Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority **Item 13**

16 December 2025

Report of the Chair

Engagements

Since the last meeting of the Authority, the Chair has been involved in the following:-

Events

Big Ideas Forum - hosted by National Park Partnership.

- Along with the CEO, attended the Europarc Conference held in Birštonas, Lithuania (see report at Appendix A).
- Official Opening of YDNPA Southern Area Ranger Base.
- Launch of Underground worlds – caves of the Yorkshire Dales and Vietnam at Dales Countryside Museum.
- Skipton's annual Remembrance Sunday parade and church service.

Meetings

- Introductory meeting with the Chair and CEO of the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust.
- Liaison Meeting with Friends of the Dales.
- Conducted annual appraisals with Secretary of State members.
- NPE Board Meeting.
- Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan Annual Forum.
- Ripon Cathedral Consultative Committee (presentation on work of YDNPA).
- Chaired the on-line Autumn Parish Forum meeting attended by representatives from 22 Parishes.
- National Parks Partnership AGM.
- Annual All-Staff Meeting.
- Chaired the Member Champion meeting.
- National Park Management Plan Partnership Meeting.
- Shortlisting and Interview to appoint a youth representative to the Management Plan Partnership.
- An extraordinary NPE Board Meeting.
- An on-line NPUK Chairs and CEOs meeting.

- An on-line NPE Board Meeting.
- Ripon Cathedral Rural Forum (Land and Landscape, Facing the Future Together).

Derek Twine
Chair

Appendix A

Europarc Conference

Lithuania October 2025

Theme: Nature for People, People for Nature

Purpose of report

1. This report covers key points from the 2025 Europarc Conference, a biennial event bringing together a range of participants from National and Regional Parks across Europe together with government agencies and many other stakeholders. YDNPA is active in the wider Europarc network; their programme of webinars is openly available and is publicised to YDNPA Members.

Points of personal note from the Conference

2. The collaboration and partnerships between members of Europarc transcends NPE and NPUK; *"***nature has no boundaries**" so international cooperation is fundamental when addressing the global scale of climate change and nature resilience.

3. Throughout Europe, National and Regional Parks are developing programmes in which the health and welfare benefits that are gained from active and strategic engagement with nature and the outdoors are enhanced: clear intentional strategies and management plans play a major contribution; NPE generally and YDNPA in particular are seen as exemplars.

4. There is variable but growing engagement of young people directly in governance of Parks and protected landscapes across Europe, with positive examples (including from the UK) prompting interest.

5. Several speakers and workshops promoted co-creation of strategies which engage with communities and which are multi-generational as well as with "specialists and environmentalists in their field"; this is reminiscent of the phrase "**Nothing about us without us" from the 2024 NPUK conference**.

6. There is a trend of conservation complacency in wider society whereby there is a creeping acceptance of species loss, decline in habitat and poorer water quality; this is a shifting baseline complacency that needs to be addressed.

7. Equity and partnerships are essential criteria in governance and planning for Parks and protected areas, especially to maximise long-term and generational sustainability.

8. Prepare and plan for greater role of digital communication in education, visitor information, wider information-sharing; where provided it has proven positive impact.

9. There is a powerful role for creative arts in communicating about the natural world in a way that arouses interest and passion (photography, painting, music, performance, storytelling) [Note YDNPA's work at DCM is a positive example for this].

10. The webinar programmes offered by Europarc and by EAI (Europarc Atlantic Isles) are very much valued, and are seen as a positive vehicle for information exchange and fostering collaborative partnerships.

Participation

- 38 countries from around Europe were represented, plus several delegates from Latin America representing Red Parques (a similar protected area network to Europarc). An accord for closer international co-operation between the two organisations was signed during the conference proceedings.
- There were over 300 participants practitioners, strategists, environmentalists, scientists, botanists, politicians, educationists and storytellers, funders, government agencies, National and Regional Park officers and Members, leaders of protected landscapes and members of Youth Councils
- From NPUK: Cairngorms (1), Eryri (4), Lake District (1), New Forest (1), North York Moors (6), Yorkshire Dales (4)
- From YDNPA: Derek Twine (Chair), David Butterworth (CEO), Elliott Lorimer (Director, and Europarc Council Member)
- From Yorkshire Dales Millenium Trust: Hermione Pocock (Europarc Youth Council Member)

Programme

The programme included:

- Formal business meeting and reports of Europarc Council
- Sub-group regional meetings (e.g. Europarc Atlantic Isles i.e. UK and Ireland)
- Plenary speeches and Q/A with specialists, politicians and project-deliverers
- Field study visits to see exemplars and to share good and innovative practice
- Small group interactive workshops

Postscript reflection

Reiterating that "nature has no boundaries", this quotation from TS Eliot is apt when consolidating the benefits and learning from the international conference: "the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time".

Derek Twine, Chair