility for inspections and publicity material.
Public access	The route must be available for all members of the public to use. This could include routes with a permissive access agreement provided that sufficient longevity can be guaranteed.
Additional factors	The following will be considered favourably: • economic benefit to the area, • heritage, scenic or ecological interest, • routes benefitting the local community as well as visitors • routes that promote the use of public transport and green businesses
Publicity material	Must be: • clear to read, • easily available, • give clear advice on minimising the impact on the area, and • be kept up to date. Material that provides additional information to promote greater understanding of the area will be seen positively.
Route alignment	The route must be checked by the National Park Authority for legal status and issues, and agreed in advance in the case of new routes. Where promoted routes use permissive paths, agreement from the landowner should be made available in writing and should confirm that permission is granted for a minimum of five years.
Road safety	Road sections and crossings, where they are not already approved, need to have been safety audited by the relevant highway authority.

58. One of the aims of developing these criteria was to ensure that when promoting long distance routes the amount of signage and waymarking is not increased unnecessarily. For instance, where long distance routes follow the same alignment as a National Trail (ie The Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway) they will normally only be waymarked where they join and leave. For the avoidance of doubt, we will continue to provide information through our outlets about other multi-day trails that do not meet the criteria above; because they still form an important part of what the Yorkshire Dales has to offer.

59. Most of the multi-day routes that have been developed are walking routes. The Pennine Bridleway National Trail, while also available for walking and cycling, is a route developed specifically for horse riders. It extends from Middleton Top in Derbyshire, through the Yorkshire Dales, to Kirkby Stephen in Cumbria. In addition, there is currently a proposal to develop a coast to coast mountain bike route, predominantly for mountain bikers, but also available for walkers and horse riders. This will link the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Parks. A feasibility study has been carried out based on linking existing rights of way.

60. **Figure 5** shows the plethora of recognised multi-day routes in the National Park and surrounding area alongside two popular day routes: The Three Peaks and Swale Trail:

- Walking routes: Dales Way, Ribble Way, Lady Anne's Way, Coast to Coast, Dales Highway, A Pennine Journey and the Pennine Way
- Cycling routes: Yorkshire Dales Cycle Way, National Cycle Network routes.
- Bridleway routes: Pennine Bridleway.

61. While the regionally promoted Yorkshire Dales Cycle Way circumnavigates the National Park, and the Lakes and Dales Loop clips its western edge, the Walney to Wear and Way of the Roses routes are part of the National Cycle Network, developed through Sustrans. The Way of the Roses is one of the best cycle touring routes in the country and is deservedly popular. It is estimated to have about 15,000 users a year, with most cyclists staying in the National Park one night on their way between the West and East Coasts.

Multi-day routes - guiding principles

- ❖ *Multi-day routes will be signed and promoted where the route is supported by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority as a regional significant route (see Table 2).*
- ❖ *Dedicated ranger(s) will be employed to undertake the maintenance and waymarking of National Trails and other multi-day routes where Natural England (or other similar body) funds this activity.*
- ❖ *The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, with associated bodies, will campaign for the Coast to Coast path to become a National Trail.*

Figure 5 Open access land and recognised walking, riding and cycling routes



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Open access land

62. In the Yorkshire Dales National Park, 60% of land is mapped as 'open access land' (mountain, moor, heath down and registered common land see **Figure 5**) as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). This land has a public right of access on foot for 'open-air recreation' (including walking, running and climbing and those less mobile in a recognised 'invalid carriage'). We are both Access Authority and Relevant Authority, i.e. responsible under the CRoW Act, for ensuring both access to open access land and determining if restrictions and/or exclusions to the access rights are required. Restrictions and exclusions can be for a number of reasons: land management, fire hazard, wildlife and heritage conservation, public safety, or defence. In addition, landowners and farmers can notify closures up to 28 days a year for a discretionary (any) reason. Landowners can also exclude dogs from grouse moors for up to five years under the CRoW Act, and many have done this, (this does not apply to rights of way).

63. Grouse moors make up approximately 40% of open access land in the National Park, and their management is an important part of the character of the area, as well as adding to the local economy (see **section 5** Tourism). The moorland access tracks, created to help grouse moor management, often along a public right of way or in Open Access land, provide a wealth of opportunities for visitors on foot or by mobility scooter, to gain relatively easy access into more remote areas.

64. In long periods of dry weather the risk of fire depends on ground conditions on the moors. When fire risk becomes a real concern, we issue press releases asking the public to take care, and place warning notices at access points. Weather and ground conditions are constantly monitored by the Met Office and can be seen on their website *www.metoffice.gov.uk* . Public access onto open access land is only suspended when the Met Office's Fire Severity Index (FSI) reaches 'Exceptional', its highest rating.

65. The Met Office's Fire Severity Index is an assessment of how severe a fire could become, if one were to start. It is not an assessment of the risk of wildfires occurring. The Met Office's website shows the current day's fire severity and a forecast of likely fire severity over the coming five days. The index values are from 1 to 5, as follows:

- FSI level 1 = low fire severity
- FSI level 2 = moderate fire severity
- FSI level 3 = high fire severity
- FSI level 4 = very high fire severity
- FSI level 5 = exceptional fire severity

66. On behalf of landowners we have put in place across the National Park fire restrictions that don't need an application so the appropriate parcel(s) of Open Access land can be closed, automatically, when a land parcel reaches level 5 of the FSI (public rights of way always remain open). This process also helps us put out clear messages at these times to the public.

Open Access - guiding principles

- *Access rights should not significantly interfere with land management operations and/or place an undue burden (whether financial or otherwise) on the occupier.*
- *The duty of care owed to the public exercising their open access rights is, in the most part, the lowest it can be in law.*
- *The integrity of important wildlife and cultural heritage sites should be safeguarded.*
- *Requests for additional infrastructure will be considered on an individual case basis and in relation to identifiable public need.*
- *Visitor management or intervention through restrictions and exclusions should always be the least restrictive approach.*
- *The national Met Office Fire Severity Index will be used to determine when open access rights should be suspended due to the likely severity of a fire on access land.*
- *Working with the Moorland Association and individual landowners and estates we will improve access opportunities to open access land for those with limited mobility.*

Access to Water

67. Demand for access to water for water-based recreation seems almost certain to increase as our climate becomes warmer and drier. However, the public cannot claim a right to get access onto a stretch of fresh water, owned by another, except through the use of a public right of way or other public access. Correspondingly, there is no right to disembark onto private land or to launch boats from private land. For the public to demonstrate the existence of a right of navigation, acquired through use, evidence of actual use is required, and that use must not have been carried out through the use of force, or secretly, or with the express permission of the landowner. Unlike navigation rights for boats, rights to fish, to swim, to picnic on banks etc. cannot be acquired through prescription (use over time as of right). Such rights, therefore, only apply where granted by the owner and on whatever terms they impose e.g. payment in return for a day's fishing.

68. The area has a history of tolerated access along most Dales rivers for kayaking/ canoeing, and use for swimming and picnicking. The key consideration is where individuals gain access to the river. Individuals are encouraged to do so responsibly ie without causing disturbance to others, and paying for car parking or services such as toilets, but not for access itself as this would be going against the ethos behind the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. It is recognised that views can be polarised on access to water, particularly amongst fishing and canoeing interests. In this context it is useful to look to Scotland, and elsewhere, for examples of where activities coexist.

Access to water - guiding principles

- *Public* access to water should not interfere with land management or other interests.

3.3 Wider benefits individuals gain from the special qualities

69. The natural landscape of the National Park offers a wide range of opportunities for people to get active outdoors and improve their health and wellbeing. It has some of the best caving, rock climbing, paragliding, canyoning and cross-country mountain biking to be found anywhere in the country. It is also an ideal location for people of all abilities to walk, run, cycle, swim and horse ride. Coupled with this the National Park offers space to breathe, tranquillity, fresh air and dark skies. It makes the National Park a sanctuary from the pressures of modern life.

Health and well-being

70. There are proven benefits from being in the countryside and connecting with nature:

- 'green' exercise enhances mood, improves self esteem and lowers blood pressure more effectively than exercise alone
- reduces stress and improves recovery from stress
- improves mental alertness, attention and cognitive performance
- reduces levels of depression
- reduces levels of aggression and violent behavior
- enhances social interaction through meeting people with similar interests.

71. Exposure to nature fosters psychological wellbeing and reduces the stresses associated with urban living, as well as promoting physical health. The National Park has an important role to play in facilitating this connection. This has been highlighted in DEFRA's *8 Point Plan for England's National Parks* (2016) with objectives associated with health and wellbeing, including to:

- Promote innovative schemes for National Parks to serve Public Health and
- Release the immense potential for outdoor recreation in National Parks.

72. The impact of the natural environment on heath was also highlighted in the Government's *A Green Future – our 25 year plan to improve the environment* (2017) which stated that 'Spending time in the natural environment – as a resident or a visitor – improves our mental health and feelings of wellbeing. It can reduce stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression; it can help boost immune systems, encourage physical activity and may reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as asthma'.

73. We are aware that the National Park can have significant impact in this area – with the right intervention. In 2018, the North York Moors National Park Authority published an independent report, conducted by The York Management School, which calculated the Social Return on Investment (SROI) for the National Park Authority in respect of its impact on health and wellbeing. The report estimated that every £1 invested by DEFRA (through the National Park Authority's grant) generates approximately £7 of health and wellbeing benefits for the nation. We recognise that we can play our part by providing a welcoming outdoor recreational resource for people living in the catchment area of the Yorkshire Dales, to encourage them to get more active. Through the Go Dales! Project, in partnership with Sport England, we specifically targeted young people (8-25 years) in the catchment area to help them experience outdoor activities in the National Park. The aim of the 'Go Dales!' project was to provide them with an early, enjoyable and 'relevant'

experience of the countryside and the National Park, by introducing them to recreational activities that young people wanted to do. The project helped to increase young people's awareness of how visits to the National Park and participation in outdoor activities could enrich their lives, health and wellbeing. We gave them the skills and confidence to enjoy activities the area offers by themselves. It helped us better understand how to make the National Park more relevant to young people. We continue to undertake this work, but on a much smaller scale, for example through our events and activities programme.

74. Individuals ***do*** recognise the benefits of spending time outdoors. Health and exercise were the main motivation for spending time in the natural environment, with 88% of people surveyed by Natural England through its National Survey, *Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment* (2017/18), reporting they felt refreshed and revitalised after being outdoors. Our own visitor survey highlights that 'getting away from it all' and walking are key activities attracting visitors to the National Park.

75. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 moved the statutory role of improving and protecting the public's health to local government from the NHS and, nationally, to Public Health England. The Health and Wellbeing Boards were established. The key actions the Annual Report of the Director for Public Health for North Yorkshire *Back to the Future* (2018) recommends that continuing improvement of the health of our local population depends on reducing health inequality, improving public mental health and embedding public health into everyday practice.

76. The Cumbria Public Health Alliance, which includes local government, the health service and the third sector in Cumbria, has produced *Cumbria Joint Public Health Strategy: Tackling the Wider Determinants of Health and Wellbeing* (2019). We can help with various strands within it including 'natural assets' - a high quality natural environment that provides opportunities for engagement with the natural world'; and also (in a more limited way) 'social assets' - allowing people to connect with each other.

77. The focus is on individuals taking actions in support of their own health and well-being. This is where we can help support these plans by:

- Creating opportunities to support a healthy lifestyle by enhancing the potential for participation in outdoor recreation and exercise in the National Park, for example by providing an accessible infrastructure of clearly marked footpaths and bridleways, and developing cycle 'hubs' and family friendly cycle routes.

- Providing opportunities for people to connect with nature and benefit from the spiritual experience of being here, including offering an engaging programme of events, activities and walks.

- Promoting opportunities which will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the local community and visitors.

- Working in partnership with community groups and health care providers to open up opportunities for activities to groups of people who are least likely to take part currently, and where the health benefits will have most impact.

- Providing rewarding volunteering opportunities that encourage physical activity, social interaction, and build confidence.

78. We will consider our role and the National Park's contribution further, through partnerships with other organisations to establish the 'natural health service'. Possibilities include: the potential to support healthy aging, healthy start for young people and helping to address some of the inequalities of access to a healthy lifestyle.

Health - guiding principles

The Yorkshire Dales National Park will be a place where:

- *Access to nature, fresh air, tranquillity and opportunities for outdoor recreation enrich people's lives and help them foster a more healthy lifestyle;*
- *Opportunities for participation in outdoor activities are accessible for everyone;*
- *Through partnership, the experiences offered are developed and contribute to the 'natural health service' and the health and wellbeing of the nation.*

Events and activities

79. Along with partner organisations, businesses and individuals we deliver an extensive programme of organised events and activities that celebrate our special qualities, at locations across the National Park, for the general public and for specific target groups (see **section 4**). With businesses, we facilitate the dark skies and cheese festivals (see **section 5**) to attract visitors in the quieter times of year.

80. Through our programme of activities and events we communicate our key messages (see earlier in this **section 3**). These key messages aim to help conserve the area and its special qualities, whilst enhancing the quality of experience of the National Park for participants in ways which help to promote their understanding and enjoyment of the area and encourage their active involvement in its conservation. (Further details are available in our learning and engagement strategy).

81. Many community and cultural events also take place throughout the area e.g. the Swaledale Festival, and are organised through the commitment of local people. When our resources allow, we will support small events organised by external organisations and community groups. More generally, we support community groups by promoting an area-wide programme of events, on behalf of local communities, through our *Visitor* magazine and free events listing on our website.

Events - guiding principle

- *The wider events programme across the Yorkshire Dales National Park is promoted in a timely and coordinated way, as a single programme, thereby encouraging participants and supporting providers and Dales communities.*

3.4 Putting something back

User payback

82. The concept of user payback seeks to convert the subjective personal value that users place on a particular area into a financial value or positive outcome. User (or visitor) payback is a mechanism for connecting those involved with conserving or maintaining the features that attract people to those who come to experience them. Traditionally, it has focused on visitors making voluntary donations to projects.

83. Visitors spend £500 million in the local economy (based on National Park wider catchment area) yet little of that expenditure finds its way back to projects on public access or conservation that help look after the area. In 2009, we launched the Three Peaks Project, the first direct user payback project in the National Park. The project aims to ensure the area is maintained and improved in the long term, by generating an income to help pay for the maintenance of rights of way in the Three Peaks area. The project will continue to develop the user payback principle further, not only through direct donations, but also through local community and business support, voluntary contributions from large scale events, merchandise, sponsorship, volunteering and a supporters' organisation (Friends of the Three Peaks), and partnerships with national organisations such as the British Mountaineering Council and 'mend our mountains' campaign.

