Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan 2025-30

Public Consultation on draft National Park Management Plan objectives

Summary of consultation results – April 2025

Background

1. The consultation was launched on 20 January and ran for a period of 7 weeks.

2. The consultation document set out some 40 proposed objectives for inclusion in an updated Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan 2025-30. Each objective was accompanied by a rationale – explaining the reasoning behind the objective, and identifying the potential bodies that would be directly involved in helping to achieve it.

3. The primary audience for the consultation was local organisations and bodies – and it was sent direct to around 300 such bodies. However, the consultation was also promoted to the wider public via press releases and social media.

Results

4. A total of 107 responses were received from organisations (38) and the public (69).

Public responses

5. In general, there was strong support with an average of 87% of the public responses strongly supporting/supporting the proposed objectives. The most strongly supported were the wildlife objectives (93% of responses) and the least supported those for climate change (83%). A summary of the issues raised in the public responses is set out in **Annex A**. Overall, the most commonly raised issues were:
    - Improve access to caves, and value of caving to encourage outdoor activity
    - Concerns about impacts of shooting on wildlife;
    - Value of outdoor sports (esp. caving) for the local economy

Organisations

6. A list of the organisations that responded to the consultation is set out in **Annex B**.

7. The vast majority of the responses were broadly supportive of the objectives in the Plan.

8. A number of the responses were very detailed, and provided useful information to improve the wording – particularly the rationales for the objectives. The full set of organisational responses can be **viewed on the Authority's website here**.

9. The main points raised were:
    - The valuable role of parish councils, local groups, and individuals in maintaining the National Park and introducing people to it; and,
    - Concern that some of the objectives dealing with wildlife and nature-friendly farming were not ambitious enough;
    - The importance of farmers and farming – especially nature-friendly farming – to achieving the Plan's objectives;
    - The challenging financial situation facing many organisations, and how some of the objectives could be achieved.

10. As part of the consultation, organisations were also asked to identify how they would contribute to the achievement of relevant objectives. Whilst a number of bodies did respond, none of the information was specific/quantified. As a result, there is still a considerable degree of uncertainty about the extent to which some of the objectives are likely to be achievable or not.

Summary of issues raised in Public Consultation

A. Landscape

17 comments were received and included:

- A1 (land farmed for nature) is too weak/want more nature-friendly farming (3)
- Need to reflect value of geology esp Karst landscape and caves (3)
- Valuable role of local archaeology and history groups, museums etc (2)
- More funding needed for barns
- Concern about impact of lodge developments on dark skies
- Be more specific about what will be done to retain/enhance tranquillity

B. Welcoming Place

20 comments were received and included:

- Improve access to caves, and value of caving to encourage outdoor activity (11)
- Concern over levels of tourism esp. at main visitor sites (5)
- Concern over impacts of recreational motor vehicles on tranquility esp. Green Lanes (4)
- Tackle parking problems and speeding traffic (2)
- Support for Garsdale-Hawes multi-user route
- Require landowners to do more to provide access
- Need to do more to provide access for people with disabilities
- Concern that making footpaths easy to use encourages mountain bikers to use them

C. Wildlife

25 comments were received, and included:

- Concerns about impacts of shooting on wildlife (7)
- Value of caves for wildlife and conservation role of caving groups (6)
- Need more ambitious targets for SSSIs and water quality (2)
- Value of nature as a way to create new jobs
- More wildlife/trees shouldn't be at the expense of food production
- Concern about curlew population
- Concerns about impacts of new housing on wildlife
- Concerns about impact of visitors on wildlife
- Farming is not main cause of pollution
- No mention of badgers or other mammals
- Don't forgot heritage aspects of peatland
- Would like to see a more ambitious approach to C1; C4; C5 and C6

D. Climate Change

15 responses were received and included:

- Encouragement for the use of public transport (5)

- Need to establish a YDNPA Public Transport Forum
- Net zero is a waste of time
- Methane from livestock is a spurious issue
- Shouldn't increase broadleaf woodland by removing conifer plantations
- The ambition is about adaptation but most objectives are about mitigation
- The value of caves and karst to climate science

E. Economy

16 responses were received and included:

- Value of outdoor sports (esp. caving) for the local economy (9)
- Need more funding for farming;
- Should support more farms and more food businesses
- Importance of retaining camping/caravan sites (not converting to luxury lodges)
- Flourishing local economy should be most important ambition
- Prioritise jobs and housing for younger people

F. Communities

20 responses were received and included:

- Support stronger action/targets to tackle impacts of second homes (4)
- Keep remote areas free from mobile phone masts/coverage (2)
- Shouldn't try to balance communities artificially (2)
- Should do more to support second homeowners
- Holiday lets are bigger issue than second homes
- Need to improve mobile phone coverage for remote areas
- Value of community-led shops and services inside and just outside the NP
- Need more camping/caravanning sites close to main visitor destinations
- Need to stop people living permanently in holiday caravans
- Negative impacts of tourism on local communities
- Best places for new housing are generally just outside the NP
- The ambition is outdated – local communities no longer 'self-reliant'
- More social and affordable housing required
- Need to safeguard the former Wensleydale railway route from development that would prevent its full reinstatement

Other issues

Other external feedback received that didn't refer to specific objectives included:

- Objectives are admirable but where will funding coming from?
- Less of the *status quo* and more innovation
- Increase the diversity of YDNPA Membership

List of organisations that responded to the consultation

- British Horse Society.
- Burton-cum-Walden Parish Council
- Campaign for National Parks
- Council for the Northern Caving Community
- CPRE North and East Yorkshire
- Dent with Cowgill Parish Council
- Friends of DalesBus
- Friends of the Dales
- Friends of the Lake District
- Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line
- The Georgian Group
- Historic England
- Representative of vehicular users on the Dales LAF
- Long Distance Walkers Association & Long Distance Paths
- Ingleborough Archaeology Group (IAG)
- Kettlewell-with-Starbotton Parish Council
- Land Access and Recreation Association.
- Lost Earth Adventures
- Malhamdale Environmental Group
- Muker Parish Council
- Nidderdale National Landscape
- North Yorkshire Council
- Plantlife
- Sedbergh Economic Partnership
- Small World Consulting
- Stop Ure Pollution
- Swaledale Outdoor Club
- Tebay Parish Council
- Council for British Archaeology
- Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain
- The Victorian Society
- Threshfield Parish Council
- Westmorland and Furness Council
- White Rose Forest
- York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority
- Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum
- Yorkshire Dales Farming & Land Management Forum
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust