17 December 2024

Member Feedback on Partnership Representation and Member Champions' Reports

Purpose of the Report

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.

Strategic Framework

3. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and support the strategic planning framework:

    - Corporate Plan Objective 31:

      Provide high quality, efficient and effective services and communications to the public and other stakeholders, and so maintain the Customer.
    - Members Duties and responsibilities December 2020 (updated 2023).

Background

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

5. Member Champions are also engaged in a wide range of activities. Champions take turns in bringing annual reports to the Authority meetings –reports were due from the Member Champions for Cultural Heritage and Recreation Management – reports attached.

6. These formal reports provide the opportunity to update members on the work of the various partnerships we are involved, 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.

7. The **Appendices** include:

    1) A list of Partnership Meetings attended in the last quarter;
    2) Reports from the relevant Partnership meetings; and
    3) The reports of the Member Champions for Cultural Heritage and Recreation Management.
    4) Report from YDNPA Delegation to National Parks UK Conference 2024

Financial Implications

8. None

Legal Implications

9. None

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

10. None

Rebecca Eslick
Committees Officer

Appendix 1

List of Partnership Meetings September 2024 – December 2024

Title	Member	Date	Attended	Report
1. National Parks England	D Twine	11/09/24 22/10/24	Yes Yes	See Chair's Report
2. Campaign for National Parks	L Bushby	11/12/24	Yes	Verbal report
3. National Park Management Plan	D Twine	8/10/24	Yes	Chairs Report
4. Local Access Forum	L Bushby N Heseltine	3/12/24	No Yes	Verbal Report
5. Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum	M Corner	9/9/24	Yes	Report Appendix 2
6. Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group	L Bushby	7/11/24	Yes	Report Appendix 2

Appendix 2

Reports from the relevant Partnership meetings.

a) Wildlife Team Update

The **Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum met on 9 September**. It made recommendations regarding the draft management plan proposed by the Wildlife Drafting Group. The Species Monitoring Subgroup have completed an audit on category one priority species monitoring with another meeting scheduled for November. This will look at how we address gaps in the data and assign lead organisations for species.

Our host Authorities are working on their Local Nature Recovery Strategies. We are providing input based on our Local Nature Recovery Plan. We will be approached for formal comments in January and June next year and publication is scheduled for September.

On 29th October DEFRA has set out the government's vision for delivering on the UK's 30 by 30 target on land in England and the criteria for land that can contribute to this target. This will be used as the basis for piloting the 30 by 30 assessment and reporting process and will be followed by full guidance in 2025. Currently, 7% of England's land meets the criteria. SSSIs will only count towards the target when they are in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition. (Only 40% of our SSI features are in favourable condition).
It is Wax Cap (fungi) Survey Season. Two Dung Beetle workshops for landowners were very successful. All landowners who took part in the 2022 Priority Habitat Survey and requested the results have now received have now been sent maps with details of the condition of the habitats that were recorded.
There has been one new Swinden Quarry Fund application which is for hedgerow planting at a farm in Freshfield. One Dry Rigg Quarry Fund received.
Tony Serjeant, Senior Wildlife Officer, is leaving the Authority to become Senior Ecologist with North Yorkshire Council.

Trees & Woodland Team

Working on preparation for this year's planting season with tenders and specifications being drawn up ready to deliver the projects. We are currently looking to deliver 10 schemes with a total of 54 hectares of planting, below the initial 62 hectare target: sites being lost due to various factors including landowners pulling out and reduced further due to the wader and peatland guidance checks we have to undertake.
The Protected Tree Team remains busy, with applications likely to exceed last year's. Advice given for over 100 planning applications this year.

Farm & FiPL Team

FiPL has allocated its budget including the DEFRA agreed 10% overspend. FiPL team now carrying out monitoring visits with landowners and a questionnaire has been developed to capture their thoughts of on the scheme. The Cross Keys Bridge

project (Cautley, Sedbergh) , funded by FiPL, is underway. The bridge is currently being fabricated and it is expected to be lifted into place during November.
DEFRA officials visited the YDNP, looking at FiPL projects, and were, apparently, impressed. Separately, i Indications from DEFRA that FiPL may be extended in some form as part of ELMS.
Farming team continue to engage with farmers regarding access to ELMS funding.

Tees Swale: busy tree planting season, and planning community events including hedge laying training, and land management talks.

Fundraising
Progress being made on several fronts in the search for external funding for potential projects within the Land Management Section. It's important that we have a priority list of project concepts ready to go to match funding streams that could become available in the short to medium term. A project management framework is being developed which should help frame this.

Budget: DEFRA 2025 budget unchanged, not clear thereafter. Basic Payment Scheme being ended earlier than originally scheduled and farm inheritance tax issue, adding to farming challenges.