User payback - guiding principles

- *Access and recreation should contribute positively to the overall environment, economy and communities of the National Park.*
- *Payback opportunities will be supported through volunteering, financial contributions, or supporting initiatives when all funds raised will be for specific enhancement and recreation projects such as the Three Peaks Project.*

Volunteering

84. Many different people are interested in conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the National Park and in helping others to understand and enjoy them. Across the National Park we are helped in our work by about 290 regular volunteers through the Dales Volunteers network, as well as by many individuals on short-term projects or groups out for a single day's practical task.

85. These volunteers make a vital contribution to our work across most services and activities, and give over 7,000 volunteer 'days' a year. Their activities include:

- Planning and leading guided walks and events for a variety of different audiences.
- Monitoring and surveying public paths (plus other elements of public access), heritage and archaeological features, species and habitats.
- Practical work on public paths, local nature reserves and tree schemes.
- Access patrols in the Three Peaks area and Open Access areas across the Dales.

- Supporting the Learning and Education Programme at the Dales Countryside Museum and across the National Park.
- Working with National Park Visitor Centre staff, helping visitors to enjoy their visit.
- Assisting with delivery of Festivals (Dark Skies, Cheese Fest, Beef and Beer).

86. Our approach to volunteering is described in more detail in our Volunteering Strategy. In summary this is:

- Voluntary activity is essential to progressing most of the elements identified in the National Park Management Plan.
- Voluntary activity is a positive form of recreation from which the volunteers gain satisfaction, enjoyment and personal development, whilst we provide the training to enable them to work safely and effectively.
- Volunteers help us achieve more than we would otherwise with the available resources.
- We will increase the diversity of volunteers, for example young people, always bearing in mind distance and sustainability of travel.
- Where practical and appropriate, management of Dales Volunteers will be delegated to the volunteers themselves.

There also other types of volunteering opportunities that should be recognised e.g. being a member of the Local Access Forum.

Volunteering – guiding principles

- ❖ *Individuals and groups of people from all backgrounds and all ages and abilities will have opportunities to make a difference, through their personal skills, interests and enthusiasm, to the long-term conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the National Park.*
- ❖ *Volunteering in the National Park makes a positive contribution to the development of understanding, enjoyment, health and wellbeing of those who volunteer.*

3.5 Future strategy

87. How we measure progress against each of the policy areas listed below is shown by reference to the relevant National Park Management Plan objectives (see number in brackets below for cross reference).

Rights of way maintenance (links to B1 B2 B3 B10)

Provide an open and welcoming countryside:

(a) In partnership with the County Councils (who have statutory responsibility), implement the ROWIP action plans for the Yorkshire Dales National Park when additional resources become available.

(b) Assist the County Councils in keeping the Definitive Map under review and support the process of recording, by 2026, footpaths bridleways and restricted byways created before 1949 which were not recorded on the Definitive Map.

(c) Undertake public rights of way maintenance, in line with the maintenance plan targets, with the help of volunteers and local contractors:

i. Maintain and enhance existing engineered routes.

ii. Ensure that engineering projects and major rights of way repair works on the busy routes are not carried out in preference to minor routine maintenance, such as installing or mending stiles and gates and waymarking, on less frequented routes.

iii. Increase the number of routes that meet the 'Access for All' criteria (see section 5).

iv. Practical work to structures will be implemented using the British Standards 5709 as guidance, but consideration will also be given to seeking to safeguard the historical value of existing structures.

(d) Unsealed unclassified roads form a key part of the recreational network. We will work with the County Councils to maintain and repair these routes when resources allow.

Improvements to the rights of way network (links to B3 B9)

Through collaboration with North Yorkshire, Cumbria and Lancashire County Councils, support the expansion and improvement of the pedestrian, cycle, horse-riding and carriage-driving network, which provides opportunities for enjoyment of the special qualities of National Park and provides access to key facilities for visitors and residents:

(a) Negotiate new public rights of way or permitted routes (e.g. through agri-environment or other schemes) to provide links to Open Access areas or rights of way 'missing links' in the existing network.

(b) Work with local communities and users to provide safe alternatives to walking and riding on the road for pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders. (Where possible this should be funded through the Local Transport Plan process or other sources).

(c) Identify and promote circular and linear routes including 'miles without stiles' routes as a sustainable and healthy way to enjoy the National Park, and provide access to facilities and services where possible.

Multi day-routes (links to B3)

(a) Identify opportunities for the creation of a new *multi-user* Coast to Coast route.

(b) Campaign for the existing Coast to Coast walking route to become a National Trail.

Open Access
Manage CRoW Act Open Access:
(a) Give priority to those areas of the National Park that have experienced increased use, and/or where there are particular conservation interests.
(b) Work with land managers and users to ensure timely information and face-to-face contact through the Ranger Service.
(c) Review the mapping of gates and stiles on to Open Access land.
(d) Enhance access information to and within Open Access land.

Green Lanes (links to B10)
(a) Work with the County Councils and users to explore, identify and implement appropriate management of green lanes in the National Park;
(b) Monitor the use and condition of sensitive green lanes and keep the individual management plans under annual review.

Organised recreational events (links to B8)
Engage event organisers and promote good practice to:
(a) Seek possible alternatives to recreational events in sensitive areas;
(b) Promote the codes of good practice produced b the National Park Authority and the Institute of Fundraising, eg their website *www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk* and the Fundraising Regulator *www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk*
Continue to monitor levels of use by promoting the on-line event notification scheme, and provide guidance and advice as appropriate to the event

Health and wellbeing (links to B4)
Develop or support opportunities for participation, especially for key groups such as young people, based on the recreational activities and special qualities of the area, to create healthier lifestyles and to improve community wellbeing:
(a) Develop an annual programme of National Park Authority events, walks and activities based on the special qualities of the National Park, to promote understanding and deliver wider benefits such as health and spiritual wellbeing.
(b) Work with health professions and support the delivery of local, regional and national physical activity plans and initiatives e.g. Be Active, Be Healthy Physical Activity Care Pathway, Healthy Towns, Change4life, Fit for Future, Walking the Way to Health, where resources allow.
See also 'Improvements to the rights of way network' future strategy above for circular and linear routes and 'Information' in section 4 for promotion of these routes.

User payback (links to B8)
Expand ways that visitors, tourism businesses/partnerships, large challenge event organisers, etc. can contribute financially through voluntary donations, sponsorship and opt-out, and other fund-raising initiatives towards conservation, access and educational activities.

Events and activities
See Learning and Engagement strategy.

Volunteering (links to B7)
Encourage volunteering across the full range of our work. However in doing so we will:
(a) Try to ensure a low carbon footprint by encouraging volunteers to be centred near their homes, and car share where possible.
(b) Match volunteers to tasks and resources.

4. A Spatial Approach

This section covers:

- A spatial and landscape approach to access, recreation and visitor facilities
- Minimising impacts – traffic management, car parks, memorials, litter, dogs.

4.1 A sense of place

88. The special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales create a strong sense of place. The term is often used in relation to those characteristics that make a place special or unique, as well as those that foster a sense of authentic human attachment and belonging. Locations said to have a strong sense of place have a strong identity and character that is deeply felt by residents and many visitors. Such a feeling may be derived from the natural environment, but is more often made up of the combination of natural and cultural features, and human associations with the landscape.

89. Our approach to managing access and recreation in the Yorkshire Dales is based very much on maintaining the characteristics that engender this strong feeling and association based on the landscapes that make up the Dales. The *Landscape Character Assessment* (2019) records the distinctive landscape characteristics and features (as well as the special qualities) that characterise different parts of the National Park, and is a valuable reference source for managing recreation and access. At a broad scale, each dale (such as Swaledale) and upland area (such as the Orton Fells) has its own unique character and identity, which this strategy seeks to conserve and enhance.

90. At a more detailed level, the landscape character types that make up the Yorkshire Dales are diverse and support a wide range of recreational experiences. Across the National Park there are quieter and busier areas, which for the most part reflect the relative remoteness and accessibility of different areas. Useful distinctions can be made between the different landscape character types, which include main dales, tributary dales, daleheads, and open uplands. In general terms these different landscape character types underpin the relative remoteness and accessibility of different parts of the landscape.

91. **Figure 6** illustrates the typical landscape character types of the Yorkshire Dales. It is important to recognise that everywhere is not the same, and to maintain the diversity of experiences associated with the different landscape character types. To this end, this strategy has adopted a spatial approach that seeks to direct new opportunities for recreation and visitor facilities to those parts of the landscape that are best suited to that form of activity or use.

4.2 A landscape-based spatial approach

92. Using our *Landscape Character Assessment* and GIS mapping, it is possible to show that the location of existing facilities broadly follows the pattern described below:

Within the National Park:

- Key service centres/visitor hubs - where a wide range of visitor facilities should be available (e.g. Reeth, Hawes, Settle, Grassington, Sedbergh, Ingleton);

- Main dales – sympathetic development that builds on the tourism offer in the area (e.g. villages of Bolton Abbey, Malham, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, Clapham, Aysgarth, Kettlewell, Dent, Ravenstonedale, Orton);

- Tributary dales and daleheads – low key development (e.g. B&Bs or Group Accommodation Units for those walking/cycling together such as bunk barns) that avoids the need for 'over-management' and is unobtrusive within the surroundings (e.g. Raydale, Coverdale, Barbondale, Asby);

- Open upland and wildlife designated sites - minimal signs of human activity.

In the area surrounding the National Park:

- Gateway towns – with all-weather activities and/or attractions (e.g. Skipton, Harrogate, Leyburn, Richmond, Kirkby Stephen, Kirkby Lonsdale).

- Conference facilities and holiday parks – mainly located outside the National Park.

93. The above does not set out prescriptions for different management zones, but identifies the way the different areas within the National Park have developed over time. This pattern should be retained and developed further to safeguard the visitor experience based on the National Park's special qualities i.e. the very things people come to enjoy.

94. Using the landscape character types identified, **Table 3** summarises the character and special qualities, opportunities and constraints for each type of landscape, based on this broad pattern. Specifically this table:

- Provides further information on the landscape character types identified in Figure 6 and helps explain the links between visitor facilities and their landscape settings.

- Builds on the hierarchy of key service centres and visitor 'hubs' that currently exists, extending the approach out in to the wider landscape setting.

- Develops a spatial strategy for visitor management based on landscape character and special qualities, which helps identify where different kinds of facilities could be located.

95. In this way it seeks to establish a positive management approach to recreation and visitor management, which can be sustained in the long-term. It also means any 'gaps' in provision can be readily identified, and the location of new facilities can be considered on the basis of these sensitivities. For example, a proposal for a 'via ferrata' (an iron aerial walkway) on a natural cliff face such as Malham Cove would be resisted, whilst a similar proposal put forward by a developer on a screened quarry site, in a main dale with good links to the existing transport system, is likely to be considered more favourably (see policy SP3 and SP1 of the local plan).

A landscape-based spatial approach – guiding principles

A sound spatial approach directs people to the right place for the experience that they are seeking, and does not change or harm the special qualities of that place:

- *Landscape itself gives us 'clues' as to appropriate recreation and tourism activity;*
- *Different parts of the National Park offer different visitor experiences;*
- *Conflict can be avoided, by 'zoning' different activities as far as possible, based on their impact on landscape character and special qualities.*
- *New access, recreational and tourism provision will be directed to landscape areas best able to accommodate the activity or facility proposed in this way, reinforcing the existing pattern of busier and quieter areas, and supporting potential opportunities for enjoyment of the countryside, while safeguarding the special qualities.*
- *Visitor facilities such as large self-catering developments, conference hotels, all-weather attractions will be better suited to the towns on the edge of the National Park. From a tourism perspective this is not a 'hard' boundary' and these towns provide a constant flow of visitors into the National Park.*

Figure 6 **Indicative landscape character types of a typical ‘dale’ showing settlement types and recreational features alongside**

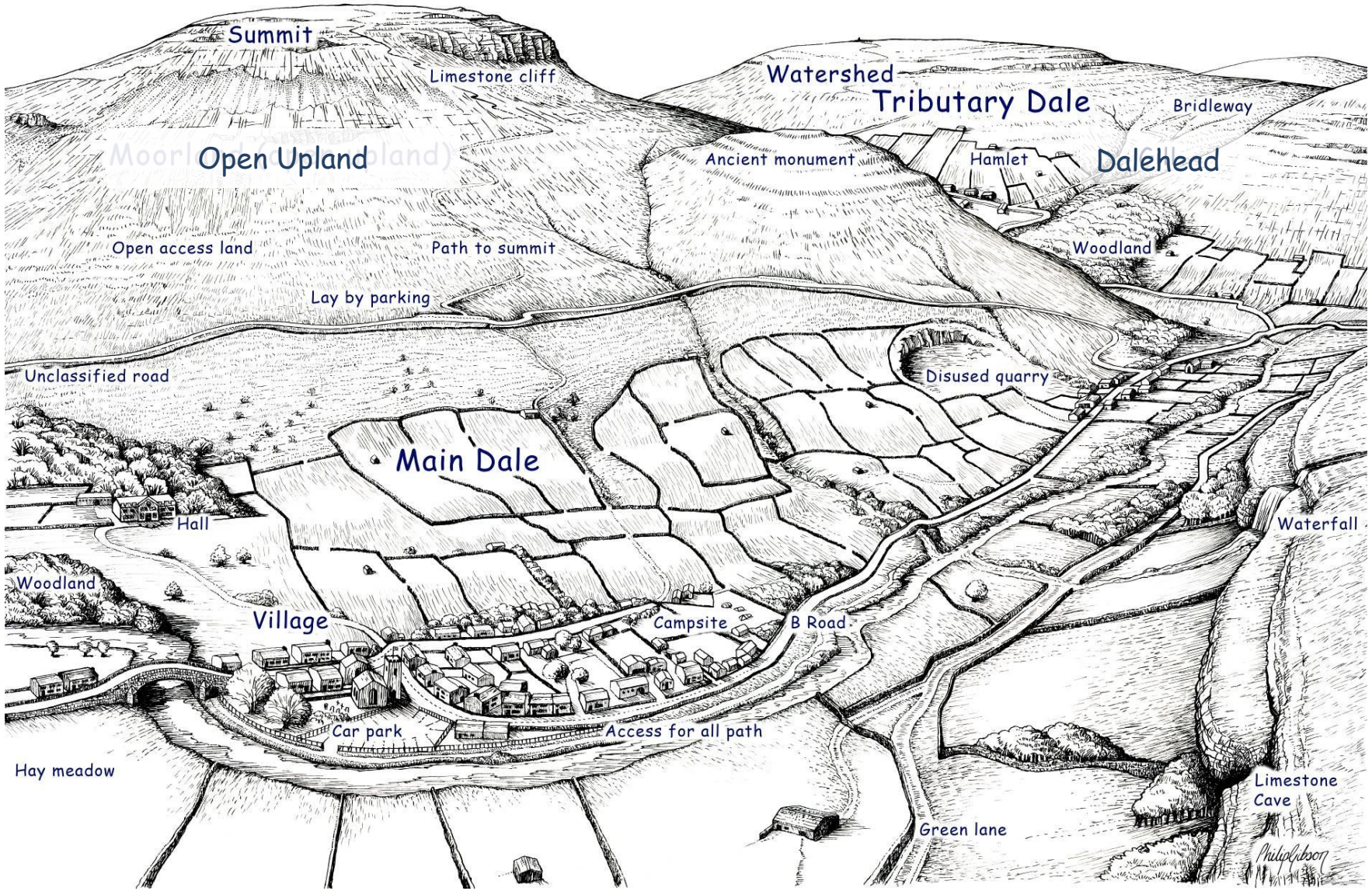


Table 3 Access, recreation and tourism provision sensitivity - based on landscape unit

