Yorkshire Dales National Park

Management Plan

2025-2030



Pen-y-ghent from Ribblesdale © Andy Kay

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park

Prepared by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan Partnership

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

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Nelet Bridge | Swaledale © Wendy MacDonnell

Introduction

What is a National Park Management Plan?

A National Park Management Plan is the most important document for a National Park. It guides how it is managed, cared for and developed. By law, every National Park Authority must produce one and review it every five years.

But this Plan is not just for one organisation – it is for the whole National Park. It brings together the policies, plans and strategies of many different organisations, making sure they all support the 'statutory purposes' - the main reasons National Parks were created. The Management Plan is the main means of ensuring that those statutory purposes are met.

National Park statutory purposes and duty

According to Section 61 of the Environment Act 1995, English National Parks have two 'statutory', purposes:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the National Parks
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Parks by the public

National Parks are not just beautiful landscapes; they are also places where people have lived and worked for thousands of years. That is why the law also states that National Park Authorities must:

- try to achieve the two National Park purposes in ways that will also foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities within the National Park.

Legal responsibilities of organisations

Under Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, certain organisations - called relevant authorities - have a legal duty to 'seek to further' the statutory purposes of National Parks in England. These bodies include local authorities; public bodies, and statutory undertakers (like utility companies).

One important way they can meet this duty is by helping to create and then implement the National Park Management Plan.



Kilnsey Crag | Wharfedale © Andy Kay

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan

The Plan is for everyone connected to the Yorkshire Dales National Park - local communities, businesses, visitors and the many organisations that operate here.

Around 97% of land in the Yorkshire Dales National Park is privately owned, and local people will be at the heart of the action needed to achieve most of the Plan's objectives. The Management Plan sets out how local organisations (whether public, private or voluntary) will help and encourage people to achieve those objectives.

Although the Plan is mainly written for these organisations, every effort has been made to make it useful and accessible to a much wider audience.

Who developed the Plan?

The 2025-30 Management Plan was reviewed and updated by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan Partnership. This group includes local authorities, statutory environmental bodies, and the voluntary sector, as well as local farmers, landowners, tourism businesses and young people.

What's in the Management Plan?

The complete Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan includes:

- A brief history of the place that became the National Park, and the natural and human forces that shaped it
- A description of the National Park's 'special qualities' – the things that make this place nationally important and worthy of protection These are unchanged from the previous Management Plan
- Six detailed evidence reports with key facts, figures about the National Park and important issues, challenges, and opportunities identified during preparation of this updated Plan
- Six long-term ambitions for what the National Park should look like by 2040. Again, these have been retained from the previous Management Plan
- 40 specific objectives to help achieve those ambitions and protect the National Park's special qualities.

How was the Plan reviewed?

The review of the Management Plan began in January 2024 and involved:

- Detailed research and evidence reports
- Public consultations
- Direct input from individuals and organisations to help write the objectives.

You can find all the documents and details from the review process on the Yorkshire Dales National Park website, under Management Plan.



Ribblehead Viaduct © Wendy McDonnell

Links to other plans and legislation

The Management Plan sets out a clear 'direction of travel' on key issues within the National Park. In doing so, it:

- Implements relevant national and international commitments in a way that fits local needs. In particular, the Government has identified 10 long-term national outcomes for which targets must be set in each Protected Landscape. The Partnership has integrated the short-term targets for these directly into the objectives in this updated Plan. The long-term targets for each outcome are set out in a separate Annex to this Plan.
- Considers the existing policies and strategies of a range of local bodies.
- Gives effect to, and is bound by, National Park purposes. All the objectives should be read to mean that they will be implemented in a way that meets National Park purposes and the associated duty.
- Establishes a framework for the future policies, plans and strategies of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and the many other organisations that operate in the National Park.

Guiding Principles

The following principles have shaped every part of the Management Plan:

- **Working with local people:**

  As nearly 97% of the National Park is privately owned, local people will be at the heart of the delivery of most of the objectives set out in this Plan. So, there is strong emphasis on working with farmers and land managers. There are also many local organisations – including parish councils, clubs, community groups and other voluntary bodies – whose members help shape the culture and landscape of the Yorkshire Dales and form a key part of interactions between people and the natural environment. While there are too many to list individually, the Partnership deeply values their contributions.

