

**A cultural heritage strategy for the Yorkshire
Dales National Park Authority**

2019-2024

1. INTRODUCTION

This strategy is concerned with the ‘cultural heritage’ of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The conservation and enhancement of the “natural beauty, wildlife *and cultural heritage* of the National Parks” is one of the two purposes of National Parks, as set out in section 61 of the Environment Act 1995.

1.1 What is cultural heritage?

- 1.1.1 For the purposes of this strategy, cultural heritage is defined as, the collective story of the human past. It encompasses much of the physical environment as well as evolving knowledge, beliefs and traditions. It is commonly expressed in terms of:
- ‘tangible’ cultural heritage, such as buildings and historic places, monuments, artifacts, etc., that are considered worthy of preservation for the future (commonly referred to as the ‘historic environment’); and,
 - ‘intangible’ cultural heritage, such as traditions, customs and practices, aesthetic and spiritual beliefs, artistic expression, language and other aspects of human activity.
- 1.1.2. Cultural heritage, relates not just to the physical remains of the past, but to how we understand and gain significance both from those physical surroundings, and from intangible cultural factors. The cultural heritage of the Yorkshire Dales is consequently dynamic, and bound to the changing understanding and perspectives of its significance. The role of the National Park Authority and its partners is to understand these changes and manage them in a way that both complements and gives continuity to the distinctive character of the Dales.
- 1.1.3 For a more comprehensive definition of cultural heritage, see Conservation Principles (2008) and ICOMOS (2005).

1.2 Purpose of this Strategy

- 1.2.1 The Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan 2019-24, was published following wide consultation in January 2019. The Management Plan sets out a shared vision for the future of the National Park. The Government expects stakeholders, including public agencies and authorities to collaborate both in the development and review of the Management Plan, and in the delivery of its objectives.
- 1.2.2 Elements of the management plan that directly and indirectly concern cultural heritage were initially developed in consultation with the Yorkshire Dales Historic Environment Group during 2018, and were then subject to wider consultation through the Management Plan development process. The Plan outlines the special qualities of the National Park, identifies critical issues facing the National Park and identifies 49 specific objectives that the Authority and partners intend to achieve by 2024.

- 1.2.3 Ten of the Management Plan objectives relate directly to the conservation of cultural heritage. In addition, there are a number of objectives elsewhere in the plan that contain strong links to cultural heritage.
- 1.2.4 This strategy, therefore, sets out more specifically what the National Park Authority intends to do over the next 5 years to:
- help to achieve the objectives for cultural heritage that are set out in the National Park Management Plan 2019-24; and,
 - deliver an efficient and effective cultural heritage service, including meeting the commitments set out in other relevant strategy documents, notably, the *Joint Statement on the Historic Environment in the National Parks of England, Scotland and Wales*.

1.3 Special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales' cultural heritage

- 1.3.1 Those special qualities of the National Park that relate to cultural heritage are outlined on [page 10 of the National Park Management Plan 2019-24](#)

1.4 The work of the Authority and our aims for cultural heritage

- 1.4.1 The vision as expressed in the YDNPA management plan is:

Through their passion for this special place, local people, businesses and organisations 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.

By 2040, it will be:

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

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

1.5 The Authority's resources for cultural heritage work

- 1.5.1 At the time of writing, the Authority's 'Historical Environment' programme is categorised as one of its 'adequate' work programmes. This means that – in broad terms – the Authority is aiming to maintain current activity and spending levels. As has been the case since 2011, any significant new initiatives to enhance cultural heritage will be dependent on the Authority being able to secure additional, external funding (see e.g. Landscape Partnerships on p10).

- 1.5.3 The core Authority resource for historical environment work is the dedicated Historical Environment team, and the Dales Countryside Museum. Additional resources to support conserving, and promoting understanding of cultural heritage are also provided through other Authority programmes, notably Development Management, Farm Conservation and Interpretation.
- 1.5.2 The 2016 extension of the National Park boundary to encompass a large area of eastern Cumbria, and a much smaller area of Lancashire has created new challenges and opportunities. The key example here is the Historic Environment Record, where there are significant differences between the content of the Cumbria database and the existing Yorkshire Dales HER. Whilst the existing data has been integrated, there is a significant mismatch in the available information between the two areas; for instance, the Cumbria HER did not contain any information relating to traditional farm buildings.