Landscape character type	Character and special qualities		Access, recreation and tourism activities	Landscape sensitivities
	Wider landscape	Settlements		
Main dales e.g. Swaledale, Wharfedale Lune Valley	• Diverse river landscapes: meadows, waterfalls and gorges. • Scattered trees and native woodland. • Traditional upland farmland: farms, barns and walls. • Rural roads: diverse network of A, B and unclassified roads, retaining traditional character for the most part. Wildflower verges. • Occasional quarries and industrial archaeology.	• Key villages and service centres, with historical centres and features (bridges, churches, castles, etc). • Country houses, parkland, woodlands and specimen trees. • Abbeys.	• Main villages and visitor hubs with transport interchange ie car to bus, car and bus to bike and walking: - Part of core bus or rail network, attractive waiting areas - Good coach and car parking with toilets - National Park Visitor Centres with real-time information - Range of well-signed circular and linear walks and rides - Secure cycle parking and baggage storage - Pubs, cafes, shops – extensive food provision. • New tourist facilities integrated within existing settlements and based on the special qualities of the area. • Accommodation: - Diverse accommodation including country houses, boutique hotels and guest houses. - Potential to extend caravan and camp sites. - Group accommodation, training and outdoor centres. • Recreation: - Dale side traverses and walks along rivers and through traditional upland farmland, and meadows. - 'Miles without stiles' promoted routes from key settlements - Mountain bike and horse riding routes - Caving and climbing - Fishing and occasionally canoeing where tolerated - Paragliding and hang-gliding utilising the steep ridges of the Dale sides - Man-made features such as forestry plantation and disused quarries provide some opportunity for new informal recreation opportunities where access and existing parking allows.	Avoid: • New stand - alone tourist development or facilities in the open countryside. • Road upgrading. • Formal parking in the countryside, except in relation to existing visitor attraction and facilities.

Landscape character type	Character and special qualities		Access, recreation and tourism activities	Landscape sensitivities
	Wider landscape	Settlements		
Tributary (secondary) dales with through routes e.g. Arkengarthdale, Langstrothdale	• Traditional farms, barns and walls, hay meadows • Networks of unspoilt lanes, with walls or hedges. Wildflower verges. Single track roads with passing places • Roads, of rural character • Night skies • Tranquillity	• Hamlets and scattered farms	• Minor visitor points: - Access information points, - signs at other locations, where possible combined with footpath finger posts providing limited information and interpretation. - Small scale informal parking areas, and photo stops in lay-bys • Accommodation provision: - Conversion of traditional buildings to visitor accommodation - Self catering, B & B, and bunk barn accommodation, as part of farm diversification and well screened - Low-key camp sites, outdoor centres and group accommodation • Visitor attractions linked to farm diversification - open or farm shops. • Recreation: - Good network of rights of way, providing access around the dale for walking, cycling and horse riding - Climbing and caving. • Forestry plantations may provide some opportunities for informal recreation if visitor infrastructure is low key and existing parking and access allows.	Limited capacity, avoid: • Formalisation or increase in car parking to cater for peak demand. • Further road upgrades. • Visitor attractions, except low key linked to farm diversification e.g. open farms or farm shops.
Dale heads/ gill heads e.g. Oughtershaw Buttertubs	• Allotments barns and walls. • Historical features: mining, prehistorical remains. • Roads, along unenclosed moorland. • Historical passes and routes; • Elevated views, • Tranquillity • Night skies	• Isolated traditional hill farms.	• Minor visitor points: - Informal ‘pull offs’ provide limited parking. - New car parking facilities not developed except where they seek to manage an existing road safety or landscape issue. - Signs at locations used by visitors and local people, where possible combined with right of way finger posts. • B&B or Bunk barn type accommodation as part of farm diversification and well screened. • Low key ‘natural’ attractions: waterfalls, limestone pavements, pot holes with no visitor infrastructure other than low key signs for visitor management. • Recreation: - Good network of rights of way, access to watershed traverses for walking, cycling and horse riding - Open access land - Climbing and caving - Paragiding.	Extremely limited capacity, avoid: • Formalisation or any increase in car parking • Further road upgrades. • Formation of new access points

Landscape character type	Character and special qualities		Access, recreation and tourism activities	Landscape sensitivities
	Wider landscape	**Settlements**		
Open uplands e.g. Barden Moor and Fell Pen Hill Newby Head	• Expansive moors and summits. • Open horizons panoramic views. • Archaeological features extensive, covering all periods. • Moorland wildlife and habitats: breeding waders, black grouse. • Tranquillity and wildness. • Night skies.	• Unsettled.	• Visitor points limited to where access by tarmac road: - Existing informal 'pull offs' for photos, picnics, and limited parking. - New car parking facilities not developed except where they seek to manage an existing road safety or landscape issue. • Non-vehicular recreation: - Open access land - Footpaths, bridleways, and restricted byways 'un-engineered' except where popular routes and/or need to protect adjacent habitat or archaeological feature - Shooting estates - Shooting tracks across open access land and green lanes provide high level access for all - Bird watching, historical interest - Rights of way network hill walks/rides and traverses including 'challenge' routes - Popular and iconic summits - Climbing, caving - Paragliding and hang gliding. • .Vehicular recreation: - Minor unenclosed moorland roads – dramatic 'watershed traverses'. - Estate and shooting tracks. - 'Non-sensitive' byways open to all traffic.	Where remote from tarmac road extremely limited capacity, avoid: • New vehicular routes. • New engineered routes. • New infrastructure for moorland management. • New cairns or built features.

New visitor facilities

96. Development of new visitor facilities is likely to require planning permission, so any proposals will be judged against the planning policies in the existing Local Plans or new emerging Local Plan for the whole National Park. In essence, new facilities will need to respect the specific location and be of a standard that is in keeping with a high-quality visitor experience e.g. comfortable, have appropriate space, warmth, effective plumbing, and sensitive aesthetics. Good design in planning terms is important because:

- The success of the facility will depend upon how attractive it is to visitors.
- In areas with many tourist attractions, it is important that each attraction is perceived as contributing to the overall experience.
- Wherever it is proposed to site tourist facilities or amenities, it is important that they will complement and improve the wider built and natural environment.

97. Design is a planning matter. This strategy does not replace the statutory planning documents but seeks to describe the general direction we believe to be appropriate, taking a holistic approach to issues relating to access, visitor management and tourism, regardless of whether it does or does not require planning permission.

98. In deciding the location for a new tourism facility developers will choose sites that are accessible to visitors, and design their development in such a way that visitors can conveniently enjoy the attraction or facility, in order to be commercially competitive and thus successful. We share this objective, but wish to maximise access by sustainable modes of transport, minimise any congestion that may arise, and ensure that particular sectors of the population are not discouraged from using the attraction when it is completed. Again these are issues that are addressed through the planning process, and further information is in the Local Plan and section 6 of this document.

New visitor facilities – guiding principles

Most new visitor facilities will require planning permission and the following will be considered at the proposal stage:

- *Where the development is located — developments need to be located where they are accessible to visitors (and for many but not all developments, by means other than just by private car) and where they do not have an adverse impact upon sensitive environments.*
- *How they are designed — developments should be attractive to users, they need to work well in functional terms and they need to use natural resources in an efficient and sustainable manner.*
- *How they fit into their surroundings — developments need to respect their environment and complement it rather than detract from it. They should be designed to have a positive impact upon landscape, the historical setting and the ecology of the area.*

4.3 Minimising visitor impacts – specific issues

99. While visitors bring many benefits to the area (see **section 6**), without planning and management they can also cause issues. Many issues e.g. litter and inconsiderate parking can be resolved through education and promoting understanding, while others such as traffic congestion may be the result of sheer numbers at peak times.

Traffic management

100. The negative side of visitor traffic includes:

- Congestion, with associated road traffic accidents, and disruption to local communities
- Adverse ecological and landscape impact in terms of visual intrusion, damage to verges, and inappropriate road improvements
- Increase in air-, light-, noise-pollution, and the overall effects on climate change.

This often leads to traffic management measures being introduced, which can lead to further changes to the landscape character of the area.

101. Traffic management is the management of the speed, volume and parking of vehicles, which is usually done to improve safety or the environment. Traffic management may, for example, include traffic calming, speed or parking/waiting restrictions, the segregation of different groups of road users or giving one group of users priority over another, or the prohibition of one or more types of road users. This is the responsibility of the County Councils as highway and transportation authorities.

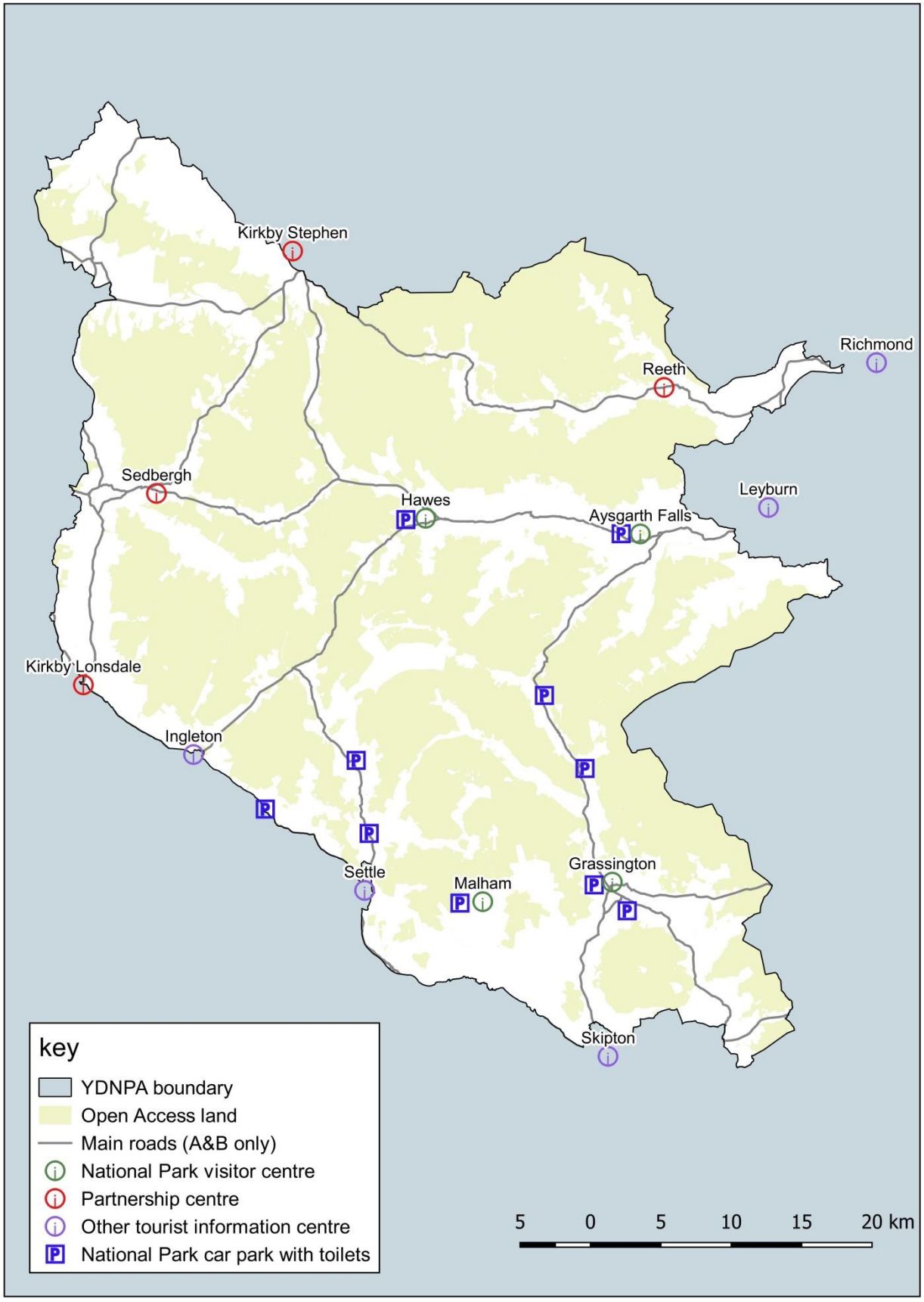
Traffic Management – guiding principles

On traffic management issues we will work with:

- ❖ *The County Councils so that vehicular traffic is directed to use the most appropriate route, based on the capacities of individual roads through or around the National Park and the purposes of the traffic concerned.*
- ❖ *Agriculture, quarrying and other local industries to reduce the impact of the movement of goods on the environment of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, local communities and the enjoyment of the special qualities of the area.*
- ❖ *Local communities and the County Councils looking at an 'evidence-based' approach to specific issues and from a perspective of positive visitor management.*

Any traffic management scheme, improvements and maintenance work should be minimised and carefully designed, so as to preserve the character and special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Figure 7 **Car parks, toilets, and National Park visitor centres run by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority**



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Car parks

102. Parking can be an emotive issue as many visitors come to the area by car, and the character of Yorkshire Dales villages means many residents need to park their car on the road, or in a car park near their property, where visitors also park. As well as formal car parks in the key service centres and villages, there are many individual lay-bys and informal car parking places throughout the Yorkshire Dales. Some 'formal' car parks are owned by us, others are owned by the district councils, parish council and private individuals amongst others. The Highway Authorities are responsible for the maintenance of informal roadside parking such as lay-bys that are part of the highway.

103. We have a long-standing policy of not providing car parking to accommodate peak demands, because in many areas this would be contrary to good visitor management, and would lead to increased erosion of the rights of way network, pressure on local facilities and other environmental issues. However, there may be circumstances where we will provide additional parking facilities, through a partnership approach, to improve existing facilities and achieve visitor management or meet climate change objectives. Any new formal car parking proposals would require planning permission, so any need would be judged against our planning policies in the Local Plan.

104. We own and manage 10 car parks (see **Figure 7**). These car parks have an approximate capacity of 1400 cars and 25 coaches. Car parks and associated facilities, such as toilets, are expensive to provide and maintain and a fee is charged. In addition, revenue generated from our car parks and toilets provides vital funding for our conservation and recreation work for the benefit of all. This is explained on site at our car parks.