- **Clarity of focus:**

  The Management Plan does not try to list everything that needs to be done over the next five years. Nor does it go into detail about how each objective will be delivered (that is guided by the numerous supporting strategies of the partner organisations). Instead, it focuses on identifying the key objectives that will be implemented through the collective efforts of many organisations and individuals.

- **Accountability:**

  The Management Plan website shows which organisations will be contributing to the achievement of each objective. Twenty-four organisations have lead responsibility, and over 60 others will be taking action to help support the achievement of particular objectives. Wherever possible, the objectives include measurable targets so progress can be tracked and shared publicly.

- **Priority of nature recovery and climate change:**

  Achieving each of the six ambitions set out in this Plan is vital. But – in the face of the climate and nature emergencies, and the clear feedback from the public consultation – the ambitions for nature recovery and tackling climate change have been given the greatest priority. The main objectives for these two ambitions are set out first – but they are also supported by many of the objectives set out that support the other four ambitions.

- **Ambitious for change:**

  The scale of the natural resources in the Yorkshire Dales National Park means it has huge potential for 'green growth' - probably the greatest in England. All the objectives in this plan are ambitious, but that is why some are deliberately very ambitious ('transformational'). Most of these relate to the new national outcomes set by the Government for nature and climate. The objectives for these have been set in line with what would need to be achieved within this National Park in order to contribute proportionately to the national targets. In that sense, they are the minimum that will need to be done. However, each of them will require a very significant investment – whether from the public or private sector - which is not yet readily available.

Statutory assessments

The preparation of this draft Management Plan has been subject to:

- **Sustainability Appraisal:**

  This appraisal looked at how the Plan's draft objectives might impact sustainable development – including any impacts on the environment.

- **Equality Impact Assessment:**

  This helps prevent unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. The Act also requires the advancement of equality of opportunity between people who show 'protected characteristics' and those who do not.

- **Habitats Regulations Assessment:**

  This determined whether any objectives could have an impact on conservation sites designated under the European Habitats Directive. These are sites of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species.

All these documents are available in the Management Plan section of the Yorkshire Dales National Park website.

Ingleborough from Scales Moor | Ribblesdale © Wendy McDonnell



Climate Adaptation Management Plan

The UK government's third National Adaptation Programme introduced a requirement to produce a 'climate adaptation management plan' for each National Park by 2028. These should be embedded in or linked with the Management Plan.

Accordingly, this Plan takes account of the likely impacts of climate change on the National Park – and includes several specific objectives setting out how the biggest impacts will be mitigated or adapted to. Detailed adaptation studies are currently being carried out for Cumbria and York and North Yorkshire, and will provide further information specifically for the National Park.

Our Vision

Through their passion for this special place, local people and businesses will keep the Yorkshire Dales National Park a thriving area. Its unique cultural landscape will be treasured for its stunning scenery, exceptional heritage and wonderful wildlife, and every year millions of people will be inspired to be a part of it.

These are our six long-term ambitions for what the Yorkshire Dales National Park should look like by 2040:

1

Finest Wildlife

Home to the finest variety of wildlife in England.

2

Climate Mitigation

Resilient and responsive to the impacts of climate change, storing more carbon each year than it produces.

3

Welcoming Place

A friendly, open and welcoming place with outstanding opportunities to enjoy its special qualities.

4

Cultural Landscape

A distinctive, living, working, cultural landscape that tells the ongoing story of generations of people interacting with their environment.

5

Flourishing Economy

Providing an outstanding range of benefits for the nation based on its natural resources, landscape and cultural heritage, which underpin a flourishing local economy.

6

Strong Communities

Home to strong, self-reliant and balanced communities with good access to the services they need.

Achieving these ambitions

The following sections set out the specific objectives that the Partnership wants to see achieved over the next five to ten years to make meaningful progress towards each of these six ambitions. Wherever possible, the objectives have been quantified and include a date for completion.

The 'transformational' objectives - that do not yet have the funding needed to achieve them - have been circled.

Detailed information about each objective, including which organisations have the main role in helping to achieve each one, which will be available on the Yorkshire Dales National Park website.

Given the integrated approach that has been taken to develop this Management Plan, every objective will help to deliver at least two of the ambitions. Gaining a full understanding of the range of activity proposed for any one ambition, therefore, depends on looking at the objectives for all the other ambitions too.