1.6 Objectives for Cultural Heritage

- 1.6.1 For the purposes of this strategy, the relevant cultural heritage objectives from the National Park Management Plan have been grouped under three broad themes:
- ***Historical landscapes***
 - ***Conservation of heritage assets***
 - ***Research, information management and community engagement***
- 1.6.2 The objectives under each theme are grouped into **core** cultural heritage objectives, and **incidental** cultural heritage objectives. Core objectives are dealt with in greater detail. There are a number of NPMP objectives that span across these themes, where this occurs a decision has been made as to which theme is most relevant.

2. Historical landscapes

A1 *“During Brexit transition, support farmers and landowners to continue to deliver a range of public benefits through national agri-environment scheme agreements and other similar initiatives, and monitor take-up.”*

Current situation

Ensuring the sustainable management of the historic environment through its inclusion within agri-environment agreements has and will continue to be a core area of work for the Authority. While the workings of the present Countryside Stewardship scheme are undergoing significant changes, agri-environment schemes will remain important for the management of both designated and undesignated heritage assets.

Current Authority workload involves detailed work enhancing and extracting data from the HER, and incorporating it into the Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England.

Implementation

The Authority will

- Provide timely and effective responses to agri-environment scheme consultations, including those for peatland restoration and woodland planting schemes
- Monitor take-up of cultural heritage options through national agri-environment schemes to ensure that historical features are being managed through the scheme, and that the Authority's advice is well targeted;
- Work with partners, farmers and landowners to develop a locally-tailored, locally-delivered environmental land management scheme that maintains and improves the outstanding cultural heritage of the National Park.
- Seek novel ways of managing the peatland historical resource whilst ensuring the greatest area is available for restoration (See also objective D3).

A9 *“By 2022, secure significant funding to repair, restore, and - where appropriate - find adaptive new uses for traditional field barns, particularly those in Swaledale, Arkengarthdale and Littondale.”*

Current Situation

Traditional field barns are one of the most distinctive elements of the Dales' landscape. The most recent estimate was that there were over 4,000 field barns within the National Park¹. Over 2,000 of these were assessed as being in poor or very bad condition². While previous national agri-environment schemes have provided significant investment in repairing and restoring barns, the sheer scale of this issue means they have had limited impact on the overall trajectory of decline. Two Conservation Areas (the largest in England) have been designated specifically for their outstanding 'barns and walls' landscape (in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale; and, Littondale). Both are categorized as 'at risk' and will remain so under current conditions.

Whilst national funding has declined dramatically in recent years, Defra is currently delivering a pilot conservation scheme, covering a small number of traditional farm buildings in 5 National Parks, including the Yorkshire Dales. The Authority is assisting with the delivery of this pilot. A significantly larger scheme would be required to make any statistical impact on the overall observed decline. In addition, the processes available through current projects would be difficult, for reasons of capacity to replicate at a larger scale. It is suggested that major funding and a range of activities, including an emphasis on the sensitive adaptive reuse of farm buildings will be needed to make headway on the issue of conservation of traditional farm buildings.

Implementation

¹ *Field Barns – A Wasting Asset*, R White (1988)

² *A condition survey of traditional farm buildings in the Yorkshire Dales National Park 2006-2007*, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (2008)

The Authority will:

- Continue to support current project initiatives, and advocate for the development of simple schemes that allow for the adaptive reuse of TFB's for agricultural and other low impact uses.
- Investigate developing a NLHF bid to develop a major funding scheme to cover one of the two at risk Barns & Walls Conservation Areas.
- Support the adaptive re-use of traditional farm buildings through the planning process,
- As part of the next Local Plan, consolidate and update conversion policies for the whole of the National Park
- Consider what can be done to further support development of alternative, lower intensity, adaptive re-use initiatives, including the barn pod idea
- Discuss (with Historic England) ways to improve the risk status of the two Barns & Walls Conservation Areas
- Where highly significant individual farm buildings are under threat, consider listing as a fallback measure to enable future conservation work
- Where there is no hope of retaining traditional farm buildings ensure that an appropriate level of recording is undertaken prior to their total loss

A3 *“By 2020, produce a simplified and updated Landscape Character Assessment for the National Park, and use it to support initiatives, policies and plans to enhance local distinctiveness and promote positive landscape change.”*

Current situation

The new Landscape Character Assessment for the National Park is almost complete, and makes significant use of historic environment data, including spatial mapping of the historic environment special qualities of the National Park.

Implementation

The Authority will:

- Publish a simplified and updated Landscape Character Assessment by 2020;
- Use the new LCA to support initiatives, policies and plans that enhance local distinctiveness and promote positive landscape change.

A8 *“By 2022 develop a locally tailored, locally delivered, outcome-focused environmental land management scheme to maintain, restore and improve the outstanding natural capital and rural heritage of the National Park.”*

Current Situation

A new Environmental Land management Scheme (ELMS) is under development by Natural England and Defra. The scheme is thought likely to be based on a 'payment by results' system, such as that being piloted in Wensleydale (C4). The scheme awards points for improvement in habitats assessed annually by the agreement holder against a professional base-line survey. This methodology has implications for the historic environment which most commonly seeks to retain the *status quo* through management actions.

Implementation

The Authority will:

- Undertake a pilot project to develop a blueprint for management of historical features within the new ELMS scheme
- Keep abreast of national scheme developments and develop a methodology for targeting the archaeological components locally.

2.3 Conservation of Heritage Assets

A6 *"Help local people to restore, repair and - where possible - bring back into use nationally important historical sites, buildings and structures so that less than 4% of scheduled monuments and listed buildings are considered 'at risk' by 2024."*

Current Situation

The National Park now contains over 2,000 Listed buildings and almost 300 Scheduled monuments.

The condition of both listed buildings and scheduled monuments is assessed through volunteer-led monitoring programmes, administered by the Authority. The extension of the National Park boundary has seen those programmes rolled out to new areas. Management information on listed buildings has been acquired, and for many, but not all of the scheduled monuments in the new area.

Whilst the Authority effectively takes a lead on the majority of conservation projects affecting significant heritage assets in the National Park, Historic England is the statutory consultee and consenting body for all works affecting scheduled monuments and grade I and II* listed buildings.

Listed Buildings at Risk (BARs)

As of March 2019, there are 9 Grade I or Grade II* listed buildings on the national 'Heritage at Risk' Register³. A further 68 Grade II listed buildings are considered to be at risk. Another 150 are classed as 'vulnerable'⁴. The Authority's funding for buildings at risk has generally been targeted at individual small projects, and supporting owners to do work to vulnerable buildings to prevent them from reaching 'at risk' status.

³ *Heritage at Risk 2019*, Historic England (2019)

⁴ *Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority* (2018)

Larger scale projects that can be resolved through finding a beneficial economic use for a building are facilitated by the Authority's development management function, both through the development of supportive policies and planning application casework.

There are over a hundred public bridges that are listed. A significant number of these are serially at risk from vehicle collisions and have suffered incrementally from poor repair.

Continuing to operate under current conditions is likely to result in the numbers of at risk and vulnerable buildings remaining fairly static. There are a significant number of listed buildings at risk that require substantial and complex interventions. Some of these are currently considered intractable – because of the costs, the desire or ability of the owner to play a role in finding a solution, other external factors; or all three. The proposed strategy is, therefore, about pragmatism and prioritisation, using limited resources to achieve positive outcomes for smaller, less complex cases, while carefully selecting a limited number of more complex cases where there is a realistic prospect of achieving a positive outcome.

Monuments at Risk (MARs)

Scheduled monuments are more diverse in nature than buildings. The Authority's monitoring data shows that the majority of monuments are in stable management. Of the 292 Scheduled monuments, 10 (3.4%) are identified as being 'At Risk' on the national 'Heritage at Risk' Register³. A further 57 (20%) are identified as being 'vulnerable'.

In the majority of cases, scheduled monuments do not have any viable economic use. Of the contingent of At Risk monuments, several have long-standing, intractable issues that would be both physically and financially difficult to resolve. There are a number of monuments in the new area of the National Park that are still to be assessed, so the overall picture may change a little.

The Authority has had some success in acquiring external funding for the conservation of Scheduled Monuments in recent years, notably through the Historic England funded *Yorkshire Dales Industrial Monuments Management Scheme*. Some monuments require regular/ongoing management, typically in the form of e.g. scrub or bracken control, and the NPA has used both volunteers and contractors to undertake this.

Implementation

The Authority will:

- Continue to collate monitoring data from the volunteer-led surveys of listed buildings and monuments at risk; updating the methodology for monuments; and, completing surveys of all accessible monuments in the new area of the National Park.
- Implement a clearer and more co-ordinated approach to BARs, prioritising cases and making pragmatic use of limited resources, including:
 - i) 'quick win' repair projects - typically small monuments, milestones, walls, private bridges etc that are incapable of providing a direct economic return and that can be directly funded by the Authority;
 - ii) buildings capable of viable re-use – these can be promoted through the planning process so that permissions are obtained and the buildings marketed or converted;
 - iii) for buildings that have no viable conservation prospects, pursue recording, delisting or consolidation ;

- iv) work with the highway authorities to improve standards of work to listed bridges and remove delays associated with obtaining consents and rectifying poor repairs.
 - v) complex cases – identify one complex project each year to receive concerted effort in order to improve the prospects of it being removed from the at risk register, including engaging the landowner, exploring funding possibilities, publicity and enforcement measures as appropriate
- Run a programme of volunteer- and contractor-led maintenance work on SMs that require regular management;
 - Seek opportunities for new management scheme funding for SMs from Historic England
 - Complete the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership’s ‘Monuments at Risk’ project, conserving three at Risk Monuments and one vulnerable monument.
 - Undertake at least one significant SM conservation project each year
 - Work with the Environment Agency through the Tees-Swale project to mitigate the effects of diffuse pollution from historical lead mining sites in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale.
 - Seek funding from Defra for a programme of works to repair SMs damaged by the flooding in Swaledale in 2019.

Non-designated buildings

Current situation

(see also barns objective)

The Authority currently responds to both formal planning applications and to pre-application enquiries; in each case, providing information about the significance of heritage assets affected by proposals, and advice on appropriate measures to maintain and enhance heritage assets through the planning process. This activity forms part of the Authority’s statutory function, and is one of the key tools for protection and enhancement of the National Park’s heritage. Planning casework is tightly time-bound, and fluctuates to a lesser degree than (e.g.) project work. One of the challenges the Authority faces in relation to planning and the historical environment is balancing the fluctuating demands of project work against statutory casework.

Following the extension of the National Park in 2016, the Authority took a decision in principle (December 2018) to prepare a single Local Plan for the whole of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The plan will enable a single set of strategies and planning policies to guide new development in the Park between 2023 and 2040. The review process will provide an opportunity to consider in more detail both the policy and guidance on managing the historical environment of the National Park.

It appears likely that there will be a drive from government towards greater use of local listing within the next couple of years. The Authority developed the criteria necessary to assess heritage assets for inclusion on a local list during 2016. Although to date, no proposal for local listing have yet been made, and the Authority will need to formally adopt the criteria.

Implementation

The Authority will:

- Provide timely and proportionate advice to encourage the development that helps to conserve, enhance and bring back into use the most important non-designated historical buildings.
- Remain abreast of developments in historic environment guidance and professional good practice. Officers maintaining memberships/contact with CiFA, the Association of Local Government Archaeologists, and IHBC.
- Complete preparations to enable the Authority to adopt and maintain a list of locally important heritage assets, and consider any proposals arising.
- Use the Local Plan Review to consider making updates and changes to policy and guidance covering the historical environment
- Review and where necessary change supplementary guidance where it is relevant to the cultural heritage (e.g. Design Guide.)

A7 “*Deliver co-ordinated programmes of activity that enhance the distinctive landscape, geology and cultural heritage of the ‘Ingleborough Dales’ (by 2020) and the ‘Westmorland Dales’ (by 2023).*”

Current situation

There are currently two National Lottery Heritage Fund Landscape Partnership programmes running in the National Park – investing around £6 million into the area. Both include strong cultural heritage themes and the Authority is assisting with, and directly delivering, a number of distinct cultural heritage projects. For the Westmorland Dales landscape partnership, the Authority is leading on the delivery of two specific projects (Monuments at Risk, and Digging the Past) and providing support to other Cultural Heritage projects. The delivery stage also allows for the creation of an additional historical environment apprenticeship, at least partly based at the Tebay office, but with some support and training provided through the YDNPA.