105. It is recognised that toilets are essential for visitors and can dictate where families and the elderly choose to visit. Importantly, good quality toilets provide a lasting first impression of the area.

Car parks - guiding principles

- *Work with the Highways Authorities (the County Councils) and local communities when specific car parking and traffic issues are identified.*
- *Continue to provide car parks at key locations in the National Park and use the revenue generated to support maintenance of the area's rights of way network and the provision of toilets at these locations.*

Drones

106. Flying drones has become increasingly popular over recent years. As with any aircraft flying, this needs to be done responsibly with regard for other aircraft and people and property on the ground. Different regulations apply in the UK depending on whether the flying of a drone is for commercial or recreational purposes. If the flying of a drone is for any non-recreational purposes, this is likely to be classed as aerial work and individuals need to follow the application process on the Civil Aviation Authority website

www.caa.co.uk/Consumers/Unmanned-aircraft-and-drones/ If the flying of a drone is for commercial filming purposes, then the specific permission of the landowner or their representative is required.

107. If the drone is being flown for recreational purposes, then permission from the landowner must be gained - over 95% of the National Park is in private ownership. Individuals should also take into account how the activity might disturb other people who have come to the National Park to enjoy its peace and tranquillity, and the potential to disturb wildlife. In addition, the National Trust owns considerable amounts of land around Malham Tarn and in Upper Wharfedale. They do not allow recreational drone flying on their land.

108. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority owns less than 1% of the land in the National Park and cannot grant permission for drone flying in areas outside its ownership or management. Under Data Protection Regulations, we are unable to supply the details of land ownership to individuals.

Drones - guiding principles

- *Permission will only be given for the take-off and landing of drones on land in our ownership where this use will contribute to promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the area's special qualities.*
- *Drone operators (who acquire permissions) must respect the environment, the privacy of others, and take care not to harm or disturb any livestock or wildlife.*
- *If problems occur from someone using a drone inappropriately or illegally, this is a matter for the local police (call 101).*

Memorials

109. The Yorkshire Dales National Park is a special place to many people, and we receive numerous requests every year to create memorials and tributes, often to install benches or plaques. But, sadly, we cannot satisfy many of these requests. The vast majority (95%) of the National Park is in private ownership, and there are only limited opportunities on the small amount of land we own.

110. For many families, establishing a memorial is an important part of the grieving process, but there are alternatives to a bench or plaque. Families can make a donation towards a range of different work we carry out, or fund a specific project. However, we do not promote the placing of memorial plaques on any completed works or projects.

111. Conservation projects carried out by ourselves, and partners such as the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and the Friends of the Lake District, offer opportunity for loved ones to be remembered, for example through tree donation schemes, tree planting, woodland management, dry stone walling, heritage and conservation restoration projects.

Memorials- guiding principle

- *Each request for a memorial or tribute on our property will be considered on its individual merits, and we will endeavour to cater for these or direct to an alternative project or organisation.*
- *The placing of memorials, benches or plaques is discouraged in the wider countryside.*

Litter

112. Litter can be a significant problem in the countryside, not only from its visual impact and impacts it can have on wildlife, but also in relation to the resources required to dispose of it correctly. The District Councils are the waste collection authorities in the area, responsible for litter including litter along roadsides through the Dales.

113. As a National Park Authority with our two statutory purposes in mind we encourage visitors to be responsible for the disposal of their own litter and to take it home. Experience over the years has shown that litterbins, however large or frequently emptied, can never cope with demand. Even when full to the point of spilling over, bins attract more litter, along with boxes or bags placed next to them. Scavenging animals and even the gentlest breeze can spread litter, quickly creating an eyesore. The hazard of uncontrolled litter presents serious risks to livestock and wildlife and takes up valuable resources both financially and in terms of staff time. In short, litter attracts litter.

114. Our own experience in removing bins from our properties (circa 1990) showed that this dramatically reduced the problems surrounding the management of litter. There is no perfect answer: by not providing bins we accept that there can occasionally be problems of low levels of litter. It is noticeable and commendable how many individuals take on responsibility for odd bits of litter and do their bit – for everyone's benefit.

115. The District Councils also provide and service dog waste collection bins. Dog related waste, receptacles and collection bags are presenting a number of problems around different areas. The District Councils work with local communities and Parish Councils, in a number of different ways, when issues are identified in the National Park.

Litter - guiding principle

- *Rather than provide litterbins, the message 'take your litter home' will continue to be promoted to encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own litter.*
- *Through the District Councils and individual Parish Councils where issues of dog waste are identified, we will endeavour to find a solution and provide dog waste bins on our own car park sites.*

Dogs

116. Every year dogs – local and visitors - enjoy the Yorkshire Dales National Park with their owners. Dog walking in the National Park can bring many benefits, including to the owner in terms of health and wellbeing and financially to the many dog-friendly establishments which exist in the Dales. However, the prominence in the Dales of livestock farming and the existence of important wildlife habitats means that it's essential that the behaviour of dogs visiting and living in the National Park is managed responsibly.

117. We work with the police and other organisations and local communities to ensure that timely and clear messaging is given about how owners should manage the behaviour of their dogs in the National Park.

Dogs – guiding principles

- *There are rules regarding the expected behaviour of dogs and their owners in the National Park, which need to be understood.*
- *By encouraging owners to adhere to these rules, sharing the National Park with a dog can be a rewarding experience and prevent disturbance to land management.*

4.4 Future strategy

118. How we measure progress against each of the policy areas listed below is shown by reference to the relevant National Park Management Plan objectives (see number in brackets below for cross reference).

Spatial strategy and visitor management (links to A2, B8, B10, E3)

1. Maintain the quality and diversity of the recreational experience in the National Park so that there continues to be a difference between honeypots, busier and quieter areas;

(a) Consider each recreational activity in terms of where it should take place, in what volume and at what time. It must be recognised that in many situations we have no legal means of control and work through education and encouraging users' voluntary restraint;

(b) Work with the recreation advisory groups and Local Access Forum to minimise any adverse impact or conflict arising from recreational activity, including developing codes of conduct and user guidelines delivering key messages about recreation and how to minimise its environmental impact on the National Park;

(c) Promote activities in those areas where the type of activity, and further development and associated increase in visitor numbers, can be managed, thus safeguarding the environment, and not placing an undue burden on land management interests. (This will be based on the characteristics of the different areas of the Park as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment).

2. Safeguard the National Park from overall or irreversible damage through inappropriate activity and minimise conflict between different users:

(a) Use existing legislation and guidance to limit inappropriate activity in the National Park, including supporting the Police Authority in controlling illegal and anti-social use;

(b) Work with landowners, farmers, users and user groups to try and resolve any actual or potential conflict through positive visitor management.

Visitor facilities (links to E3)

When considering new proposals these should draw on and enhance the landscape character of the area, and consider the spatial distribution of facilities, to ensure an appropriate range and balance of visitor facilities, so that people of all ages and abilities from every sector of society have the opportunity to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park.

Traffic management (links to E3)

1. Support measures which remove unnecessary and/or inappropriate traffic from the National Park,
2. Promote the management of traffic so that vehicles use appropriate routes both inside and outside the National Park.

Car parks (links to E3)

1. Levy a charge on the use of our car parks at an appropriate level to balance parking supply and demand.
2. Consider car parking provision and the need to improve existing facilities in locations where such action would improve recreational or environmental management.
3. Promote the leaving of unattended vehicles in the car park overnight so multi-day trips can be undertaken using alternative modes of travel.

5. Accessibility and Access for All

This section covers

- Equality, diversity and engagement
- Access for all (miles without stiles)
- Orientation of visitors, information, signage and interpretation.

119. Access to the National Park and the benefits such access can offer should be available to all. However, there are many barriers that can stop an individual coming into, and making the most of the National Park. These include, but are not limited to:

Knowledge and understanding – people are unlikely to visit what they do not know. Awareness of the National Park is low amongst some groups of the population. Some potential visitors also lack confidence to know whether the National Park is for them.

Financial – the costs and availability of transport and accommodation, especially for extended family groups, can often be prohibitive.

Physical – people with limited mobility need to be certain that there are facilities that meet their needs within the National Park, and that they can travel to and around it.

120. This section outlines how we seek to break down these barriers and open up access to everyone, with a focus on ensuring equality and diversity of access, suitable routes and infrastructure through 'miles without stiles' routes, and clear orientation and information for visitors, including signage and interpretation appropriate for all.

5.1 Equality and diversity

121. The National Park is available to anyone; however, we are aware that some groups are less likely to access the area than others. Nationally there are four main under-represented groups among people who access the natural environment: disabled people; black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups; the young; and residents of inner cities.

122. Our Visitor profile reflects this, when compared to the population of the UK, as the *Yorkshire Dales National Park Visitor Survey* (2017) and **Table 4** shows:

Table 4: Ethnicity of UK visitors to the Yorkshire Dales National Park (2017)

Ethnic Group	National Park	North West	Yorkshire and Humber	England and Wales
White British	95%	87%	86%	80%
White Other	2%	3%	3%	5%
Mixed	2%	2%	2%	2%
Asian	1%	6%	7%	8%
Black	0%	1%	2%	3%
Other	0%	1%	1%	1%

Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding error

Significantly, a lower proportion was from Asian ethnic groups than in the North West and Yorkshire and Humber regions as a whole.

123. In addition, the 2017 Visitor Survey found around three-quarters of visitors to the National Park are from within the more affluent social grades A, B and C1, with a quarter from the less affluent C2, D and E grades. This suggests that those from social grades C2/D/E are under-represented in our visitors. Nationally in England and Wales, almost a half of the population (47%) are from social grades C2/D/E and in the North West and Yorkshire and Humber regions 51% are from social grades C2/D/E.

124. We work to reduce barriers and promote equality or equal opportunity for all to access the National Park - this is embedded throughout the services we offer. We try to ensure that the diversity of cultural and socio-economic characteristics in the visitor (user) profile of the National Park reflects the cultural and socio-economic characteristics of the population as a whole. Through our engagement programme we aim to increase the number, diversity and frequency of people in under-represented groups enjoying the National Park, by increasing awareness by under-represented groups of:

- What the National Park has to offer
- Where to go to enjoy it, and
- How to get the most out of each visit, and building confidence for repeat visits.

125. We want to see:

- New visitors from the under-represented groups using the natural environment, understanding what the natural environment has to offer and with the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of recreational activities and confidently return for more;
- Constructive relationships between providers and organisations representing the under-represented groups;
- Readily accessible information in a form that meets the requirements of the under-represented groups;
- Accessible, available and affordable transport together with accessible transport information.
- More recognition amongst tourism promoters and providers of the economic value of attracting under-represented groups, and sensitivity to their needs so they are able to provide an enjoyable experience.

126. We take very seriously our responsibilities under the various Acts of Parliament, for example the Equality Act, the Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act. We work hard to reduce barriers and promote equal opportunity for all to access the National Park. This approach is embedded throughout the services we offer and the way we seek to work with and influence partners. While we can raise awareness of the National Park among under-represented target groups, and substantially reduce barriers to these groups making visits, crucially, the choice about whether or not to make visits rests entirely with individuals.

Engagement programme

127. We have actively promoted awareness of the National Park among under-represented groups in the region and provided many opportunities for groups to make visits. Our 'Dales Experience' programme provides visits for a substantial number of groups; many involve linking rural and urban communities through joint projects. We continue to work hard to assist community groups to develop projects and initiatives which help to meet our outreach aims and objectives. Building on the Beyond the Boundary initiative (commissioned by the Countryside Agency), the Mosaic Project, Mosaic Partnership and Mosaic, have ensured the development of a long term and active engagement between BAME groups and the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

128. Mosaic (2009-12), sought to develop clusters of community champions in BAME communities around the National Park, who are able to sustain their own activities in raising awareness of and promoting visits to the area. The final evaluation of the Mosaic project claimed four major legacies from its work:

- A model for the National Parks to engage with communities that live nearby but tend not to use them;
- A network of Community Champions who have the skills and experience to champion the National Parks within their communities, and to champion equality, outreach and community engagement within partner and secondary partner organisations;
- Many thousands of people from deprived urban areas who have visited the National Parks for the first time;
- Greater awareness within the partner and secondary partner organisations that some populations face barriers to accessing the National Parks, and of how these barriers can be overcome.

129. There are missed opportunities and a lack of recognition amongst tourism promoters and providers about the economic value and opportunities in targeting non-tourism markets. This is thought to be due to these groups not being seen as potential high value tourists. However, it is recognised that any level of promotion to new audiences has to go hand in hand with awareness-raising within the tourism industry.

Equality and diversity - guiding principles

- ❖ *Everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park, we will create opportunities to encourage those from under-represented groups to visit.*
- ❖ *Activities to improve understanding and to highlight opportunities for enjoyment of the National Park will extend beyond the National Park boundary in order to reach regional, national and international audiences.*

Access for All and Miles without Stiles

130. The *Yorkshire Dales National Park Visitor Survey* (2017) found that 12% of respondents described themselves as having a long-term limiting illness or disability that limited their daily lives. The Equality Act 2010 is based on the principle that disabled people should not, for a reason related to their disability, be treated less favourably than others. People with disabilities and limited mobility have needs and aspirations as diverse as any other group. Wheelchair users, people with mobility impairments, people with visual impairments, people with hearing impairments, people with learning difficulties, people with speech impairments, the elderly, families with pushchairs and young children, are all residents or potential and actual visitors of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

131. All visitors to, and residents of, the National Park should be able to enjoy its special qualities, no matter what their level of physical ability. As individuals they should be able to decide whether or not a public right of way or recreation opportunity is suitable for them. This is given the shorthand term of Access for All. Addressing Access for All issues is an integral part of our rights of way management. Improving access for people with limited mobility can also benefit the able-bodied by making routes easier to use, for example families with pushchairs and young children, and dog walkers.

132. A complete audit of the rights of way network within the Yorkshire Dales was undertaken in 2007, based on the guidelines produced by the Countryside Agency *By All Reasonable Means: Inclusive access to the outdoors for disabled people*. A total of 17 accessible routes have since been identified and promoted as 'miles without stiles' routes. These can be enjoyed by a wide range of users and the terrain and any potential obstacles along the route are clearly described. We are also working with the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum and local user groups to identify further routes, including some for environmentally friendly vehicles such as trampers. Our targets for this work are described in our National Park Management Plan and Rights of Way Maintenance Plan.