Muker | Swaledale © Andy Kay

1 Finest Wildlife

Home to the finest variety of wildlife in England



Dormouse | Freeholders Wood © YDNPA

1.1. Improve the condition of protected wildlife sites so that 60% of features in Sites of Special Scientific Interest are assessed as having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition by the start of 2028, and at least 45% are in favourable condition by 2030.

1.2. Support farmers and landowners to restore and manage landscape-scale mosaics of semi-natural habitats in six 'nature recovery areas' ('Cumbria Connect'; 'Heart of the Dales';'Snaizeholme'; 'Tees-Swale: Naturally Connected'; 'Three Dales'; and 'Ure Dales'), and develop similar initiatives for at least three additional areas.

1.3. Increase the area of priority habitat outside of Sites of Special Scientific Interest that is in favourable management through agri-environment or similar funding schemes by 10,000 hectares by 2030.

1.4. Ensure that recovery plans are in place and being implemented for all 'priority wildlife species' by 2030, so that 85% of those species have stable or increasing populations by 2035.

1.5. Work with farmers, landowners and water companies to improve the condition of rivers – including significantly reducing the frequency of spills from storm overflows at 10 sewage treatment works - so that 65% are in 'good ecological status' by 2031.

1.6. Support implementation of the national Wildlife Crime Strategy, so as to end the illegal killing and disturbance of birds of prey and other wildlife by 2028.

1.7. Support farmers and landowners to restore or create 5,000 hectares of new wildlife-rich habitats outside protected sites by 2030 (from a 2022 baseline).

1.8. Support farmers and landowners to bring 75% of woodland into sustainable management by 2030, including positive management of conifer plantations to increase habitat for red squirrels and black grouse.

2 Climate Mitigation

Resilient and responsive to the impacts of climate change, storing more carbon each year than it produces



Fleet Moss © Yorkshire Peat Partnership

2.1. Work with farmers and landowners to support food production through the use of regenerative farming practices, working with natural processes, across at least 100 farm holdings (c.15,000 hectares) by 2030.

2.2. Work with farmers and landowners to bring all remaining degraded peatland (c.28,000 hectares) into initial restoration and management by 2035.

2.3. Work with farmers and landowners to encourage creation of 6,000 hectares of native broadleaf and mixed woodland, including scrub, wood pasture and natural regeneration, by 2031, to create a network that increases resilience to climate change and reduces downstream flood peaks.

2.4. Significantly increase take up of natural flood management measures to reduce flood risks inside and outside the National Park, including 're-naturalising' 25 km of watercourses by 2030.

2.5. Support more services along the Settle-Carlisle Railway and the reinstatement of other rail lines, increase bus and shared transport links to surrounding towns, and improve infrastructure for electric vehicles, so as to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from travel by 50% by 2030 (compared to 2019).

2.6. Support initiatives to improve the energy efficiency of buildings and increase small-scale and community renewable energy schemes, so as to reduce energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from industrial, commercial and domestic properties by 50% by 2030 (compared to 2019).

3 Welcoming Place

A friendly, open and welcoming place with outstanding opportunities to enjoy its special qualities



Malham Cove © Stephen Garnett

3.1. Manage and maintain the standard of all public rights of way, so that, on average, 90% remain 'easy to use', and create five new 'miles without stiles' routes that are suitable for a diverse range of ages and abilities.

3.2. Manage and promote the Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway and Coast-to-Coast National Trails and other established long-distance routes, and improve linkages from the Coast-to-Coast route to five nearby settlements by 2030.

3.3. By 2030 work with 200 community groups to co-design activity days, support and training to help people from under-served communities to experience the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park more easily.

3.4. Provide curriculum-based outdoor learning and skills-based activities to enable 5,000 young people from in and around the National Park to explore and take action to enhance their environment each year.

3.5. Give people from all backgrounds an opportunity to enjoy and contribute to looking after the National Park by providing at least 7,000 volunteer days per year, with at least 20% coming from under-served communities by 2029.

3.6. Enhance at least five 'green lanes' by 2030 and manage use by recreational motor vehicles and motorcycles - encouraging and supporting responsible use and enforcing restrictions where necessary.

3.7. Help to tackle health inequalities and improve people's health and well-being by enabling at least 1,500 people with health conditions to connect with and experience the special qualities of the National Park through 'social prescribing' activities by 2030.

4 Cultural Landscape

A distinctive, living, working, cultural landscape that tells the ongoing story of generations of people interacting with their environment



Collier Holme Farm © John Bentley

4.1. Support farmers and land managers to maintain and improve the outstanding landscape, geology, wildlife and heritage of the National Park, so that at least 80% of land managers have adopted nature-friendly farming or land management on at least 15% of their land by 2030.

