Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority **Item 5**

30 September 2025

National Park Management Plan Annual report 2024-25

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Members of the progress made in the final year of the National Park Management Plan 2019-2024, and over the lifetime of the Plan.

Recommendation(s)

2. That Members note the progress made by a wide range of bodies in implementing the objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan.

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 29: In partnership with key organisations, and in consultation with local communities and visitors, update the National Park Management Plan (NPMP) by 2025, giving priority to tackling the climate and nature emergencies.

Background

4. The National Park Management Plan is the most important document for the National Park. Members will be aware that the Plan is produced and monitored by the National Park Management Plan Partnership - a group of 17 local organisations/ representatives.

5. The outcomes of the Plan reflect the collective efforts and shared responsibility of all partners involved. Success or otherwise is not attributable to any single organisation, but to the combined efforts of those operating across the National Park.

6. The primary means of reporting progress is via the NPMP website. For each objective, a page has been created providing details of the rationale behind the objective, the organisations directly involved in their delivery, and the progress being made. All these pages can be viewed here: https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about/national-park-management-plan/

7. This year's progress report marks the end of the 2019-24 Plan. An updated Management Plan 2025-30 was adopted at the last Authority meeting. The report,

therefore, provides both an annual update and a summary of overall progress during the lifetime of the superseded Plan.

Progress report

8. The **attached** final report marks the conclusion of the 2019-2024 Plan and provides both and annual update and a summary of progress over the full Plan period.

9. Overall, there were:
    - 27 objectives that have either been achieved or remain on course;
    - 15 objectives where some progress had been made;
    - 5 objectives where there has been little or no progress;
    - 2 lack sufficient data for assessment.

10. More details of progress on each of the 49 individual objectives are set out at https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about/national-park-management-plan/

11. As always, collating progress data for so many objectives from so many different organisations has been challenging. There are two objectives for which there is simply insufficient information to be able to make any meaningful assessment of progress.

12. Much of the information in the report will be used to establish the baseline for measuring progress on the updated Management Plan (for 2025 to 2030).

Financial and Legal Implications

13. None

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

14. The Plan contained ten objectives that were particularly positive towards equality. Of these, eight were achieved and the other two made considerable progress.

Climate Change Implications

15. The Management Plan included eight objectives that were specifically intended to support the achievement of the ambition for climate change: namely, for the Park to be storing more carbon than it produces each year by 2040 at the latest. Over the lifetime of the Plan, emissions across the National Park reduced from 575,000 tCO_2e to 513 tCO_2e – a reduction of 10%. In reality, the drop is likely to be larger than currently reported – partly because a two-year time-lag in the national data (the figures published in 2025 are for 2023) and partly because of improvements in data accuracy. For example, the latest Natural England data suggests that peat and woodland in the

National Park are sequestering four times more carbon than is currently shown in the national datasets.

Conclusion

16. Overall, considerable progress has been made towards achieving the objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan 2019-24. This reflects the combined efforts of many different local organisations and individuals – and there is much to look back on with local pride in the face of significant resource constraints. As Members are well aware, the most significant challenges have been in relation to the objectives for wildlife. Despite many fantastic individual projects and enhancements there has been little or no improvement in nature overall – and in some cases things have got worse.

17. The updated Management Plan 2025-30 has made nature (and climate) a priority in a bid to reverse that decline, and to take advantage of the enormous potential to use the National Park's natural capital to provide a wide range of much-needed public benefits, including a flourishing local economy. The Annual Forum in Grassington on 23 October will be a key opportunity to galvanize support and align efforts for the new Plan period.

Gary Smith
Director of Conservation and Community

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