Access for All - guiding principles

- *In each area of the National Park, routes suitable for all user abilities will be identified and upgraded, (or where a need has been identified new routes will be created and promoted). Where practicable, routes that loop from villages (especially those with visitor centres, or public transport interchanges and RADAR toilets) will be provided as a matter of priority.*
- *Wherever an existing right of way is being maintained, every opportunity to replace difficult barriers with more accessible features will be considered, e.g. replacing a wooden ladder stile with a gap or gate. The less remote a route, the more stringently this criterion will be applied.*
- *The creation and upgrading of Access for All routes must safeguard the historical, scenic and environmental value of the National Park.*

5.2 Learning, Engagement and Education

133. In March 2016 the government set out what it saw as the priorities for National Parks for the period 2016 to 2020 in the *National Parks: 8 point plan for England*. Of the 8 areas identified, the following 3 focused on learning and engagement:

- Connect Young People with Nature
- Everyone's National Parks
- Health and wellbeing in National Parks

134. We take a broad approach to the public learning about the National Park, and our Learning and Education programme includes education (both formal and in-formal including work with schools), guided walks, skills based activities, events, shows, and work with under-represented groups. Detail on this approach is set out in *The Learning and Engagement Strategy* 2017 – 2020.

135. The National Park's learning and engagement programme covers all ages, but has a particular role in inspiring young people to spend more time outdoors; exploring, learning about, loving, enhancing and caring for the special qualities we have in the National Park. By connecting young people with the natural environment now, there is more chance that this new generation will work to protect it in the future. The educational, health and wellbeing benefits of such connections are also well documented, for example the National Trust's *Natural Childhood* report into Nature Deficit Disorder looked at the educational benefits of increasing children's engagement with nature.

> 'Increased contact with nature also improves the way children learn, both formally and informally. Outdoor learning gives them direct experience of the subject, making it more interesting and enhancing their understanding. It also enables them to develop the vital connections between the outside world and what educationalists call children's 'interior, hidden, affective world'. (Robin Moore)

136. What we will do:

- Work in partnership with education providers to provide opportunities and resources that encourage and enable young people to embark on a lifelong relationship with the National Park. These experiences will be delivered by, with, and for formal and informal education providers, and include: curriculum based resources for teachers, YDNPA staff and volunteer-led outdoor activities, training and professional development opportunities for education providers, and delivery of the John Muir Award Scheme. Examples of recent initiatives include our partnership with the Edge Foundation to develop new educational resources and careers information for young people.
- Deliver an extensive programme of learning and engagement activities for the general public and for specific target groups at locations across the National Park. These events will give people an understanding of our special qualities, and enable and encourage active involvement in their conservation.
- Work with partner organisations and communities in and around the National Park to engage new audiences in our learning and engagement programme. Through the Dales Experience Programme we currently work with people from under-

represented communities to provide supported activity days in the National Park including walks, practical conservation activities and learning experiences.

- Continue to work with young people aged 11 – 16 through the Young Rangers Programme, enabling them to connect with and be involved in the conservation of their natural environment.

137. Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances. National Parks contain a huge range of landscapes, habitats, history and rural communities, providing excellent opportunities for learning, recreation and exercise in beautiful natural surroundings. We want to inspire a lifelong commitment to enjoying, understanding and caring for the natural environment.

Learning and Engagement - guiding principles

- ❖ *Formal education will be linked to the national curriculum and focussed on increasing understanding of the special qualities. It will be delivered in partnership with education providers in and around the National Park.*
- ❖ *Increase understanding of the special qualities through our events and enable and encourage active involvement in their conservation, and help inspire a lifelong commitment to enjoying, understanding and caring for the natural environment.*

Cultural experience

138. The Dales Countryside Museum at Hawes is managed by us; it is an Arts Council credited museum and a Visit England accredited attraction. It offers a great visitor experience and hosts regular exhibitions and events, and has an education programme.

139. It tells the story of the people and landscape of the Yorkshire Dales past and present, and stimulates visitors to think about its future with displays to interpret the development of the National Park from pre-historical times to the present day. Themes include: school days, home life, leisure time, religion, transport, communication and tourism, farming, local crafts and industries. It is a unique facility, managing an artefact and archive collection that is specific to the Yorkshire Dales, and enables us to promote the understanding and enjoyment of cultural heritage, wildlife and landscape. The Museum's website *www.dalescountrysidemuseum.org.uk* provides further information.

140. The museum also tells the stories of the Lead Mining industry in the Dales, with the 'Rich Seam', Lead Mining and Textile Heritage collection. The Yorkshire Mining collection helps to interpret the lives of the miners and their families and illustrates the links to associated industries such as textiles and knitting which helped to support them.

141. The cultural experience in the Dales is supplemented with family history research, which uses the collection of resources and specialist archives, knowledgeable volunteers and access to the Historical Environment record (HER).

142. The unique cultural heritage of the Dales is brought to life through projects such as 'Dairy Days', which aims to research and share the story of the dairy industry that helped to shape Wensleydale's landscape and which still plays such an important part in the local economy. This, and the 'Every Barn Tells a Story' project, help to record the stories and recollections of the people whose lives centred around agriculture and these heritage features, for example the rich pattern of wall and field barns in Swaledale. The barns may be used less in modern farming practices, but their special pattern on the landscape combined with the natural beauty of the hay meadows has become something which contributes to the visitor economy and enhances the visitor experience.

Cultural experience - guiding principle

- *The collection of artefacts held by the Dales Countryside Museum will be used creatively, to form the basis for activities that engage local people and provide connections with people living in urban areas to the heritage of the Dales.*

5.3 Information, orientation and interpretation

143. Another barrier to residents' and visitors' access to the National Park can be lack of information, both before and during a visit.

144. To avoid possible confusion it is useful to clarify what we mean by the terms used in this next section. 'Information' is definite knowledge acquired, or supplied about something. 'Orientation' is becoming accustomed to a new situation or set of surroundings. 'Interpretation' is defined as 'a communication process designed to reveal meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to the public, through first-hand involvement with an object, artefact, landscape or site' (Interpretation Canada 1973). Information is not the same as interpretation, though some information may have an interpretative element.

Information and technology

145. A variety of sources of information exist (e.g. through our website, visitor centres, leaflets and publications, as well as 'on site' information). The best way of providing information varies depending on the target audience. New ways are being used to communicate, and technology can be used to tap into different target audiences. For example, mobile phones are now combined with GPS, and have ready access to the internet and mapping technology. This could be used to help people find out about the area, without the need for leaflets.

Information and technology - guiding principle

- *To meet users' and visitors' preferences and our changing society, we will make full use of new technologies and approaches to maximise effectiveness of promoting understanding and enjoyment through information and interpretation.*

Orientation (including signing and waymarking)

146. Information (e.g. in the form of circular and linear walks leaflets and signing and waymarking of promoted routes 'on the ground') is often the best way to help people find their way around the area and become accustomed to new surroundings. From key settlements and visitor hubs easy routes are promoted. These have been developed with extensive and specific signage to enable people to follow the route and to instil confidence amongst those who would not normally follow a map or waymarked route e.g. the Squirrel Trail at Snaizeholme.

147. The amount of waymarking in any particular location should be sufficient to orientate people in their surroundings and avoid disturbance to land management. While general requests for more waymarking are made from time to time 'because people cannot be relied on to follow a map or GPS on their phones', there can never be sufficient waymarking to help individuals navigate across a large allotment or open moorland when

the mist is down. However, where there are known problem areas we will place signs e.g. the fingerpost to orientate Three Peaks walkers on the flank of Pen y Ghent.

Orientation – guiding principles

Information signs

- *A sign should be erected where:*

1. There is a statutory requirement to do so;

or 2. There is a need to manage visitor behaviour in order to protect conservation or other interests and a sign is the most effective way of doing this, and its provision is less damaging than the problem it is seeking to prevent;

or 3. There is a need to convey information to the public in order to pursue the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's purpose of promoting understanding and enjoyment, and a sign is the only and most effective way to do this, and its provision would be environmentally acceptable.

- *We will try to remove unnecessary and misleading signs from all areas, and persuade others also to remove unnecessary signs.*
- *Where possible we will try to use subtle visitor management techniques to direct people to their chosen destination.*

Waymarking (arrows and fingerposts)

Other than a fingerpost indicating where a right of way leaves a metalled road (a statutory requirement) any other waymarking depends on location and landowner permission:

- *From settlements in the main Dales and around buildings, waymarking will be used extensively to orientate visitors, and give them confidence, in their surroundings.*
- *In rural lowland areas and tributary dales, away from buildings, waymarking will be used to avoid disturbance to land management and will be unobtrusive within the surroundings.*
- *In open upland areas, the use of waymarks will be used only out of necessity or where required as an aid to navigation on promoted routes, with the aim of ensuring that any signs of human activity are minimal.*

Open Access Symbol

- *The provision of open access signage will be the minimum necessary to make clear to the public the boundaries of access land and the location of access rights.*

Interpretation

148. Interpretation helps people to understand and appreciate the heritage that surrounds them and to find their own meaning in it. It is a strong tool to build appreciation of the National Park's special qualities and to alter behaviour, where appropriate. Good interpretation reflects the special qualities of the National Park, can be tailored to individual sites, can engage a variety of audiences with varied learning styles and needs, and can provide visitors with access to learning experiences all year round.

149. In past years, the majority of our interpretation projects have been outdoor interpretation panels. However, in many areas a saturation point has been reached. So we now seek to use alternative methods of interpretation and encourage the development of more creative, innovative approaches to transmitting the special qualities the National Park and empowering positive and responsible actions. We are using new technology, which has included MP3 downloads, geocaching trails and a trail using Bluetooth technology.

150. Each interpretive project must be appropriate to the project's location, National Park messages, and audience. The audience for each project should be clearly identified at the outset to ensure an audience-focused project, which appeals to a range of learning styles and, where possible, hands-on (interactive) learning. We can help with these decisions and offer an interpretation service within the National Park.

151. A branding for outdoor interpretation panels and signs across the National Park was developed 10 years ago, and the Yorkshire Dales National Park style, including the distinctive green border, is now used successfully across the whole National Park, and is made available for other organisations too.

Interpretation – guiding principles

Interpretation can take many forms, and each solution needs to be considered carefully in terms of its communication objectives and audience.

❖ *The following criteria are used for the assessment of new interpretation projects:*

- contribution to National Park purposes
- resources available, value of resources required
- style, content and tools appropriate to audience, theme and location
- type of target audience and accessibility of outputs
- timescale and achievability
- sustainability and environmental impact
- creativity and innovation
- baseline information available and ease of evaluation of the outputs
- contribution to a scheme or strategy.

❖ *Interpretation includes:*

- Displays and exhibitions at National Park Visitor Centres and Dales Countryside Museum
- A programme of events and activities
- Special celebrations such as an Anniversary
- outdoor and indoor interpretation panels
- material on websites and social media such as Historical England's Lead Mining app
- digital tools such as video clips, Bluetooth, geocaching.com and MP3 audio trails
- printed materials including leaflets.

5.4 Future strategy

152. How we measure progress against each of the policy areas listed below is shown by reference to the relevant National Park Management Plan objectives (see number in brackets below for cross reference).

Equality and diversity (links to B4)

1. Make information about the National Park easily accessible and relevant to a diverse range of groups and individuals, focusing on the urban areas of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Teesside that surround it.
2. Raise awareness of the National Park and the range of services available among BAME target groups, using the means most appropriate to specific groups, including face-to-face direct contact.
3. Through 'Dales Experience' provide groups with visits to suitable National Park locations: offer support and resources for organising the visit, including a leader, and encourage groups and individuals to return independently and build confidence to support the progressive venture to new locations.
4. Build relationships with regional and national organisations which can help to develop and support new projects and increase collaborative working and multiply the benefits for all involved, through local/regional partnerships.
5. Develop specific projects to target under-represented groups including:

(a) a unified focus on families, as groups representing needs across the user spectrum.
(b) young people, to inspire a lifelong commitment to enjoying, understanding and caring for the National Park.

Access for all (links to B3)

See improvements to the rights of way network in section 3.5

Information and interpretation (links to B4, B5, B6, E3)

Provide accessible and up-to-date information and interpretation to enable the National Park to be enjoyed responsibly by everyone, paying particular regard to users from under-represented groups:

(a) Through promotional material (web and publications) provide 'key messages' to increase users' awareness of their impact and to influence their behaviour towards the Yorkshire Dales National Park. (See also Responsible use – guiding principle);
(b) Put map-based information, and information about walks onto our website *www.yorkshiredales.org.uk* that can be downloaded.

Orientation (links to B3)

1. Ensure that the waymarking of the rights of way network, around village centres and farm buildings (subject to landowners' permission), is suitable to orientate users of all standards.
2. Sign and colour code a variety of promoted circular and linear routes on popular low level trails, so that users can follow the route without needing to read a map.

6. Tourism

This section covers:

- Tourism in the National Park
- Sustainable travel
- Visitor experiences and hubs
- Working with businesses, business support and grants
- Marketing and promotion
- Partnership.

6.1 Introduction to tourism in the Yorkshire Dales National Park

153. Tourism has been part of the Yorkshire Dales since the eighteenth century. It was first made famous by poets and painters such as Turner. In 1781, there was already a tour guide to the caves in the Ingleborough and Settle area. By the late nineteenth century railways had been built across the Dales and brought mass tourism to the area - long before it became a National Park. The area has been marketed for tourism since Victorian times. However, the real boom in tourism has taken place in the twentieth century with the rise in car ownership and increased leisure time.

154. 'Tourism' is a term that is interpreted by different people in different ways, and can mean different types of visitors. In this strategy the term tourism is defined as:

> the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. *World Tourism Organisation* (WTO)

155. The National Park is surrounded on two sides by conurbations: to the south, West Yorkshire and Lancashire and to the northeast the conurbation of Teesside. Most of our day visitors come from these areas. Based on the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model (STEAM), in 2017 there were 5 million visitor days to the National Park of which 4 million were day visits. There were 13.5 million visitor days (of which 8.5 million were day visits) to the National Park's wider area of influence ie the National Park and towns along its boundary. The area caters for many different types of visitors and recreational users, from the annual family holiday to a wide range of shorter visits, weekend breaks and recreation-based day trips. Unsurprisingly those visiting for the day only, tend to live in much closer proximity to the Yorkshire Dales, than those staying overnight.

The National Park's visitor profile and visitor spend

156. We have undertaken regular surveys of our visitors over many years, and carried out face to face interviews with a representative sample at five year intervals since 2002. The number of visitor days to the National Park and the National Park catchment area (this includes the gateway towns such as Ingleton on the edge of the National Park) has remained fairly static over the past 20 years. There are around 5 million visitor days to the National Park. This is lower than the 1995 'all parks visitor survey' which recorded 8 million visitor days, as part of a year-round national survey undertaken across all National Parks. (NB one person staying two nights is three visitor days, and reflects length of stay). Over

this period there has been a long-term trend towards shorter trips with more frequent visits, such as long weekends, rather than annual week-long holidays.

157. The results of our 2017 visitor survey show a small, but significant increase in new visitors to the National Park. The proportion of visitors who were visiting for the first time in 2017 is higher than in 2013, and double the proportion in 2008 (14%, 10% and 7% respectively). Visitors on their first trip were more likely to be 'staying visitors'.

158. The visitor surveys also show an increase in overseas visitors to around 6% in 2017 (the 2013 result was 7%) compared to 2% in 2002 and 2008. Overseas visitors in 2013 and 2017 were mainly from Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. It is unlikely to be a coincidence that these are countries where cycling and cycle racing are popular, (the official announcement that Yorkshire would be hosting the Tour de France Grand Depart was made in December 2012).

159. In terms of satisfaction levels, visitors to the National Park, in the vast majority of cases are very satisfied with their visit. The results of the 2017 survey show a continued, year on year rise in satisfaction levels compared to earlier surveys. In 2017, 79% of respondents gave their overall satisfaction rating as 6 out of 6 (very satisfied), with no respondent giving a score less than 3. Just over three quarters said nothing had spoilt their enjoyment when asked, while 10% cited bad weather, and 1% traffic congestion. The figures for the 2013 survey were similar 75%, 9% and 4% respectively.

160. The 2017 survey also show very high levels for recommendations. Over nine out of ten visitors were very likely to recommend the Yorkshire Dales to friends and family. This is common to all visitors regardless of social background or whether a day visitor or staying visitor. The recommendation scores translate into an extremely high Net Promoter Score (88); a measure (between -100 and +100) that is used by major organisations to understand their customer loyalty. For the National Park it far exceeds major household brands. This is a key strength that could be utilised in marketing the National Park and in attracting under-represented groups.

161. Though tourism itself is not a specific purpose for National Parks, and as an organisation we are not about increasing visit numbers, we recognise that the special qualities of the area do attract visitors and the money they spend is fundamental to the local economy. Tourism accounts directly, and indirectly, for a significant part of the Yorkshire region's economy and is worth £8 billion a year (Welcome to Yorkshire and Sheffield Hallam University, 2018). The Yorkshire Dales National Park and its immediate surrounding area (area of influence) accounts for £670 million (2017) based on STEAM data.

162. Visitor spending, particular in remoter areas, can help support a wider range of social and cultural amenities. It has a crucial value to communities in the National Park; where the provision of many goods and services enjoyed by residents may only be viable because of visitor spend. Outside of the summer months there is capacity for more visitors, particularly overnight stays, between October and April.

6.2 Sustainable tourism

163. In its simplest form the WTO defines Sustainable tourism as:

> 'Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities'

164. In this context *visitors* are defined as either tourists or excursionists (excursionists are residents or non-residents outside their usual environment for personal or business purposes). Tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve expenditure. The WTO recognises that achieving sustainable tourism is an iterative process:

> 'achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary. Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of visitor satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them'. (WTO 2008)

165. The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, defines 'sustainable tourism' as:

> 'any form of development, management or tourist activity which ensures the long term protection and preservation of natural, cultural and social resources and contributes in a positive and equitable manner to the economic development and wellbeing of individuals living, working or staying in protected areas.' (Europarc 2000)

166. To be sustainable all tourism-related activity must consider its impact on the National Park. These can be positive impacts, for example supporting local businesses and helping to maintain the landscape and local traditional methods of farming and food production through buying local produce, or negative impacts on the environment, for example waste and pollution. Encouraging tourism which has a low carbon footprint e.g. walking a long distance trail such as the Pennine Way, travelling around the area by train, or bus rather than private car, is consistent with 'sustainable tourism'.

Sustainable travel

167. Significantly, over the last 15 years the proportion of visitors travelling by private car has appeared to go down slightly. The latest visitor survey (2017) showed 87% of visitors travelling by private car, compared to 89% in 2013 and 90% recorded in 2002. A hierarchy of modes of travel based on CO_2 emissions and least environmental impact is: walking, bicycle or horse, motorcycle, coach or bus, rail, electric/hybrid car, car, plane.

168. Information and promotion of travel options can make an important contribution in encouraging people to make environmentally-based decisions over travel choice, when travelling to and within the National Park. To this end, any promotion of the Yorkshire Dales wider area to visitors has an influential role to play in marketing sustainable travel as

a viable option. It is especially important to link promoted rights of way routes with public transport to help give a viable alternative to the car, wherever possible.

169. The National Park is fortunate in that it has both train services and bus services to and within the National Park area. Run through the dedication of volunteers there is a fantastic community transport network that provides regular services for visitors and residents alike. While the Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company has a pivotal role in ensuring the provision of summer Sunday and Bank Holiday bus services to the Dales. The Settle Carlisle line is internationally famous, and passes through the heart of the area while the Bentham Line (Leeds-Morecambe), runs along the southern edge (see **Figure 8**). These lines are all members of the national organisation Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP), which promotes the use and development of community rail lines and services for local and tourist initiatives. They have the potential to bring hundreds of thousands of visitors, over a year, to the National Park and have a clear role in 'greener' and 'active' travel. **Figure 8** shows how they link with some of the long distance cycling and walking routes (see also **Figure 5**).

170. Users of long distance routes generally spend more per day on average in the local economy than other visitors. Translating the numbers using these routes into the amount spent involves making assumptions around average daily spend and the length of time that walkers are within the National Park. However, even with modest assumptions that end to end users are spending £35 - £45 per day, and are in the National Park for 2 to 4 days, this represents approximately £1.1 million to £1.4 million directly into the National Park economy from the Pennine Way, Dales Way and Coast to Coast routes alone. In addition to accommodation, pubs and cafes, this visitor spend supports other businesses including baggage handling and holiday organisers.

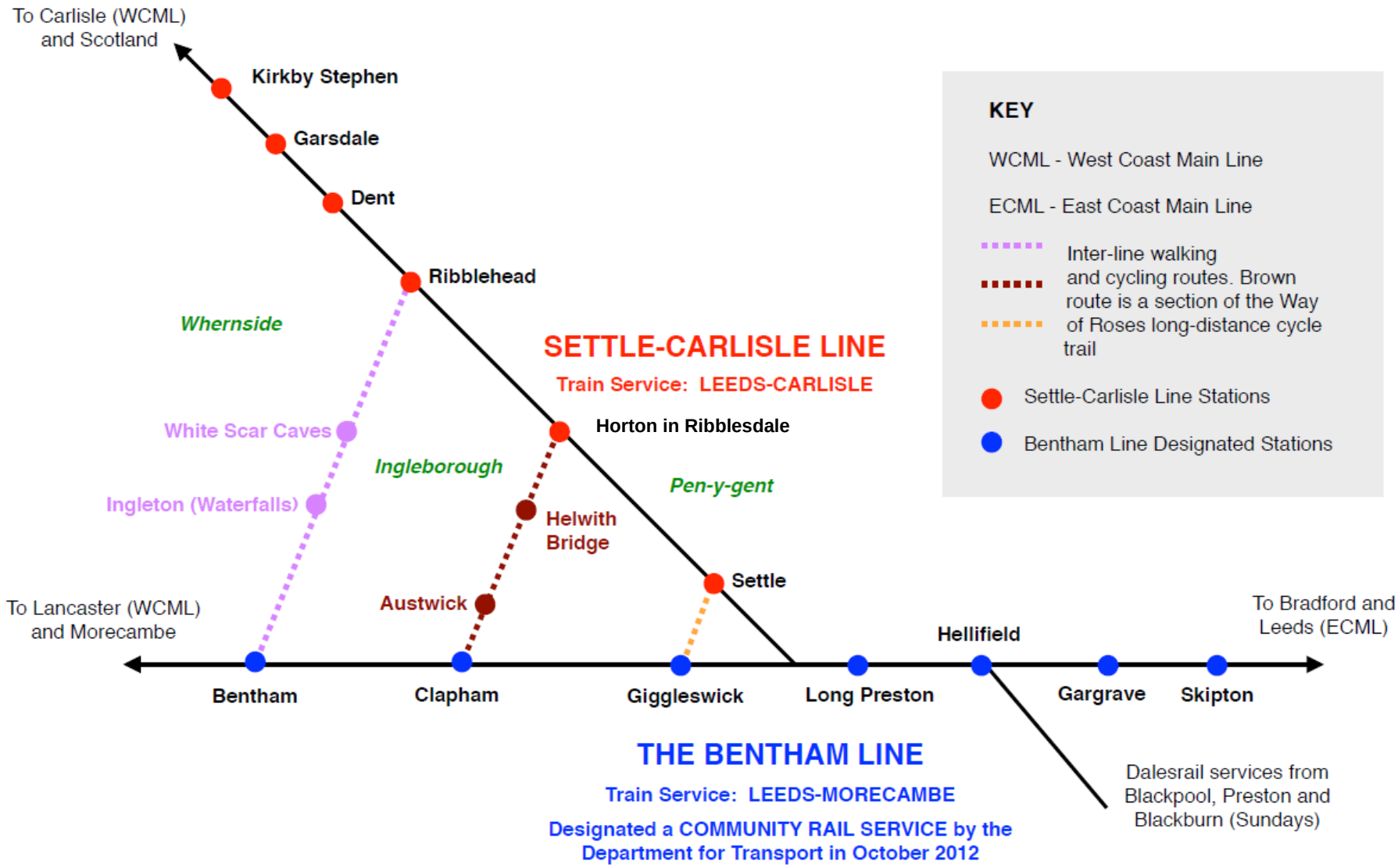
171. The Pennine Way is currently one of the seven Great Trails being marketed through VisitEngland to overseas markets (German, Netherlands and United States) with individual itineraries being created along specific lengths. The important point here is that it is - slow travel, with the journey being an immersive experience. The Pennine Way also links well with the 'explore' and 'challenger' market sectors identified in **Table 1**.

Sustainable Travel - guiding principles

Transport issues are complex and require significant resources to address them. We will work in partnership with others and strategically for the greatest impact by:

- *Promoting different modes of travel including slow travel (where the journey is the experience) to and within the National Park to reduce people's impact on the environment in terms of energy consumption and pollution.*
- *Giving due consideration to travel and traffic in relation to new tourism initiatives.*
- *Providing electric vehicle charging points at three of our main visitor hubs.*

Figure 8 Tourism and sustainable travel - the Settle Carlisle and Bentham lines



Businesses and environmental performance

172. There are a number of things that tourist facilities and businesses within the National Park can do, directly, to become more sustainable:

- **Support local service provision** – By spending in the local economy, businesses can help to maintain local services and suppliers. This leads to a 'multiplier' effect in terms of visitor spend which benefits the whole area.

- **Provide key messages** for visitors about the National Park, to raise their awareness of what makes the National Park special and their impact on it, to influence their behaviour, (see **section 3** for key messages).

- **Promote public transport** by working with local businesses to include public transport information on promotional literature.

- **Establish a visitor management programme** which can be a particularly appropriate solution where an attraction or its surroundings are fragile or sensitive to use by a large number of people. Visitor management may be achieved by regulating flow (e.g. timed ticket sales).

- **Reduce the carbon footprint of the business** by monitoring the impact it has on the environment, both in terms of direct energy consumption e.g. fuel bills, and indirectly e.g. sourcing local products and using local produce wherever possible.

173. Green or Environmental Quality Accreditation schemes are available for those businesses wishing to have their green credentials formally assessed via external verification and this allows them to promote their rating within the scheme.

6.3 The future direction for tourism in the Yorkshire Dales

Changing expectations and visitor profile

174. The National Park has high customer retention - many visitors are on repeat visits to the area. However, it is important to attract new visitors if the tourism economy is to be sustained in the longer term. Looking to the future, there will be demographic shifts in the population that will effect our visitor profile, and these will need to be considered:

- **The Active Third Age**: those over the age of 60 is set to rise over 40% in the next 20 years (6 times that of those aged under 60). Referred to as the Active Third Age, they are staying active longer; they want to keep the body and mind stimulated.

- **Millennials:** will be 22% of the total population by 2030. They expect personal and tailored experiences.

- **Extended families:** families are extending both horizontally (increase in the number of step-family relationships) and vertically (ageing population). They expect experiences to be flexible, catering for their varied wants and needs.

- **Growing ethnic mix**: in an increasingly multi-cultural society thought needs to be given to catering for different cultures. Activities need to capture the interest and involvement of diverse cultures.

175. Expectations are changing too. Technology is an integral part of people's (particularly young people's) lives. People expect to have access to technology in all environments - being 'connected' and being able to share experiences are important aspects of modern life, and highlighted in the 2017 visitor survey.

176. When people travel they increasingly want to live it, breathe it, become part of a place and not just 'see' it. Experiential tourism has seen huge growth in recent years. Visitors are moving to the next level and want more immersive experiences. This is particularly true amongst millennials, an increasingly important market segment.

177. Based on the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism principles, we will continue to engage with visitors to help them:

- Have greater awareness of what makes the area special and unique, and value it for these reasons
- Consider the areas of the National Park they are visiting, the activities they are undertaking and the impact they are having on the National Park
- Travel by means that reduce the carbon footprint of the area, and once here, stay longer, ideally overnight
- Come at different times of year; by boosting visits outside the current peak seasons businesses are able to increase their income throughout the year
- Think about the environmental performance of the businesses and services they use as part of their visit, including the availability of local produce to reduce 'food miles' and help maintain traditional farming methods.

178. In addition, we need to work with local businesses and organisations to ensure:

- Marketing is consistent with the good management of the special qualities that underpin the National Park's appeal.
- An emphasis on younger people and additional thought to how younger people might be attracted to visit the National Park.
- Effective networks exist to bring together the public and private sectors through a partnership approach. The interests of industry providers, visitors and communities, both in the National Park and in surrounding areas, come together to develop a mutual understanding of each other's needs and priorities.
- Tourism products and services are developed to help understanding of the area through activities and events that draw on the special qualities of the National Park, focusing on its distinctiveness, and ensuring high standards.
- Information on a good range of accommodation (which responds to current needs and trends e.g. Glamping) is provided for visitors.
- Good up-to-date research is available so any gaps in provision of visitor facilities are identified at an early stage e.g. there may be a limited number of family based facilities and/or a lack of certain types of accommodation.
- Any tourism and visitor management decisions are based on sound evidence.

179. The future direction of tourism in the National Park should address the points above. In essence, we support tourism that delivers exceptional visitor experiences that strengthen the socio-economic wellbeing of our communities and encourage enjoyment and respect of the area's special qualities. It can only be achieved by working with tourism businesses, and other organisations, to ensure everyone understands what makes the environment of the National Park special, and how tourism makes a positive contribution to the economy and wellbeing of those who live and work here.

Supporting visitor experiences - visitor and cycling hubs

180. The 2017 visitor surveys show that not only has overall visitor satisfaction increased, but this extends to particular facilities and services. Perhaps the most notable is the satisfaction with the National Park Visitor Centres, which shows an increase in satisfaction of over 10% between the 2013 and 2017 surveys from 83% to 95%.

