YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY **ITEM 13**

Date: **26 March 2024**

Report: **MEMBER FEEDBACK ON PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATION AND MEMBER CHAMPIONS' REPORTS**

Purpose

1. To provide feedback from meetings attended by Members as representatives of the National Park Authority since the last Authority meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That Members consider and note the reports from the Authority's representatives.

Background

3. Members represent the Authority on a wide variety of Partnerships and, in order to keep Members and Officers updated on this representation, formal reports are brought to each Authority meeting.

4. Member Champions are also engaged in a wide range of activities and take turns in bringing annual reports to Authority meetings.

5. These formal reports provide the opportunity to update Members on the work of the various partnerships we are involved with, a chance to question Member representatives and Champions and a means by which we can continually assess the value of these partnerships and Champion roles.

6. The **Appendices** include:
   1) A list of Partnership meetings attended in the last quarter (**Appendix 1**);
   2) Reports from the relevant Partnership meetings (**Appendix 2**);
   3) The annual report of the Member Champion for Sustainable Development Management (**Appendix 3**).

Rebecca Eslick
Committees Officer

7 March 2024

Appendix 1

List of Partnership Meetings December 2023 – March 2024

Title	Member	Date	Attended	Report
1. National Park Management Plan Steering Group	N Heseltine	13/03/2024	Yes	See Chair's Report
2. North Yorkshire Shared Prosperity Fund Partnership	Richard Foster	15/02/2024	Yes	No
3. Swinden Quarry Trust	Richard Foster	8/02/2024	Yes	No
4. Housing Provision Advisory Group	Richard Foster	07/12/2023	No	No
5. Local Government York North Yorkshire & East Riding Housing Board	Richard Foster	11/03/2024	Yes	No
6. Yorkshire Dales Access Forum	Lizzie Bushby & Neil Heseltine	20/02/2024	Yes	See Report at Appendix 2
7. Biodiversity Forum	Mark Corner	11/01/2024	Yes	See Report at Appendix 2

Report on Partnership Meetings

YDNP Biodiversity Forum

The Forum met virtually on 11th January 2024.

The terms of reference for the Forum were reviewed; an annual exercise. It was agreed that the existing requirement to produce an annual work plan for the forum was particularly important now, in the context of the Nature Recovery Plan. It is necessary to define clearly which of the Forum partners will be delivering what in the next 12 months to progress fulfilling the objectives of the plan, and a work plan will be developed by the end of January. In terms of membership, it was also agreed that it would be helpful to have more representation from the farming and land management community, and this will be pursued.

The Nature Recovery Plan is now published on YDNPA's webpages. An Executive Summary is being produced and was discussed in the meeting. As well as the habitat-based objectives of the NRP, there are also the 40 Category 1 Priority Species, which will require bespoke conservation action. The Plan has not identified what actions will be taken for these species and who will lead on them, and the April meeting of the forum will focus on this. Monitoring progress and outcomes of the plan is critical and an Implementation and Monitoring Subgroup of the Forum will be established to do this.

An update was provided on progress of the Local Nature Recovery Strategies, which the unitary and combined authorities are accountable for establishing. The target date for completion is March 2025.

Mark Corner
Member Champion for the Natural Environment
6 March 2024

Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum

The Forum met online on Tuesday 20th February 2024

Yorkshire Dales Management Plan

- LAF members were updated on the Management Plan and encouraged to respond to the consultation.

Lune Valley Cycle Access

- Helen Kellar from Sustrans gave a short presentation on the Lune Valley Greenway – a multi user route, focussing on the section between Kirkby Lonsdale to Cowan Bridge. This is a largely traffic free route of 6 separate projects expected to be constructed by 2035.
- There was discussion about inclusive language – with multi user route and greenways being preferred inclusive terms.

Officers Report

- Update on the Coast to Coast route – the team are now in post. Legal works with Cleasby, Crackpot and Rampsholme Diversion Orders were scheduled to go out to consultation in February. Accessibility options are being considered. Signage is scheduled to be installed from March onwards.

- Update on Accessible Aysgarth – DEFRA funding has been used to provide a feasibility study for an accessible route from the National Park Centre, and purchase tramper (in use since October 2023 – full launch from Spring 2024). Phase 2 involves securing funding through FiPL for a 4km circular route suitable for people with limited mobility.
- National Parks Partnership (NPP) have requested cycling projects to be considered for a package offer to potential partners.

Lizzie Bushby
Member Champion Recreation Management
7 March 2024

Annual Report of the Member Champion for Sustainable Development

The **Local Plan Advisory Group** was set up by the Authority in June and has now met eight times. The Group has advised officers on aspects of policy including the approach to rural exceptions sites but the main work has been looking at the proposed housing sites for allocation. The list of possible sites has been widened out to ensure the best range of options to choose from. There has been a delay whilst further external and internal consultations have taken place around infrastructure and environmental constraints and whilst officers report back to the Group.

As of the middle of February the Advisory Group has started to prepare its list of preferred sites which it will publish for a final round of informal public consultation during the Spring. The Groups recommended sites and the outcome of consultation will then be referred to the Authority for a decision before the Local Plan can be published in the summer.

The timetable has slipped so the PDF which was intended to be held on the 27th February will now be cancelled and reorganised.