CNP presented their National Parks Health Check on Nature Recovery to Members after our 1st October Authority meeting.

Adrian Shepherd attended a meeting of the Raptor Persecution Working Group. The Police National Wildlife Crime Unit are being more active and have visited landowners within the Dales. Adrian also attended the YDNPA & Nidderdale National landscape Raptor Forum group meeting hosted at Bolton Hall Estate. The RSPB have now left the forum, dissatisfied with progress.

I attended the 15th birthday celebrations of the Yorkshire Peat Partnership. It has been a great success and a fine example of partnership working and has a young, energetic group of people running it.

Mark Corner 7/11/24

b) Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group Meeting - 7 November 2024 (online)

Topics discussed:

- Annual Green Lanes Report 2034/24 – Rachel Briggs presented the report and answered questions re an increase in traffic on The Highways (accessed from Mallerstang) and Thwaite Lane in Clapham – the Planning Inspectorate has decided to reclassify the route as a bridleway – to be

advertised in the local press in Nov-Dec If there are no objections it is likely to go to a hearing.

- NYC Path keepers Scheme - Andy Brown (NYC) gave a summary of the scheme

- Active Travel Plan for the Yorkshire Dales – Rob Ashford gave a short presentation and signposted the consultation

- Green Lanes Condition Surveys for Marsett Bottoms and Cam High Road – Rachel Briggs presented the surveys.

Next Meeting scheduled for November 2025.

Lizzie Bushby
Member Champion Recreation Management

a) Annual Report - Member Champion for Cultural Heritage

I want to begin by thanking Sarah Whitley and the Cultural Heritage team for the excellent work they deliver on behalf of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. This report provides an overview of some of the work which has been delivered over the past 12 months.

Historic Environment Record

The YDNPA Historic Environment Record contains more than 55,000 records of known sites and features of archaeological, architectural and historical interest; and events relating to field projects etc. It also includes aerial photographs, historic maps, technical papers and other sources of information in digital format or hard copy.

HER audit: Sarah Whiteley and Luke Barker recently completed the 5 yearly audits of the HER, as required by Historic England. This involved reviewing and updating all policy and practice documents relating to this part of the wider National Park Historic Environment Service; and identifying themes and areas which need to be focused on to enhance the record.

Doug Mitcham (substantive post: Community Heritage officer) is currently seconded to the Yorkshire Peat Partnership Ure Dales Landscape Recovery Project for 2.5 days per week for the next two years. In this role he undertakes HER data enhancement for the land which is part of this scheme, which will then inform peatland restoration and tree planting schemes to ensure that known historic environment features are not adversely affected. This work largely involves adding information to the HER from existing field surveys and studying LiDAR and aerial photographic information to identify new archaeological sites which then have records made for them.

Building Conservation

There are over 1,800 listed buildings in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. A brief description of each is available on a link to Historic England from the YDNPA website. Eash asset is searchable on a parish or postcode, or via an online map.

The conservation consultants, Purcell, have been commissioned to produce a conservation area appraisal of Marske village. This is in response to a request from the Parish Council for the existing Conservation Area, which only covers the North Yorkshire sector of the village, to be extended to cover the part which is within the National Park. Initial field assessment has been undertaken to date, and related data collection is underway.

Buildings Conservation Officer, Peter Reynolds is working with Ravenstonedale Parish Council to develop a programme of works to protect the Ravenstonedale High Chapel Building which is owned by the Parish but has fallen into a state of decay.

Five barns/historic structures have been renovated this year all using the FIPL scheme.
Details below:

- Dungeon Barn, Thwaite (FiPL) – completed
- Blackburn Barn, Low Row (FiPL) – completed
- Keldside Smithy, nr. Muker (FiPL) – completed
- Building attached to West Mill, Askrigg (FiPL) –
- Low Barn, Dent (FiPL)

Archaeology

Sarah Whiteley has been part of a team, along with YDNPA staff from the Rangers service and Historic England to contribute to the Langcliffe Quarry interpretation project, which is being led by North Yorkshire Council's regeneration team. In addition to improvements to access, and renewed interpretation around the site, one of the outcomes of this has been an updated condition assessment of the historic structures on the site by the consultants, Purcell.

Doug Mitcham and Luke Barker completed a report on the first phase of the Farming in Protected Landscapes funded, Knights Close farm, Raydale, field survey In June this year. They presented the results of this work at the recent Dales Archaeology Day on Nov 2nd, and plan further fieldwork with YDNPA volunteers later this month.

General

Sarah Whiteley spent a day with the YDNPA CEO David Butterworth in October visiting Historic Environment casework sites. This included the excavation of part a Romano British settlement In Littondale (developer funded project), a range of examples of historic building casework and a damaged Neolithic long cairn on the edge of Ingleborough.