181. The role of our four National Park Visitor Centres has been rapidly evolving over the past five years, to become an important part of telling the story of place to visitors. As such they are a focal point and visitor 'hubs' (see **Figure 9**) at honeypot sites: Grassington, Malham, Aysgarth Falls and Hawes. As well as in-depth educational exhibits, and engaging media displays, helpful staff are on hand with suggested itineraries tailored to individual needs; signposting people to events and activities; and linking with businesses and service providers in their immediate area, (and across the National Park as a whole) to help people get the most out of their visit.

182. Similarly, we want 'cycling hubs' to develop. The Tour de France put the area in the spotlight in 2014. Cycling has continued to be a growth area, attracting a new market segment with 14% first time visitors to the National Park during the Grand Depart (20% to

the wider Yorkshire Dales including Nidderdale). We are looking to continue building on the popularity and growth of cycling as a way of enjoying the National Park with the Tour de Yorkshire and 2019 World Championships continuing to showcase the area for road cycling. The National Park also has some of the best cross-country mountain biking in the UK. However, it is acknowledged that cycling as an activity is not universally welcomed by all residents and 'responsible' cycling that takes account of other users should always be encouraged.

183. Compared to other areas of the UK, the National Park lacks 'Family Friendly' cycling routes - a mainly traffic-free cycling route which can be enjoyed, at least in part, by the whole family. The multi-user Swale Trail opened in 2017 is low-level and relatively easy, but it is not a flat cycle trail (typical of those along old railway lines). A strong theme in the recent National Park Management Plan consultation was support for the development of old railway lines that criss-cross the area into family friendly cycle routes. Unfortunately, developing even a single section of railway path is likely to be problematic, because of multiple landownership and the track bed often being used for other purposes. However, it would make a significant difference to cycling in the area and benefit both residents and visitors alike, particular those 45 and under with families, or older cyclists on electric bikes.

184. Cycling hubs are locations where there is a cycle tourism offer built around cycle-friendly accommodation, bike shops/bike hire and good cycle routes and bike trails catering for all abilities- making the most of the environmental and cultural assets of the area. Settle and Reeth are 'cycle hubs' because they have bike hire and a relatively easy bike trail close by. Hawes, Sedbergh and Kirkby Stephen have the potential to become cycling hubs, and both are situated on or near recognised long distance routes.

Visitor Hubs - guiding principles

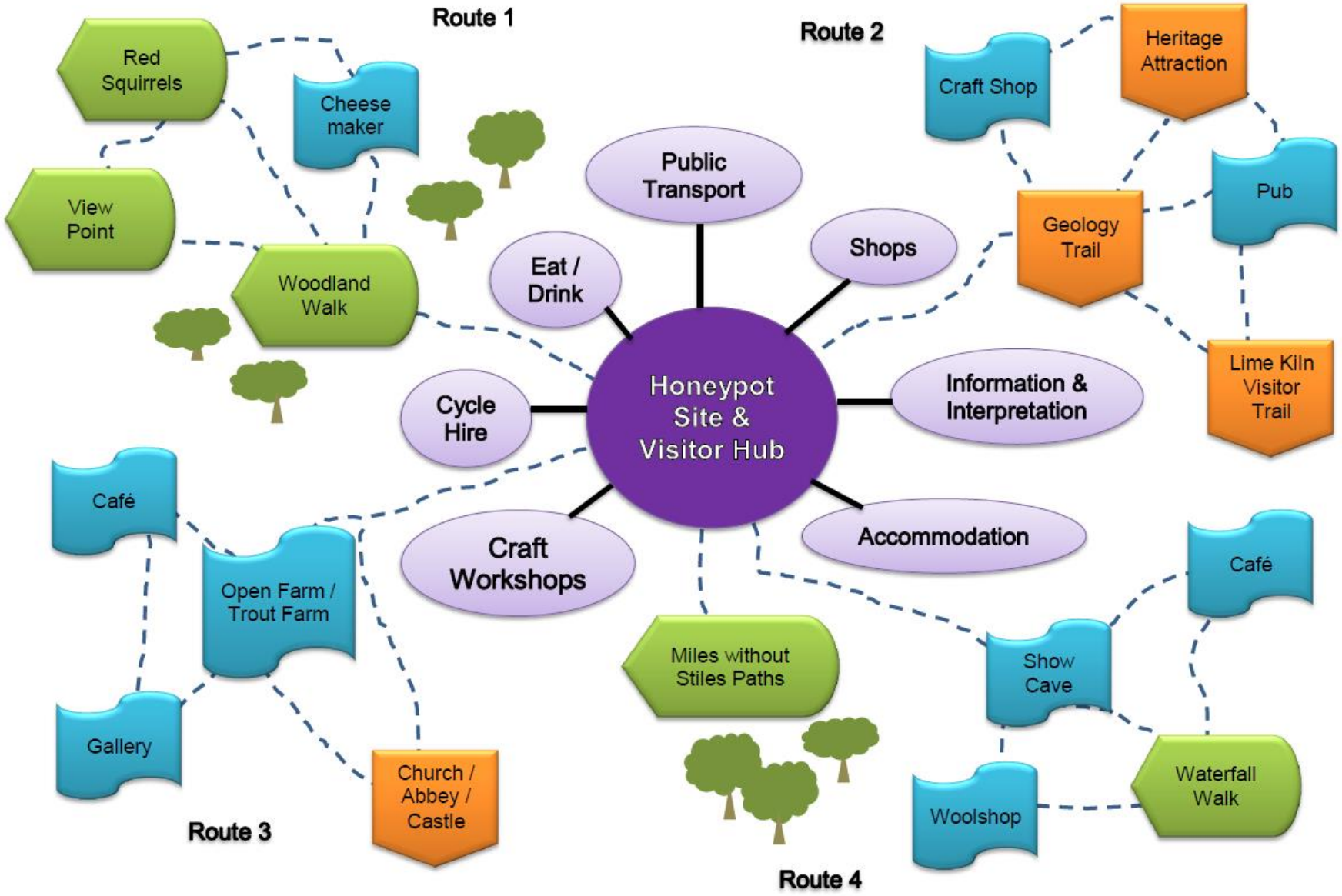
The purpose of promoting visitor hubs is to:

- *Enable all visitors to have a high quality experience in all aspects of their visit.*
- *Provide information on activities, events, walks and opportunities to experience the destination, local services, and the area's special qualities.*

Visitor accommodation

185. The National Park Management Plan has an objective to improve the quality, variety and marketing of tourism in order to encourage more overnight stays, particularly outside the busier months. Staying overnight is a more sustainable way to visit and to better enjoy the qualities of an area. It can provide a less rushed, more comfortable experience, and allows more time to be sociable and enjoy an area during the quieter time of the day. Overnight stays bring more money into the economy than day visits and therefore support more employment and better local services.

Figure 9 A visitor hub



186. A study of the National Park's visitor accommodation in 2013 (undertaken for the Local Plan) identified opportunities to attract wider markets, expand choice and meet changing demands. This also fits with our other objectives: to attract a wider range of visitors, including under-represented groups such as the young and those on a budget.

187. It is not possible to expand accommodation everywhere because some of the remoter areas are sensitive to even small additional amounts of light, noise and landscape impact, as explained in section 4 and **Table 3**. In those areas, wholly new accommodation is either discouraged or subject to conditions to prevent use at sensitive times of year.

188. Local plan policies guide new development into allocated sites, some of which are specifically identified as having capacity for new visitor accommodation. Sites at Linton Camp and Threshfield Quarry are allocated for a range of possible development options including contemporary forms of self-catering or hotel uses.

189. The 2013 recommendations led to more flexible planning policies in the National Park's 2015-2030 Local Plan. These have permitted more camping capacity in the National Park and have also gone the next step to encourage more resilient, sensitive and innovative accommodation such as pods, huts, yurts and other off Grid self-catering. The more conventional development of caravans, camper vans and chalets has not been ignored, and the Local Plan also supports their expansion and improvement, albeit in unobtrusive locations.

190. Prior to 2015, the YDNPA's planning policies only permitted barn conversions for holiday letting in farm yards as part of agricultural diversification. After 2015, the YDNPA's new policies extended beyond farm building groups to include many other roadside barns and traditional buildings. This has yielded a strong upsurge in planning applications and permissions for residential conversion. Potentially, hundreds of candidate barns are now available and it is hoped that long term investment in these will both expand the number of permanently occupied homes in the National Park and widen the range of visitor accommodation. The Local Plan policy permits applicants to choose between local residential occupancy and holiday letting and to switch uses as the two markets develop. This helps to deliver the National Park purposes of conservation and public enjoyment, while also making a valuable contribution to the local economy and local services.

191. The tourism industry will continue to respond to new markets at both the budget and luxury ends. From a planning perspective this will mean permitting appropriate scale extensions and remodelling of existing accommodation to bring it more into line with changing visitor expectations around privacy, amenity, space standards, connectivity and food and drink. The planning system can mitigate impact by requiring good design and by applying conditions to approvals.

192. The National Park does not however have capacity for the largest forms of visitor accommodation such as major conference hotels or large scale holiday villages. The size of site and capacity of transport connections required to host these effectively do not normally exist inside the National Park boundary. National planning policy also excludes major development inside National Parks, unless it is in the national interest to do so, which is unlikely to be the case for visitor accommodation.

193. There should be a range of suitable accommodation to match the type of activities we encourage people to undertake (walking, cycling, wildlife and cultural pursuits) including for groups. This could be small niche hotels and hostels, as well as cheaper

bunkhouses and campsites. This may mean supporting new accommodation in some areas or safeguarding against the loss of accommodation in others.

194. The National Park area has been losing some budget-end accommodation from its market stock. In recent years a number of youth hostels have closed as a result of the YHA change in business model, often working in partnership with private sector accommodation providers. Over time there has also been a reduction in camping and touring caravan pitches, as these are replaced with static holiday caravans.

195. Sourcing accommodation can be problematic along some multi-day walking and cycling routes, because accommodation is limited and many providers do not encourage people who stay only one night before moving on, which is often the case for individuals walking/cycling through the area.

Festival and events

196. Festival and events create vibrancy about an area, and have a particularly important role in attracting new visitors. They also bring a range of direct and indirect benefits: they provide opportunities to attract new audiences outside of the traditional season and, in so doing, support a range of businesses (accommodation, retail, food and drink, attractions). Festivals also enable higher level promotion which benefits the whole area (which extends beyond the immediate reach of the new festival).

197. The YDNPA events programme is focussed on providing people with opportunities to discover and learn about the Yorkshire Dales National Park. This objective brings together, into a cohesive programme the range of events run by the YDNPA for the public including: tourism events, activities at National Park Visitor Centres, volunteer-led guided walks, specialist walks and events at the Dales Countryside Museum. In addition, there are also good examples of the public and private sectors working in partnership to deliver festivals based on the area's special qualities e.g. Cheese and the Dark Skies festivals, as well as many festivals and events hosted by local communities and businesses:

- Festivals e.g. Swaledale Festival, Grassington Festival
- Sporting events, Ardrock, Spin Race, Fellsman, Triathlon, sportives

Festivals and events - guiding principles

- ❖ *Encourage new festivals and events that enable discovery and understanding of the area's special qualities.*
- ❖ *Promote events and festivals and associated activities to increase tourism spend and the number of new and staying visitors.*

Destination Management and partnership

198. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is not a destination management organisation, but it does work closely with the regional tourism organisations and local business networks as well as individual businesses looking to promote the area. Providing a link to facilitate coordination and clear communication is one of our key functions, as the National Park area includes three destination management organisations and eight local authorities. To assist with collaborative working across these organisations delivering tourism within the National Park, we have established the Yorkshire Dales National Park Tourism Partnership (see **Figure 10**). It is made up of representatives from:

Destination Management Organisations (shown in red on **Figure 10):**

- Welcome to Yorkshire
- Cumbria Tourism
- Marketing Lancashire

Local authorities

- Richmondshire District Council
- Craven District Council
- South Lakeland District Council
- Eden District Council
- Lancaster City Council
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Cumbria County Council
- Lancashire County Council

199. In addition, to facilitate good cross-boundary working with neighbouring protected areas (where a boundary is shared with the National Park), the following are also invited:

- Nidderdale AONB
- North Pennines AONB
- Forest of Bowland AONB

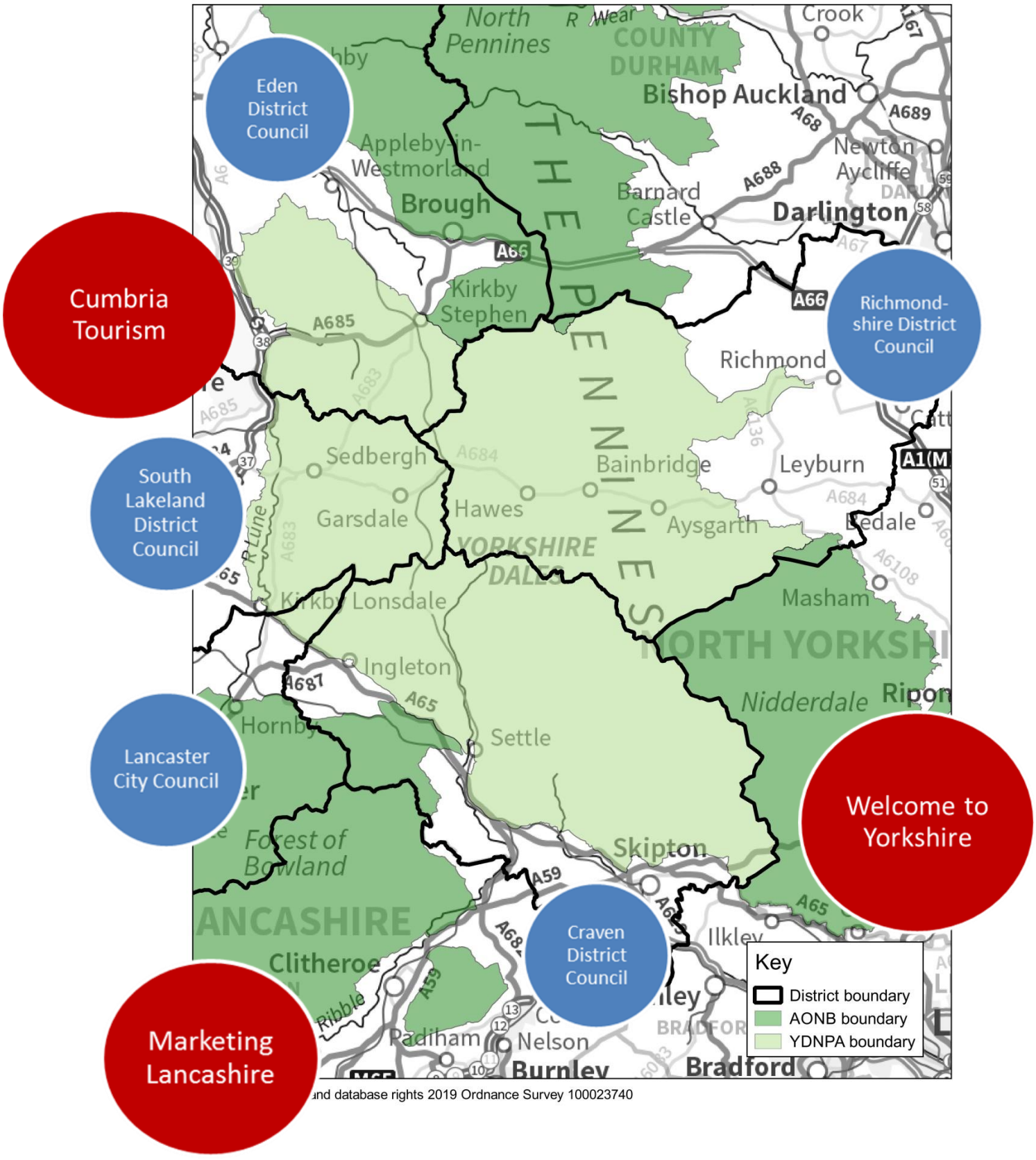
200. We recognise the importance of working with partner organisations, businesses and communities in areas around the boundaries of the National Park. Many visitors staying in accommodation outside the National Park make one or more day trips into it e.g. visitors staying in Kirkby Stephen are likely to visit Swaledale - given its close proximity. We also work at a national level and have a strong partnership with VisitEngland through National Parks England, and the DiscoverEngland initiative, and we are partners in VisitBritain's Countryside is GREAT campaign.