4.2. Maintain the National Park as a place where a true sense of tranquillity and remoteness can still be found, including taking action to retain international 'Dark Sky Reserve' status.

4.3. Help local people to record, restore, repair and – where possible - bring back into use historical sites, buildings and features, including ensuring that no more than 12 nationally designated heritage assets are at risk by 2030.

4.4. Support farmers and landowners to conserve and enhance the distinctive landscape of field barns and drystone walls, so that at least one of the Barns and Walls Conservation Areas (Swaledale & Arkengarthdale and Littondale) is no longer at risk.

4.5. Support farmers and landowners to enhance the Dales' landscape, and support nature, climate and farming resilience, including planting field trees to mitigate the impact of ash dieback on tree cover outside woodlands, and creating or restoring 60 km of hedgerows by 2030 (from 2022 baseline).

4.6. Continue to reduce the visual impacts of intrusive infrastructure and equipment, including putting a further 15km of overhead power lines underground by 2028.

5 Flourishing Economy

Providing an outstanding range of benefits for the nation based on its natural resources, landscape and cultural heritage, which underpin a flourishing local economy



Yorkshire Dales Cheese Festival © Stephen Garnett

5.1. Establish an integrated National Park farm advisory service to: support regenerative farming; increase take-up of national agri-environment schemes and green finance opportunities; and, so support the viability and retention of low input livestock farming across the National Park.

5.2. Provide advice, training and support for rural and land-based businesses to help them to innovate, diversify, and secure investment in their natural assets and create 'green jobs', so as to retain at least the same number of jobs within the sector.

5.3. By 2030 provide at least 30 apprenticeships or traineeships, and wider programmes of training in land management, heritage and green skills, including the new skills needed by businesses to support more nature-friendly farming and tackle climate change.

5.4. Improve the quality, sustainability and accessibility of the tourism 'offer' and information to encourage visitors to stay overnight, come 'out of season', and experience parts of the National Park that are currently less visited, so that the value of tourism grows by at least 5% in real terms by 2030.

5.5. Make the National Park more accessible to a diverse range of ages and abilities, including by providing five locations that all have 'Changing Places' accessible toilet facilities, all terrain mobility scooters, and 'miles without stiles' routes.

5.6. Develop and promote events and attractions based on the special qualities of the National Park that will be attractive to a new, more diverse and younger audience, so that 15% of visitors each year are coming for the first time.

5.7. Encourage and support farms and estates to provide more opportunities for visitors and schools groups to experience the special qualities of the National Park, including establishing a 'peer mentoring' network to help build capacity by 2029.

6 Strong Communities

Home to strong, self-reliant and balanced communities with good access to the services they need



New houses in Bainbridge © Wendy McDonnell

6.1. Support the completion of 250 new dwellings by 2030, of which at least half will be social housing, affordable or local occupancy homes to attract and retain younger working age households.

6.2. Increase the proportion of dwellings that are permanently occupied by requiring all new dwellings to be for principal occupancy, and, encouraging change of use from second homes, so that fewer than 20% of properties are under-occupied by 2031.

6.3. Improve local access to services that are essential to the long-term viability of local communities, including providing access to gigabit broadband to 99% of properties in the Cumbrian part of the National Park by 2026, and superfast (over 30Mbs) to 97% of properties in the North Yorkshire part by 2030.

6.4. Empower community groups to take on and manage services, take ownership of local assets and develop community wealth initiatives such as shops and community renewable energy.

6.5. Improve connectivity by reducing mobile phone 'not spots' from 21% of the National Park to less than 10% by 2027.

6.6. Produce local plans to improve connections for walking, cycling, wheeling and horse-riding, so it is easier for residents and visitors to travel for work, for school and to access key services and visitor destinations without needing a car, and create at least two new multi-use routes by 2030, including one linking Garsdale–Hawes.

Monitoring and reporting

The National Park Management Partnership monitors and reports progress towards the achievement of the Plan's ambitions and objectives. Each year, the Partnership will publish:

- An annual summary of progress; and
- Detailed updates of progress on every individual objective.

These updates will be available in the Management Plan section of the Yorkshire Dales National Park website.



Curlew © Ian Court

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Find out more
www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about/national-park-management-plan/

YORKSHIRE DALES
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