

YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY  
ACCESS COMMITTEE

9 November 2006

**CRAVEN ALLIANCE FOR SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION**

**Purpose of report**

To make members aware of the Craven Alliance for Sport and Active Recreation and to seek endorsement of Authority membership of the Alliance.

**Strategic Planning Framework**

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

- ***National Park Management Plan (Post Consultation Draft)***

AR8. Develop opportunities, including a Park-wide programme of events, walks and other activities that encourage healthy lifestyles and assist in the Government's target of increasing levels of physical activity amongst residents and visitors by 1% per year.

- ***Integrated Access Strategy***

AS6(c) Promote cycling and walking routes as a sustainable and healthy way to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park, as well as providing access to facilities and services;

AS16 Enhance the opportunities through the outdoor-activity industry so that a variety of opportunities for outdoor activity and instruction are available:

Using existing partnerships such as the Craven Integrated Rural Development Project (CIRD), Business Link, Sports England, to develop a vibrant outdoor-activity industry that meets the needs of residents and visitors.

**Background**

In 2002 the Government published 'Game Plan', the national plan for sport and physical activity followed by the White Paper Choosing Health (2004). These documents recognise the importance of sport and recreation in terms of rising levels of obesity, and health and well being in general. They include a national target to have 70% of the population 'active', which means taking part in 30 minutes of 'moderate-intensity' physical activity at least five times a week by 2020. The Government sees all government departments and relevant public organisations as having a part to play in meeting this target. At a regional level Sport England are driving forward the changes that will be needed, and have produced 'Yorkshire Plan for Sport' which identifies 16 priorities. This is translated, at a local level, through local authority sport and recreation strategies and local area agreements.

## **Craven 'On the Move'**

Craven District Council (CDC) is leading in establishing the strategic direction for sport and active recreation in Craven; it has produced 'Craven on the Move' which interprets the National and Regional sport and active recreation strategies and objectives, particularly the national objective of increasing participation, at a local level. The vision of the Craven 'on the move' strategy is to:

'To improve the quality of life of all Craven residents through more, and higher quality opportunities for increased participation in sport and active recreation'.

With the specific aim to:

'increase levels of physical activity through participation in sport and active recreation and to focus on participation by younger and older people particularly.'

The strategy takes a wide definition of active recreation which includes outdoor adventure, leisure cycling and walking, lifestyle sports (e.g. skateboarding), workplace activity programmes and volunteer conservation work.

An action plan, and portfolio of projects, has been produced to accompany the strategy.

## **Craven District Council - Craven Alliance for Sport and Active Recreation**

The Council recognises that it cannot alone be the direct provider of sport and active recreation and believes that, by engaging with partners and enabling the community to deliver, there will be greater ownership and sustainability. CDC's enabling role is being taken forward through a formal partnership, the Craven Alliance for Sport and Active Recreation including the National Park Authority. The Authority has already worked with CDC on a number of relevant projects through the access enhancement element of the Craven Integrated Rural Development Project, and the Target project. For its part CDC recognises the work undertaken by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority in ensuring enjoyment, sustainable use and development of the access and recreation resource within the National Park. This is seen as a major asset to the district. Active recreation participation rates, amongst residents in Craven district, are in the top 15% in the country, and the extensive and diverse community sport coupled with the proximity of the outdoor recreation opportunities within the Craven area of the Yorkshire Dales National Park are believed to contribute significantly to this figure.

## **The Role of the National Park Authority**

One of the reasons why National Parks were designated, in England and Wales, was because of the contribution they could make to the well-being of the nation through their close proximity to urban areas, their relative wildness, and the ample opportunities they provided for open-air recreation.

One of the Yorkshire Dales National Park's special qualities is the historic and extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and tracks, extensive areas of public access, rivers, crags

and caves mean that it has some of the best walking, caving, climbing, paragliding and cross-country mountain biking to be found anywhere in the country.

The National Park Authority has a role to play through working with the District Councils, and other partners, eg Natural England, and Sport England, in increasing participation in physical activity linked to the special qualities of the National Park. The Authority has been involved in walks for health, and other similar initiatives in the past. Currently the Authority is involved in the development of the 'GoDales!'. This project aims to promote opportunities for volunteering and outdoor activities for youngsters (8-25 age group) particularly amongst hard to reach groups by linking with existing initiatives and youth and community groups in the Park and surrounding urban areas. It aims to 'motivate' young people to participate in active recreation by helping them access a range of activities on their doorstep in the National Park. The project is being put forward, to the Big Lottery, through Natural England's regional 'green exercise' portfolio. If external funding is secured, it will link with initiatives in 'Craven on the Move' in the Craven area.

## **Conclusion**

Rising levels of obesity, heart disease etc., mean that the health agenda, linked to active recreation, is increasing in importance. The challenge for the National Park Authority is to play its part, in securing the health and well being of the residents of the National Park, as well as those who visit from other areas through promoting the opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities. This ethos is at the heart of our National Parks.

The Craven Alliance for Sport and Active Recreation will give us opportunities to further fulfil our statutory purposes, through a partnership approach within the Craven area.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Members endorse

- (a) the Authority's membership of the Craven Alliance for Sport and Active Recreation and
- (b) the over arching aim and vision of 'Craven on the move' .

KATHRYN BEARDMORE  
ACCESS AND RECREATION MANAGER

### **Background documents:**

Craven on the Move– A Sport and Active Recreation Strategy for Craven District 2005 - 2010

27<sup>TH</sup> October 3006