Destination Management - guiding principles

Facilitate good destination management by encouraging collaboration between the Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) and local authorities including to:

- ❖ *Foster a shared understanding and appreciation of the special qualities of the National Park that will enhance the visitor experience.*
- ❖ *Ensure that our National Park Management Plan and Destination Management Plans are connected and mutually supportive.*

Figure 10 Yorkshire Dales National Park Tourism Partnership area



6.4 Markets and working with businesses

Brilliant businesses and support for businesses

201. Tourism businesses are encouraged to use the National Park's special qualities to provide a high quality experience for their customers. We support this work through a range of tools including free access to promotional images, locator logos and guidance through the Distinctly Dales Business toolkit and a Local Food toolkit. We promote tourism businesses on our website and have developed Brilliant Business case studies to share good practice.

202. We also provide an opportunity for the National Park's tourism businesses to come together at our annual tourism forum, which provides a chance to hear from dynamic keynote speakers and to network with other businesses. We also provide opportunities for businesses to become involved in new initiatives such as marketing campaigns, festivals and the development of bespoke experiences to new overseas markets. Through our *Sustainable Development Fund* we give grants to support local businesses in efforts to improve their quality and environmental performance and to provide a more coordinated approach to marketing e.g. through business networks.

203. Tourism is also a potential avenue for farm diversification. We work with local farmers on diversification schemes that provide sustainable tourist facilities and improve the economic viability of the farm. Agri-tourism is a potential growth area in the Yorkshire Dales, and is defined broadly as any activity that brings tourists to a farm. People have become more interested in how their food is produced. They want to meet farmers and see first hand the source of their food. Examples include:

- Cheese Festival Stonebeck Cheese Farm walk event
- Farm shops (e.g. Townend).

Local produce

204. The National Park area is renowned for its local produce, particularly its cheese, lamb and high quality beef. However, visitors are not always aware how the landscape of the Dales and local produce are inextricably linked. The defining characteristics of the field barns originated as a feature of upland dairy farming, for over-wintering stock and storage of hay from the meadows. This traditional land use underpins today's continued specialism in dairy products. In addition, animals were bred that could not only withstand the relatively harsh environment, but also provide reasonable meat and milk yields. There are many recognisable local breeds: Rough Fell and Swaledale sheep and Shorthorn cattle, for example.

205. Much of the traditional local produce associated with the Yorkshire Dales came about through the constraints of the environment. Preserving fruit and vegetables in the forms of jams, relishes and chutneys extended shelf life. Cheese, to some extent, was produced to use up surplus milk. The Yorkshire Dales' most famous cheese is Wensleydale, with lesser known varieties such as Swaledale, Ribblesdale, and Coverdale. Some of these traditional practices can be experienced by visitors today e.g. in Wensleydale. There the farms supply the Creamery and the milk on sale in the local area; there are businesses

such as Raydale Preserves; and butchers supply local meats. In addition there are a number of micro-breweries in the area producing good local beer.

206. The re-introduction of hardy cattle, which are more compatible with the management of the landscape, promotes knowledge of traditional breeds and gives the visitor the opportunity to experience food not generally available elsewhere. Through local businesses promoting mainly local produce, visitors can 'eat the view', because they will be encouraging the retention of traditional and unique farming methods that maintain the landscape they come to experience. Increasingly, local produce is found on the menus of restaurants, hotels, pubs and B&Bs in the area. This means local farmers should also be getting better value for their produce, and food should be fresh.

207. Green accreditation schemes encourage businesses to use local produce and services. There are several advantages: it ensures low 'food miles' and overall quality of the produce; helps reinforce a sense of place, e.g. by local B&Bs serving local sausages, made by local people; and ensures tourism revenue stays within the local economy.

208. A Food Toolkit has been developed to assist businesses to source, use and promote local produce. This easy-to-use resource will provide opportunities for tourism businesses to extend the visitor season and raise awareness of the distinctive products and produce which are available in these special areas.

Working with Businesses - guiding principles

- *Provide support and encourage businesses to use the special qualities and help to address issues around seasonality, promoting products that are strong outside the main season such as dark skies, local seasonal produce and the celebrations market.*
- *Provide networking opportunities for the tourism businesses to encourage business collaboration.*

6.5 Marketing and promotion

209. Development of new itineraries through the English National Parks Experience Collection project, and events and festivals such as the Dark Skies festival and the Yorkshire Dales Cheese Festival through the Destination Management Moors and Dales project, assist with development of new products and marketing campaigns. There are also believed to be a number of un-tapped/undeveloped niche markets that would benefit the area. These provide traditional and non-traditional activities for visitors to the National Park with the aim to attract new audiences.

Active in the outdoors

210. Tourism choices are influenced by growing interest in health, wellness and fitness. Activity holidays have most appeal to people aged 20-44 with a broad appeal across social classes ABC1/C2. The traditional 'relaxing on a beach' holiday is showing a decline in favour of more active pursuits, and the Sport England research and market segments described in **Table 1** are very helpful in identifying areas of potential growth.

211. The range of niche activities continues to increase as tastes diversify. In developing its outdoor activity market the Yorkshire Dales should capitalise on the fact that it has more readily accessible adventures for most than the 'high octane' image of the Lakes or Scotland. It is a perfect place for mini-adventures - this could be a fantastic walk and view, going out with a guide, experiencing caving or climbing, or just sleeping under the stars.

Railway heritage

212. The Yorkshire Dales has one of the most famous and scenic railway lines in the country – the Settle Carlisle line. The Ribblehead viaduct is one of the most iconic views of the National Park. It also has three heritage railways:

- Embsay and Bolton Abbey
- Wensleydale Railway
- Stainmore Railway

213. The rail network in the Yorkshire Dales provides access to activities such as walks and general sightseeing). In addition, there is potential to develop joint marketing of Heritage Railway in the Dales alongside the Settle Carlisle line and bring additional economic value to the area.

Evening economy

214. Another possible under-developed area identified is the evening economy: for example, encouraging restaurants and shops to stay open later and provide more options for families to dine in the Dales during the evening, other than in pubs. (Planning permission would obviously have to be considered with any such changes: the main consideration would be avoiding loss of amenity for neighbours etc.). This would have the added advantage of encouraging people to stay over, thereby extending the length of stay and reducing the carbon footprint at the same time.

215. Many tourism businesses are now promoting one of our special qualities - dark skies, giving added value to their visitors This initiative gives people the opportunity to experience the wonders of the night's sky, where it has not been obliterated by artificial light, as is often the case in urban areas. This provides the businesses with opportunities to attract visitors at a quieter time.

Field sports

216. Field sports make a contribution towards tourism activity; much of it takes place outside of the traditional visitor season. The Moorland Association states that the value of grouse shooting across the Yorkshire Dales is estimated at about £6m per annum, with c50 full time equivalent grouse keepers and c100 fte employed on shoot days.

217. Keeper staff are employed all year round, irrespective of the season, and additional workers are brought in on a casual basis, up to 50 people a day on the bigger moors.

218. Research has shown that associated spin-offs from grouse shooting benefit a raft of rural businesses (source: Moorland Association). These include game dealers, the hospitality industry, equipment suppliers and transport operators, many of them based in some of the most remote areas.

Eco tourism

219. Eco tourism is described as travel that makes a positive impact on both the ecology and economy of a given destination. There are many examples which promote understanding about species or habitats. These include the tourism opportunities based on photography, guided safaris and wildlife experiences operated on Yorkshire's East Coast which allow visitors to get close to coastal wildlife, including gannets, puffins and seals. Research carried out by tourism experts at Leeds Beckett University has revealed that nature tourism is now worth as much as £15 million to the East Yorkshire economy, with the contribution from this globally-growing sector estimated to double to £30m by 2020.

220. Eco tourism is a potential growth sector in the National Park, particularly if the current opportunities Red Squirrel Trail, Hay Time and Malham Peregrine Watch (an estimated 250,000 visitors to the viewing point during the 16 years since the project started) are developed and packaged alongside other potential wildlife such as Red Kites. There are good examples which demonstrate the economic potential, for example:

- White Tailed Eagles on Mull - £5 million annual tourist spend and 110 jobs supported.
- Red kites in Galloway - £8.2 million tourist spend over an 11 year period and 19 full time jobs supported.

Media and promotion

221. The area is promoted through a partnership approach at a national, regional and sub-regional level. An example of national marketing is the Discover England Fund (DEF)

English National Parks Experience Collection project. At a regional level the area is promoted through the regional tourism organisations: 'Welcome to Yorkshire', Cumbria Tourism and Marketing Lancashire websites and publications. We recognise that the National Park logo is also a strong 'brand' and businesses and events can use the National Park logo in their promotion.

222. In terms of media used for promotion and marketing, we are involved, directly, in several forms including:

- The 'Visitor' newspaper
- Website
- Events
- National Park Visitor Centres

223. We try to ensure that any marketing of the area and sub-areas includes key messages as outlined earlier, and is based on the special qualities of the area. Through our information and marketing we want to help people to get the most out of their visit. This includes using the latest technology as described in **section 5**.

Local distinctiveness

224. Local distinctiveness means the essential character and spirit of an area and the elements that make one place different from another. It cannot be manufactured, but develops over a period of time. It can be enhanced and promoted. These essential details, large and small, natural and manmade, combine to create a "sense of place". It helps explain why each dale of the National Park is similar but unique, and it extols these qualities as part of each location's unique selling point. We have produced a toolkit which draws together all these different aspects for different parts of the Dales and encourages businesses to use this in marketing their services and products. Thus they benefit directly from the special qualities of the National Park.

225. We recognise the individuality of each area of the National Park, and promote this through our website and Visitor magazine. It helps the businesses to promote their immediate locality and to make the most of its identity, whilst benefiting from being in the National Park. It celebrates the fact that each part of the Dales is 'unique, with different characteristics and cultural identity, for example Swaledale, Wharfedale, Three Peaks, Westmorland Dales, and these differences are seen very much as a virtue.

Marketing and Promotion - guiding principles

- ❖ *Collaborate at the national and local level to support understanding of the growth potential of our National Park, particularly the development and promotion of our tourism offer, to encourage visits and overnight stays from the domestic market, with a particular emphasis on off-peak visitors.*
- ❖ *Support the marketing of the National Park and its different areas (sub-brands)*
- ❖ *Identify potential growth segments and develop joined up messages that help to reflect the distinctiveness of each area across the National Park*

6.6 Future strategy

226. How we measure progress against each of the policy areas listed below is shown by reference to the relevant National Park Management Plan objectives.

Sustainable travel (links to E3)

1. Through a partnership approach with neighbouring authorities, encourage people to think about their mode of travel to and within the Yorkshire Dales National Park, as well as the activities they pursue, in relation to their wider impact on the environment:

(a) Ensure promotional material for the area presents a range of viable travel options for travel to and within the area, other than by car.
(b) Continue to integrate public transport promotion and information into sustainable tourism and outreach activities.

2. Through a partnership approach, promote the public transport network which provides access to and within the National Park to key facilities for both visitors and residents:

(a) Through the Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company promote focused management of services and use of public transport.
(b) Through working with the County and District Councils, encourage the 'gateways' on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the 'hubs' within the National Park to facilitate getting around the area, by sustainable means of travel, such as cycling and walking routes.
(c) Provide public transport infrastructure on our sites where this can be externally funded.

Working with businesses (links to E2, E3)

Work with businesses to:

(a) Develop a tourism sector that supports National Park purposes and delivers key messages that emphasise environmental best practice;
(b) Provide networking opportunities and encourage businesses to share ideas and experiences, to help adjust to changes in market conditions or tourist preferences;
(c) Promote local produce and products that will help deliver sustainable tourism and achieve a high quality visitor experience.

Marketing (links to E2)

Influence people's opinion about the area, and understanding about what the area offers:

(a) Work with businesses to become 'ambassadors' for our 'key messages';
(b) Try to ensure our key messages are featured in marketing material, and that images of the area reflect the special qualities of the National Park;
(c) Continue to work with Visit England and Visit Britain and DMOs.

Sustainable tourism (links to E2, E3, E6).

Through partnership encourage sustainable tourism that recognises the special qualities of, and builds on, the environmental assets of the National Park:

(a) Develop all-year-round tourism products that celebrate the special qualities and safeguard the character and environmental assets of the area;
(b) Encourage more 'staying' visits through partnership initiatives such as the Destination Moors and Dales Project, and English National Parks Experience Collection
(c) Work as a key regional and national influencer, working to ensure that sustainable tourism is high on the agenda of those with this remit.

7. Next Steps

227. As we must function with limited resources and few direct controls over land or activities, collaboration is an essential as well as a desirable method of working. We have many excellent examples of achievements made possible with partners to deliver National Park purposes. We will continue to work in partnership with other agencies, bodies and individuals to manage and raise awareness and understanding of what is special about the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

7.1 Monitoring and reporting

228. This Strategy provides the overall policy framework; detailed actions, performance measures and targets will be highlighted in the annual Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Corporate Plan with longer-term, over-arching, objectives in the National Park Management Plan. Having sound data and measuring progress against targets and objectives is the key to good management, and at the heart of our National Park Management Plan.

229. We will monitor our work and measure outcomes. Progress on corporate plan actions is reported every six months, whilst progress against the National Park Management Plan objectives is reported on our website *www.yorkshiredales.org.uk*.

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