Dales Archaeology Day 2nd November 2024

This event was held at the Grassington Institute and attracted c. 80 delegates. The programme included reports on the work of the YDNPA HE team, a presentation by AOC Archaeology on the developer funded excavation of part a Romano British settlement In Littondale, a report on the outcomes of the Ingleborough Caves project (part of the Our Upland Commons HLF funded initiative) and a presentation on milestones and guideposts in the Yorkshire Dales by the local branch of the Milestone Society.

Over the past 12 months the Cultural Heritage team has delivered 34 volunteer days across three sperate events, The Dales Archaeology Day, Knights Close Survey and Ingleborough Caves Project.

Libby Bateman
Member Champion for Cultural Heritage 2024

b) Annual Report - Member Champion for Recreation Management.

Areas of activity

- Active travel plan steering group (Nov – ongoing)
- Annual volunteer meeting (Nov)
- Delegated statutory highways authority review (Sept – Nov)
- Green Lanes Advisory Group – chaired meeting (Nov)
- NPUK Conference – 75 years of landscapes for everyone (Sept)
- Garsdale – Hawes Steering Group (July – ongoing)
- Quotes as required for press releases

Key updates

- YDNPA continues to seek external income to resource public rights of way work. W&F and NYC have agreed to contribute funding towards the maintenance of rights of way for the next 3 and 5 years respectively.
- Active Travel Plan - YDNPA received £100k grant from Active Travel England to support the development of a strategic Active Travel Plan which will identify, prioritise and develop safe and accessible walking, wheeling, cycling and horse-riding routes across the whole of the National Park.
- Coast to Coast – Legal and practical work is underway. Rangers are working on a two-mile-long flagstone path across peatland in Birkdale - completion expected early 2025.
- Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway - The Authority continues to perform the ‘lead partner’ role for management of the Pennine National Trails Partnership, which oversees the management of the Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway.
- Miles without Stiles
    - Aysgarth - Work to create a 3 mile all-terrain wheelchair route at Aysgarth Falls has been completed, and the new tramper has arrived. This has been funded by FIPL. Further work to improve access from the carpark to the wood will start soon.

    - Smardale - Work to create a new 1.5km ‘miles without stiles’ route at Smardale has started. This is part of the NHLF Access to Eden project. Route completion will be delayed due to needing planning permission for the bridges.
    - A full audit of our miles without stiles routes will be undertaken in 25/26 – to include recommendations to improve enjoyment of the routes for people with a wide range of disability.

- Garsdale to Hawes – work is underway obtaining agreements from landowners to create the multiuser route along the former Hawes to Garsdale railway line.
- Cross Keys Bridge Cautley – work has commenced on installing the new multi access bridge
- Apprentices – two new apprentices have joined the Ranger Service through the YDMP rural apprenticeship scheme.
- BMW Accessible Activity Days – 10 accessible activity days have been planned and 8 held so far for groups including Meanwood Valley Urban Farm who visited Grimwith Reservoir and Morley Street Resource Sensory Needs Service, who visited Parcevall Hall and The Brownie Barn.
- Digital access hub - designed to meet a wide range of access needs, and will include Audio Described routes, the brief was about giving information for people with a wide range of access needs and users with different disabilities will be consulted during its development. Expected to go live in March 2025.
- Malham Visitor Centre - We are looking at improvements to increase accessibility, this might include a tramper and changing place. We’re also looking at whether we can make the site dementia friendly. Delivering all this will be subject securing funding.
- 14 new contactless touch screen machines have replaced the old machines in authority car parks.

Lizzie Bushby
Member Champion Recreation management November 2024

Appendix 4

Report from YDNPA Delegation to National Parks UK Conference 2024

Purpose of the report

1. This report is to inform the Authority of the programme and matters arising from the 2024 National Parks UK Conference.

2. This report is to be noted, subject to any comments from Members

Background

3. Every two years the 15 National Parks in the UK meet to consider our role in society, how we are addressing key challenges, and to share ideas.

4. The 2024 Conference was hosted by the Northumberland NPA from 24th-26th September.

5. The theme for the conference was “75 Years of Landscapes for Everyone”.

6. At the Authority’s meeting in June 2024, it was agreed that the YDNPA delegation would be:
   - Derek Twine (Chair, and former MC for Promoting Understanding))
   - Lizzie Bushby (Deputy Chair and MC for Recreation Management)
   - Mark Corner (MC for Natural Environment)
   - Neil Heseltine (who had been invited as a conference speaker)
   - David Butterworth (Chief Executive)
   - Another delegate to be decided in response to the conference organisers’ request to include a representative who could contribute on the “Landscapes for Everyone” theme (this place was subsequently filled by Mohammed Dhalech, a Dales Volunteer and a leader of Mosaic)

7. As well as Members and key officers from the 15 National Parks, there were representatives and contributors from:

Active Inclusion Network

Campaign for National Parks

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

Disability Rights UK

Europarc Atlantic Isles

Forestry Commission

Historic England

Muslim Hikers

National Landscapes Association

National Lottery Heritage Fund

National Parks England

National Parks Partnerships
National Trails
National Trust
Natural England
Race Equality Foundation
Right to Roam
SOIL Collective
Welsh Government
Youth Hostels Association

8. The conference programme included speakers, discussion groups, Q&A sessions, informal networking opportunities, and a range of options for targeted small-group visits into the NNPA to see first-hand work being undertaken on the conference theme “Landscapes for Everyone”.

