

Date: 29 June 2021

Report: NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN – ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2020-21

Purpose of the report

1. To inform Members of the progress made in implementing the objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan 2019-24.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Strategic Planning Framework

3. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework.

Background

4. The National Park Management Plan (2019-24) is the single most important document for the National Park. It was prepared – and developed through widespread consultation – by the **National Park Management Plan Steering Group**. As most Members will be aware, the Group is a partnership of 15 local organisations who have the main responsibility for implementing the objectives.
5. As it is a plan for the National Park, not just for the Authority, the Steering Group also has responsibility for monitoring progress. The Group produces an annual report summarising progress on the delivery of objectives.
6. As previously agreed by the Steering Group, the primary vehicle for reporting progress is via the NPMP website pages. For each objective, a page has been created giving details of the rationale behind it, the organisations directly involved, and the progress being made. All these pages can be viewed here:
<https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about/national-park-management-plan/>
7. Members should note that, unsurprisingly, the continuation of Covid-19 throughout 2020-21 has created additional challenges in delivering on these objectives.

The 20120/21 progress report

8. The Steering Group's annual report is attached as an **Appendix** to this report. In line with the move to a more engaging, web-based reporting system, the annual report itself is now more concise. It highlights those objectives where notable progress has been made (18), and those where there has been little or no progress (currently 0).
9. Overall, there are:
 - 35 objectives that have either been achieved or remain on course;
 - 13 objectives where there has been some progress;
 - 1 objective for which there is not yet any meaningful data.
10. It should be stressed that the Annual Report is a summary of the collective activity of *many* different organisations and, of course, local people and businesses. The summary report highlights their many significant achievements from last year.
11. Full details of progress on every objective can be found on the website. Members should note that there are two objectives – peatland (D3) and woodland management (D1) – where figures for 2020-21 are still awaited. This data will be added to the website when it is received.
12. Of the 13 objectives that are not on course, 6 were badly affected by the impacts of Covid 19. Whilst significant in the short term, they should all get back on track over the next 12 months. A further three (barns, Wensleydale Railway and housing) are part of the cohort of “very ambitious objectives” for which there was no funding in place at the time the Management Plan was adopted.

Conclusion

13. The Steering Group's view is that overall good progress is still being made in implementing objectives despite the impacts of Covid-19 on work last year, notably on 'people engagement' activities. Collectively, the work of many local organisations, groups and individuals has made a tangible and measureable difference to the National Park.

Gary Smith
Director of Conservation and Community

16 June 2021



YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park

**NATIONAL PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN
2019–2024**

**ANNUAL REPORT
JUNE 2021**

Prepared on behalf of the National Park Management Plan Steering Group

Members of the Steering Group



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Summary



This report summarises the work undertaken in 2020-21 by **a wide range of local partners** towards achieving the 49 objectives that were agreed and set out in the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan 2019-24. Further details of each objective, the organisations involved, and the progress made can be found at:

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

Significant achievements made by local partners in the last year:

- The National Park was designated as an International Dark Sky Reserve, in recognition of the work by local partners and communities to minimise light pollution [A2];
- A further 2.5km of overhead power lines were placed underground through works by Electricity North West, bringing the total to over 12km [A4];
- The *Ingleborough Dales Landscape Partnership* programme was completed. Over 5 years, the programme provided grants worth almost £1.7m to 170 individual projects, covering wildlife, cultural heritage, physical and intellectual access improvements, educational activities, volunteering, apprenticeships, and benefits to the local economy [A7];
- 5 barns were restored and a further 29 repaired, converted and brought back into use [B];
- 88% of the rights of way across the National Park were assessed as being ‘easy to use’ (B1);
- The Government announced it would be taking forward the designation of the Coast to Coast path as a National Trail (B2);
- 5 km of rights of way were upgraded to make them accessible to users of all abilities, and the total is now 215 km (B3);
- £5.5 million was secured from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for *Tees-Swale: naturally connected*, the largest ‘farming for nature recovery’ programme in England, and the 5-year programme of support was launched in February (C1);

- Through the *Catchment Sensitive Farming* programme grants were provided to 40 farms for development to reduce diffuse pollution. 62% of rivers have now achieved good ecological status, up from 47% in 2017 (C3);
- The fifth year of the national pilot of a 'results-based' agri-environment payment scheme in Wensleydale was completed, and funding secured for a further extension (C4)
- A local group was established, and agreed a local approach to co-ordinate monitoring of Birds of Prey breeding sites, and producing an annual report. (C5);
- Grant funding was provided to support the creation of over 230 ha of new native woodland, meaning the overall objective of 450 ha has been achieved in just 3 years (D2).
- Road haulage from quarries was reduced by a further 12%, with the introduction of further reductions to haulage limits at Swinden Quarry (D4);
- An online habitat map was produced to help farmers and land managers to identify opportunities to protect, expand and connect habitats and secure new funding (D6);
- Enhancements to the site of the National Park Centre at Grassington were completed, creating a new 'visitor hub' (E3);
- Surveys indicated that a much higher proportion (27%) of visitors were making their first visit to the National Park (E6)
- Significant new economic development was approved at two allocated employment sites (Langcliffe Quarry; Linton Camp), which should create around 70 new jobs when completed (E8);
- 30 local community and business projects were supported, with a commitment of over £160,000 from the Sustainable Development Fund [F6].

There are no objectives in the Plan where there is clear evidence that little or no progress is being made. However:

- Engagement with the public was severely affected by Covid 19, causing a temporary slowdown in progress on several objectives (B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B11)
- The provision of new housing to meet local needs is still behind target, although the numbers of completions (49) was a 60% increase on the previous year (F1).

There is one objective (F7) for which there is still no meaningful information to be able to measure progress.

Park Profile 2021

Area		
Total Park area	218,482 ha	Natural England, 2019
Parishes totally or partly in the Park	110	YDNPA, 2019
Population		
Resident population	23,637 ¹	ONS, 2012 + YDNPA 2016
School and pre-school age (0-15)	15% ²	ONS, 2012
Working age (16-64)	59% ²	ONS, 2012
Pensionable age (65+)	26% ²	ONS, 2012
Housing		
Housing stock	13,396 ³	YDNPA, 2016
Resident households	10,480 ⁴	YDNPA, 2017
Owner occupied	7,712 ⁴	
Private rented	2,069 ⁴	
Social housing	699 ⁴	
Second homes and holiday lets	2,916 ⁴	YDNPA 2017
Natural Environment		
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	57,338 ha	Natural England, 2018
Area of priority habitat	83,191ha	Natural England 2017
Land use		
Moorland, heath & rough unenclosed grassland	n/a	
Farmland	n/a	
Woodland	8,046 ha	Forestry Commission, 2016
Developed land	n/a	
Heritage		
Scheduled Monuments	292	Historic England, 2021
Conservation Areas	46	YDNPA, 2021
Listed Buildings	2,137	Historic England, 2021
Grade I	25	
Grade II*	105	
Grade II	2,008	
Recreation		
Total Rights of Way	2,620 km	YDNPA, 2017
Public footpaths	1,748 km	
Public bridleways	783 km	
Other public rights of way	89 km	
National Trails	174 km	Natural England, 2017
Publicly-accessible land	129,680 ha	Natural England, 2017

¹ Includes YDNPA estimate of 3,876 residents in the new area of the National Park

² Indicative figure based on the pre-1 August 2016 National Park area (ONS, 2012)

³ ONS 2012 + YDNPA estimate for the new area of the National Park

⁴ Indicative estimate based on the pre-1 August National Park area (ONS, 2012)

