



YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007 – 2012

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT JULY 2009

Prepared on behalf of the National Park Management Plan Steering Group

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SUMMARY

Overall, very good progress is being made, with nine objectives (13%) already achieved; 42 (60%) still on course to be achieved; and 17 where some progress is being made. Major achievements include:

- over 8,500 hectares of land was brought into Natural England's Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme;
- 85% of the National Park is now in some form of environmental agreement;
- the National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund funded 21 local economic, social and environmental projects, worth over £800,000;
- all but one of the highly-sensitive 'green lanes' now have active management plans in place;
- the area of SSSI land in 'favourable or recovering' condition increased by 2,500 ha, and now stands at 86%;
- a map of important habitats across the Park is now publicly available;
- 89% of rights of way are 'easy to use'
- restoration plans have been agreed for Threshfield and Giggleswick Quarries;
- 19 affordable housing units were built – in Bainbridge and Sedbergh;
- Over 8 km of rights of way were upgraded to be accessible to wheelchair users;
- Over 6,000 days of work were provided by volunteers through the National Park Authority;
- the National Park Authority was awarded the Europarc *Charter for Sustainable Tourism*, on behalf of the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Tourism Partnership;
- the Yorkshire Dales LEADER programme was approved, which will now make £2.5 million of funding available for rural regeneration activity until March 2013.
- the Dales Road Verge Project brought 7 km of verges into active management

There are only 2 objectives where there is still no real progress being made:

- **AR6** a) and d) on improving the integration and use of sustainable transport for leisure and everyday life in the Park. While there are encouraging signs of development of community transport schemes within the Park, services for visitors — and access to events within it — remain limited
- **AR9** Designation of a network of 'quiet lanes'. There has been little interest or demand. For both County Councils this issue is now part of the wider consideration of quietening all rural roads. The Steering Group has accepted that this objective should, therefore, be abandoned.

More detailed information on progress on all of the objectives is available on-line at:

www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/index/looking_after/yorkshire_dales_national_park_management_plan.htm

Summary of Progress against NPMP Objectives

Landscape		Community and Culture		Access and Recreation		Understanding and Enjoyment		Nature Conservation		Historic Environment		Economy and Employment	
L1		CC1		AR1		UE1		NC1		HE1		EE1	
L2		CC2		AR2		UE2		NC2		HE2		EE2	
L3		CC3		AR3		UE3		NC3		HE3		EE3	
L4		CC4		AR4		UE4		NC4		HE4		EE4	
L5		CC5		AR5		UE5		NC5		HE5		EE5	
L6		CC6		AR6		UE6		NC6		HE6		EE6	
L7		CC7		AR7		UE7		NC7		HE7		EE7	
L8		CC8		AR8		UE8		NC8		HE8		EE8	
L9		CC9		AR9		UE9		NC9		HE9		EE9	
L10		CC10		AR10		UE10		NC10		HE10		EE10	

	Achieved/on course
	Some progress
	Little or no progress
	Abandoned

22.06.09

CONTEXT

There are a number of general issues that provide important context for what is happening in the Park already or will do so in the future. They include:

- **Climate change**
Attention is increasingly turning to how best to adapt to the impacts of climate change. An adaptation strategy for the Park will be produced later this year, taking account of the most recent Yorkshire and Humber Regional Adaptation Study. In the meantime, July will see the launch of a major programme of work to restore degraded upland peatlands – under the auspices of the Yorkshire Peat Partnership.
- **National Park boundary**
Natural England has recommenced work on reviewing the boundaries of the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District National Parks. Over the coming year Natural England will be publishing its proposals for consultation with local communities, local authorities, national park authorities and other interested parties.
- **Economic downturn**
The precise impact of the economic downturn on the Dales will not be known for some time. Early indications are that visitor numbers have actually increased but spend per head may be down. All elements of the economy are likely to be affected to some extent. Longer term, the level of public investment targeted on the Dales is likely to be affected by the squeeze on public sector spending.
- **Water Framework Directive –**
It establishes a framework for managing the water environment in a holistic manner. Action will be needed within the Park to ensure that its water bodies achieve stringent new standards for good ecological and chemical status by 2015.
- **Upland farming**
Big challenges remain to perpetuate sustainable farming businesses that, as well as producing livestock, can contribute to the ongoing management of the special features of the Park. In particular, attention is now turning to the future of the Single Payment Scheme and agri-environment support beyond 2013.
- **Renewable energy**
Generation of energy from renewable sources is a key element of mitigating climate change, and an increasingly important issue for local communities where many are still reliant on oil-fired or solid fuel heating. The key challenge for the Park will be to find ways to encourage a step-change in the development of appropriate small-scale renewable energy sources such as hydro-power.
- **Social changes**
The National Park population continues to grow gradually (a 1.5% increase from 2001-2005). The 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation figures show a slight improvement since 2004 in relation to barriers to housing and services - a reflection of the progress being made through the Districts' Community Strategies, and better use of IT to deliver services remotely. The average house price in the National Park in 2008 was £263,379, a drop of nearly 5% compared to 2007. Mean income in the Park in 2007 was £31,935 so current index of affordability is still very high at around 8.7.