Report

9. Below are personal reports from individual members of the delegation on:

i. What we personally learned

a. “Inclusion is not a project but a life-long commitment” (SOIL Collective) **LB**

b. “How a delegation, conference or meeting with more diversity can generate greater energy, more vibrancy and a far greater breadth of perspectives, which in turn brought both challenge and freshness to my own thinking” **NH**

c. The Conference was a wake-up call to “see ourselves as others see us” **DT**

d. Many NPs are already taking actions to increase inclusivity but there appears little coordination or shared learning **DT MD**

e. National Parks are perceived by many as white spaces **MC**

f. The phrase “nothing about us without us” is a principle that applies not just to visible physical disabilities but also to age, non-visible disabilities, cultural or ethnic diversity; noting also that 23% of the population has some form of disability of which only 3% are wheelchair users **MC LB DT NH**

g. For decision-making that incorporates diverse perspective, involve “the right person with the right knowledge in the right place” **NH**

h. The “language” of accessibility is an insightful concept **MC**

i. Listen to, and publicise, the personal stories of people with lived experience **LB**

j. “Believe in the art of the possible” (Karin Woodley) **LB**

k. Second homes were referred to by one speaker as “anti-social housing” **MC**

ii. What we might do differently at YDNPA

a. Don’t treat widening engagement and diversity as a separate project in a silo, but embed into all we do (including climate, nature, well-being, education, communications and governance); this is especially relevant considering that “Outreach” is now agreed as a Priority Programme **LB MC DT DB MD**

b. Actively review where and how we could already involve greater diversity of engagement into our decision-making processes and governance **MC DT**

c. Learn from and build on examples where other NPs have developed their governance models to increase youth engagement (e.g. co-options, creating a Youth Board, etc) **DT**

d. Could Dales Countryside Museum curate an exhibition on the erasure of black history in the landscape (possibly timed with 2025 Black History Month? **DB MD**

e. Listen to experiences of Muslim Hikers and similar walking groups using the Dales, and invite their perspectives **DB**

f. Consider appointing a Member Champion for "A Park for all", with a cross-cutting remit for monitoring and review **MC**

g. Consider working with other Authorities to develop informal networks of Member Champions or similar roles (as happens among officers) **MC LB**

h. Review and develop our guidance to appointing bodies to consider when appointing Members to the Authority (already recently done for Defra, now consider doing likewise for appointing councils) **DT**

i. Research and build on experience of other NPs with Member appraisals/personal development reviews **DT**

j. For 2026 National Parks Conference, plan and budget now for broader YDNPA delegation **NH DT LB**

k. Check what opportunities might be possible with Bradford City of Culture 2025 **MD**

l. Learn from NNPA's centre at Walltown, with parking and a shop but also a Changing Places accessible toilet and an accessible classroom used by members of NNPA's team to work with small groups of all kinds, whether neuro-diverse, mixed physical or emotional abilities or those just with less confidence about exploring the outdoors **NH**

iii. Significant personal highlights

a. "Nothing about us without us" **MC DT DB MD NH**

b. Interacting and networking with officers and Members from other Authorities, with external stakeholders and with excellent speakers **MC LB MD DB DT**

c. If a problem or challenge seems too big, identify the small step within our power and gain the easy wins **LB**

d. Following a visit to Sycamore Gap and the exhibition at NNPA's centre at the Sill showing the story of the tree's desecration, their key message was that "after anger comes hope and new growth"; the National Trust presented a sapling from the seeds of sycamore tree to each National Park **DT NH**

10. Major common considerations that the delegation wish to underline to Members are as follows:

i. Accept then ensure that we need "to see ourselves as others see us"

ii. Incorporate “nothing about us without us” into our work and into our decisions, seeking to “involve the right people with the right knowledge at the right time”

iii. Actively review where and how we could already achieve greater diversity of engagement into our current decision-making processes and governance whilst also working to achieve greater systemic progress

iv. Reiterate that Outreach has been agreed as a priority for YDNPA and ensure that we embed this in all we do.

Lizzie Bushby
David Butterworth
Mark Corner
Mohammed Dhalech
Neil Heseltine
Derek Twine