YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park

NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019–2024

Final Progress Report

September 2025

Prepared on behalf of the National Park Management Plan Partnership

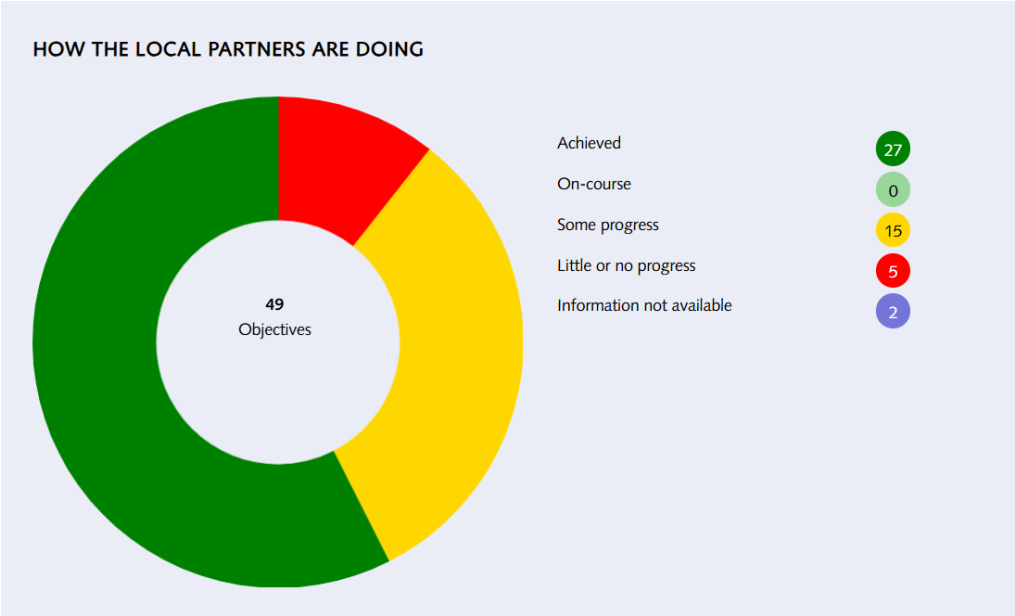
Members of the Management Plan Partnership

Cumbria Tourism	Cumbria Tourism Businesses			Rural Estates (Cumbria, Lancashire)
Environment Agency	Environment Agency			Rural Estates (Yorkshire)
	Farmers (Cumbria, Lancashire)		Westmorland & Furness Council	Westmorland & Furness Council
	Farmers (Yorkshire)		Office for Health Improvement & Disparities	Yorkshire & Humber Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
Forestry Commission	Forestry Commission		YORKSHIRE DALES MILLENNIUM TRUST	Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust
Historic England	Historic England		YORKSHIRE DALES National Park Authority	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
NATURAL ENGLAND	Natural England			Yorkshire Tourism Businesses
NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL	North Yorkshire Council		York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority	York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority
			YORKSHIRE DALES National Park	Youth Representatives

Summary

An updated National Park Management Plan for 2025-30 was adopted in June. This, therefore, represents the final report on progress made during the lifetime of the former Plan (2019-24). It summarises the work undertaken in 2024-25 (as well as the lifetime of the Plan) by **a** wide range of local partners. Full details of every objective, the organisations involved, and the progress made can be found at:

https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about/national-park-management-plan/



Significant achievements in 2024-25:

- Through Defra's *Farming in Protected Landscapes* programme, the National Park Authority provided £2.43 million in grants to farmers and land managers for projects that benefit nature, climate, people and place (**A1**);
- 11 Grade 2 Listed Buildings were repaired or restored, and removed from the National Park Authority's 'at risk' register (**A6**);
- 34 traditional farm buildings were repaired, restored, d/or brought back into use (**A9**);
- Over 1,500 activity days were provided for people from under-represented groups (**B4**);
- Collectively, YDNPA, Bolton Abbey estate and Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust ran curriculum-based outdoor sessions with primary and secondary schools inspiring just over 3,800 young people to engage with nature;
- Almost 8,000 young people attended activities that informed them about the National Park's special qualities (**B6**);
- Construction work was completed on a new railhead at Horton Quarry (**D4**);
- A further 4 apprentices and 2 Trainees were supported by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (**E7**);

- 103 new homes were built, including a single development of 49 houses in Sedbergh (**F1**);

Significant **achievements** during the lifetime of the Management Plan include:

- The National Park was designated as an international Dark Sky Reserve – one of just 23 worldwide and the largest in the UK – in recognition of its outstanding unpolluted night skies (**A2**);
- Over 20 km of visually-intrusive overhead power lines have been placed underground by Electricity North West and Northern Power Grid (**A4**);
- The number of Listed Buildings at risk has been reduced from 77 to 61 (**A6**)**.**
- The Friends of the Lake District and partners completed the 5-year, £3.5m Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership, which worked with local communities to enhance the landscape, cultural heritage, and visitor welcome (**A7**);
- Defra's Farming in Protected Landscapes programme provided £5.2 million to farmers for 200 projects that have provided benefits for nature, climate, people and place (**A8**);
- The quality of 'rights of way' was improved to the point where 92% were 'easy to use' - up from 84% in 2019 (**B1**);
- The Coast-to-Coast footpath was designated as a national trail, and significant investment to implement the route on the ground by the end of this year (**B2**);
- 68 km of rights of way were improved to make them accessible to people of all ages and abilities, increasing the proportion accessible from 7.5% to over 10% (**B3**);
- Over 8,600 activity days have been provided for people from under-represented groups since 2018. (**B4**);
- Collectively, YDNPA, Bolton Abbey estate and Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust ran outdoor sessions enabling 29,000 school children to engage with nature (**B5**);
- Monitoring of 'Green Lanes' shows that on average the compliance by recreational vehicles has been kept to an average of 96% over the past 6 years (**B10**);
- Over 1,200 ha of new native and mixed woodland has been planted through funding from a range of local partners, compared to the original objective of 450 ha (**D2**);
- Re:Cover – an interactive habitat map – was completed in 2021 (updated in 2024) and is available to use on the National Park Authority's website. (**D6**);
- The economic value of tourism has increased by 11.5% in real terms compared to the baseline figure in 2017 (**E2**);
- Four 'visitor hubs' were created at Grassington; Aysgarth; Hawes and Malham (**E3**);
- Over 15,000 people have attended the Cheese Festival and Dark Skies Festivals. A visitor survey showed that 15% of visitors in 2022 were on their first visit (**E6**);
- 46 apprentices have been supported by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, together with 12 trainees (**E7)**;
- Over 400 new homes have been created (**F1**);

- YDNPA's Sustainable Development Fund supported 137 local projects, worth over £800,000 (**F6**).

There are five objectives in the Plan where little or no progress has been made:

- The proportions of priority species whose populations are either stable or increasing has dropped from 81% in 2016 to 76% in 2021 (**C2**);
- Latest figures (2024) showed 51% of rivers were in good ecological status. This is down from 62% in 2020, although it still compares favourably to the national average of 14% (**C3**)
- The proportion of woodland that is in active management has dropped from 65% in 2019 to 57% (**D1**);
- The Yorkshire Dales Invasive Non-native species (INNS) Working Group has been disbanded (**D7**);
- Despite significant efforts, there has been no material progress towards enhancing railway services to, or within, the National Park (**E5**)

There are two objectives – national agri-environment funding support (A1) and public transport provision (F7) – where there is insufficient evidence to be able to make a meaningful assessment of progress.

Park Profile 2025

Area		
Total Park area	218,483 ha	Natural England, 2025
Parishes totally or partly in the Park	110	YDNPA, 2025
Population		
Resident population	22,798	ONS, Census 2021
School and pre-school age (0-15)	14%	ONS, Census 2021
Working age (16-64)	55%	ONS, Census 2021
Pensionable age (65+)	31%	ONS, Census 2021
Housing		
Housing stock	13,094	Arc4 2024
Resident households	10,272	
Owner occupied	7,570	
Private rented	2,013	
Social housing	688	
Second homes and holiday lets	2,822	Census 2021
Natural Environment		
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	57,152 ha	Natural England, 2025
Area of priority habitat	85,231 ha	Natural England, 2025
Land use		
Improved farmland	9,475 ha	Natural England, 2025
Unimproved grassland	124,683 ha	Natural England, 2025
Moorland, bog and heath	65,006 ha	Natural England, 2025
Woodland	10,771 ha	Forestry Commission 2025
Developed land	1,185 ha	Natural England, 2025
Heritage		
Scheduled Monuments	292	Historic England, 2025
Conservation Areas	46	YDNPA, 2025
Listed Buildings	2,142	Historic England, 2025
Grade I	25	
Grade II*	105	
Grade II	2,012	
Recreation		
Total Rights of Way	2,637 km	YDNPA, 2022
Public footpaths	1,754 km	
Public bridleways	793 km	
Other public rights of way	90 km	
National Trails	168 km	Natural England, 2025
Publicly-accessible land	129,680 ha	Natural England, 2017