Implementation

The Authority will:

- Support the closing stages of the Stories in Stone project, providing advice on TFB conservation work, and other projects as needed.
- Lead on the Monuments at Risk conservation project and the ‘Digging the past’ community archaeology project as part of the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership by 2023.
- Support the delivery of the 8 other cultural heritage projects being undertaken through the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership;
- Support the Westmorland Dales Historic Environment Apprenticeship, by partial hosting of the role (as required), the provision of training and shadowing opportunities at the Bainbridge Office, and where needed by direct supervision of work.

- Support the Our Common Cause NLHF project to deliver both conservation and community-based archaeology projects on Grassington Moor and Ingleborough Common.
- Develop smaller NLHF bid projects, including one at Kilnsey and one based on railway heritage

E7 *“By 2023, provide at least 20 apprenticeships that focus on the skills that are essential to maintaining the National Park’s special qualities”.*

Current Situation

A two-year Apprenticeship post for the Historic Environment team was created in 2017. The first apprenticeship was fulfilled by using the Business Administration NVQ. . The post was successful, and added significantly to the capacity of the HE team.

Implementation

The Authority will:

- Employ a Historic Environment Apprentice every 2 years, using the newly established Archaeological Adviser (level 4) standard.

2.4 Research, information management and community engagement

A5 *“Use the Dales Countryside Museum and the Historic Environment Record to help local heritage groups to research, record and promote the stories of the National Park area, including completing the enhancement of the Historic Environment Record for the new area of the National Park by 2024”.*

Current Situation

The Dales Countryside Museum provides opportunities for involvement in heritage related projects. The collection, research facility, displays, temporary exhibitions and volunteer opportunities are all used as a focus for community engagement.

Externally funded projects such as A Rich Seam and Dairy Days have involved local communities in the recording of oral histories, encouraged research activities and facilitated the sharing of knowledge.

The Museum is the base for the Yorkshire Dales Young Archaeologists’ club and provides opportunities for children and young people to explore archaeology and the broader heritage of the Dales and to be inspired to help conserve it.

The Historic Environment Record (HER) for the National Park contains references to and descriptions of over 39,000 historical features. This includes: 2,127 Listed Buildings; 292 Scheduled Monuments; and, 2 Registered Parks and Gardens

The focus for HER work since 2016 has been on incorporating HER data from Lancashire and Cumbria County Councils, appraising the state of data, and in undertaking initial enhancement work for the extension area. There is an evident gap in the quantity of HER data between the former County Council areas and the 'old' National Park boundary, which reflects the resource that the NPA has put into enhancing the HER over recent years. There are still major data gaps within the record for the extension area.

A number of community archaeology projects have been led or assisted by the Authority in recent years. These have included involvement in externally-funded projects, the delivery of training/capacity-building events, and community-based archaeological investigations. The Authority has also used social media channels to expand the reach of this activity. The Authority has run an annual 'Dales Archaeology Day', with speakers generally presenting on recent research – for the last 17 years. The event now moves between different venues in order to be available to as much as possible of the population within and around the NP.

Implementation

The Authority will:

- Undertake a National Archaeological Identification Survey (using aerial mapping and new LIDAR data once available) for the new area of the National Park.
- Continue to run an annual Dales Archaeology Day.
- Maintain the Authority's historical environment social media channels
- Build new links with university-based researchers, and facilitate new external research-based projects into various aspects of the National Park historical environment.
- Secure funding for, and complete, the enhancement of the Historic Environment Record for the new area of the National Park.
- Continue to provide a base for the Yorkshire Dales Young Archaeologists' Club and deliver activities with the support of the volunteer team.
- Work with the Nash to deliver the Stories of Schools project to engage people in the history of learning in the Dales, including a multi-media exhibition at the Dales Countryside Museum, immersive school workshops and school visits and a piece of high-quality public 'heritage art' – researched and created with young people and displayed at the exhibition.
- Work with Leeds University to deliver the Dialect and Heritage Project 2020-2023, to engage people in the research and exploration of dialect, enable active contributions, provide volunteering opportunities and make the archive accessible to the communities to which it relates.