Following the public comments last summer, the Advisory Group has also been agreeing the housing development boundaries drawn around the 96 towns, villages and smaller settlements across the National Park. The development boundaries will provide guidance for infill housing which will enable a supply of 'windfall' opportunities that will be additional to the planned sites. The development boundaries will be included on the Policies Map which will form part of the Publication version of the Local Plan in the summer.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment which provides evidence about the amount and type of new housing needed over the 15-year plan period is also being refreshed. The current version was published in 2019 and a number of important events since then including Covid, Local Government Reorganisation and the publication of a new Census means that this important piece of evidence needs to be revisited. The update will indicate whether key local plan outputs such as the housing target and the type of housing required, are still supported by the evidence.

Some of the smaller housing sites that will fall out of the Local Plan are now expected to provide future opportunities for possible rural exceptions sites for affordable housing. These sites will be shared with the Rural Housing Enablers at North Yorkshire and Westmorland, particularly in their search for suitable options in Richmondshire and Eden, where there is a shortfall of suitable site allocations.

Officers are working on a memorandum of Understanding to be discussed with North Yorkshire and Westmorland and Furness Councils. This will provide agreement on cross boundary planning policy matters, later this Spring.

Formal submission to Government of the final version of the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan is anticipated in early 2025.

Annual Report on the Sustainable Development Fund

SDF Budget 2023-2024

The Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) budget for 2023/2024 was £155,000. This became available on 1 April 2023. Members and staff are kept up to date via the SDF quarterly summary that gives more details about particular projects and how the budget is being spent.

In September 2023 the number of SDF applications being submitted had slowed down. One

factor was the launch of a new YDMT Grants Programme which has very similar criteria to the SDF. Their grants can support projects and organisations that help to deliver at least one of three aims: People, landscape and wildlife.

By November 2023 the pipeline of developed projects became almost non-existent. This was despite giving out loads of pre-application advice, and have chased these up, but applications still didn't materialise for one reason or another. The budget was reviewed and the Director of Conservation & Community agreed that the remaining funding available would be reduced to £100k up until the end of the financial year.

Following this change in mid-December 2023 we started to receive a steady flow of new grant applications to consider. In light of this the good news it does mean that we are in a strong position to commit the remaining budget of £100k by the end of the financial year.

National Park Management Plan - Objective F6

Objective F6 of the National Park Management Plan has a specific objective which aims to support 20 new local projects each year that bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the National Park. This year we should meet this objective as we are on track to contribute financial support to more than 20 worthy projects.

Media 2023/24 photo shoots/press releases/social media

A press release was issued in April 2023 regarding the River Bain Hydro project which began generating environmentally sustainable electrical energy in June 2011. It passed the one million kWh milestone – or one gigawatt hour – on 22 February 2023. The SDF contributed a grant of £50k towards the installation of an Archimedes screw back in 2011.

The Dales Magazine summer 2023 edition included an SDF article – All projects great and small. This focused on re-purposed buildings and listed buildings that were being brought back into use. The two projects referred to were – Hudswell Hostel and Settle Drill Hall.

A press release was issued in July 2023 regarding the Kingsdale Head Farm hydro scheme that the SDF contributed £26k. Several members visited the farm including Neil Heseltine and Mark Corner to learn more about nature recovery at the 600 ha holding.

Richmondshire Today ran a feature about the opening event of St Mary's Church Community Hub in Arkengarthdale in July 2023. The SDF contributed £10k. The SDF was acknowledged in the article.

The Craven Herald ran a feature about the second phase of the Glencroft Clapdale Wool Project – a new jumper range using locally produced wool. The original project focused on created a traceable wool derived from local farms. The SDF contributed £5k towards phase 1. The SDF was acknowledged in the article.

The November issue of the Yorkshire Dalesman magazine included an article about the 12 views of Kisdon landscape project (SDF grant £2,710). The photographic exhibition was on display at Yoredale from November until 29 February 2024. On 27 August 2023 the exhibition was promoted on Richmondshire Today's website. This can be viewed here.

On 10 November 2023 The Farmer Network, Business Support for Young People Project (SDF grant £28,020) featured in the Craven Herald. This can be viewed here.

On 1 November 2023 Swaledale: An insider's guide book (SDF grant £3,000) was promoted on Richmondshire Today's website. This can be viewed here.

The Authority's Dales Magazine Winter 2023 edition included an SDF article on page 7. This focused on the two recently completed projects – St Mary's Church Community Hub, Arkengarthdale (SDF grant £10k) and Kingsdale Head Farm hydro (SDF grant £26,474).

On 6 December 2023 the Sustainable Development Officer took part in the 'Friends of the Dales' Events Programme. The digital talk introduced the SDF scheme, the funding available and how to apply. The event showcased a number of past projects. This was followed by a talk from Edward Sexton of Clapham based Glencroft who explained how the £5k SDF grant had helped kick-start his company's now successful 'farm to yarn' project – Clapdale Wool – buying fleeces from farms within a 5-mile radius and transforming them into Yorkshire-made hand-knit yarn.



FARM TO YARN: (l-r) Zoe Fletcher and Maria Benjamin of The Flock, father and son farmers duo John and William Dawson with Edward Sexton, owner of clothing brand Glencroft.

Next year – 2024/25

Looking ahead to the next financial year. A number of new funding enquiries are currently being developed into grant applications. We should be able to consider these from 1 April 2024 when next year's SDF budget becomes available once again (subject to the SDF budget being approved).

Richard Foster

Member Champion for Sustainable Development

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