PARK PROFILE 2008/9

The table below provides a statistical summary of contextual information relating to the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

		DATA SOURCE
Area		
Total National Park area	176,180ha	OS 2008
Number of parishes (whole or partial)	83	ONS 2001
Population		
Resident population	19,654	ONS 2001
School and pre-school age (0-15)	3,439 (17%)	
Working age (16-64)	12,087 (61%)	
Pensionable age (65+)	4,127 (21%)	
Number of settlements with 3,000+ population	0	
Housing		
Housing stock	10,236	ONS 2001
Resident households	8,363	
Owner occupied	6,194 (74%)	
Private rented	1,614 (20%)	
Social Housing	555 (6%)	
Second and holiday lets	1,498 (15%)	
Nature conservation		
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	50,769ha	NE 2008
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	28,606ha	
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	40,063ha	
RAMSAR Sites	285ha	
National Nature Reserves	1,278ha	
Land use		
Moorland, heathland and unenclosed grassland	92,500ha	CC 1991
Farmland	71,800ha	
Woodland	6,000ha	
Heritage		
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	203	EH 2008
Conservation Areas	37	YDNPA 2008
Listed Buildings		EH 2008
Grade I	18	
Grade II*	68	
Grade II	1,713	
Recreation		
Public footpaths	1,456km	YDNPA 2008
Public bridleways	660km	
Other public rights of way	44km	
Open Access land	109,300ha	

OS	Ordnance Survey
ONS	Office of National Statistics
NE	Natural England
CC	Countryside Commission (former)
EH	English Heritage
YDNPA	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

THEMATIC OVERVIEWS

LANDSCAPE

Progress against Objectives

Progress on most of the objectives remains encouraging. Particular achievements since last year include:

- 85% of the Park is now covered by agri-environment agreements, with some 8,500 ha brought into active management through the Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (**L2**).
- No significant development ‘detractors’ were granted permission within the Park, and two wind-farm developments just outside the National Park Boundary were refused permission by Craven District Council. A long-term restoration scheme has been approved for Threshfield Quarry (**L4b**).
- The first year of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust/North Yorkshire County Council/YDNPA road verge project brought 7 km of important verges into active management (**L8**).
- Water quality in Dales’ rivers continues to be good, with 98% in the top two categories of quality (**L9**).
- Planning permission was granted for 24 small-scale renewable energy schemes. This includes the restoration of a former hydro-electric power plant — now a Scheduled Monument — at Linton Falls, which will provide 510,000 kilowatt hours of electricity each year (**L10**).

Issues

50 ha of existing commercial conifer plantation was removed but a this is only half the amount needed each year to meet the objective. In part, this reflects a change in management emphasis linked to the continuing expansion of the red squirrel population within the Park (**L3**).

1 km of former overhead power lines have been placed underground by United Utilities. However, CE Electric, which covers most of the Park, has yet to carry out any work and has no plans to do so before 2011 (**L4d**).

There has been some progress in developing a more sympathetic approach to road improvements in North Yorkshire. North Yorkshire County Council is now working with the National Park Authority and others on a protocol on highway signing and works in the National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This will form part of the NYCC Highway Design Guide which the Council will publish later this year. (**L8**).

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Progress against Objectives

Not all of the objectives contain specific targets so making judgements on progress is more subjective. Progress so far is mixed. Seven objectives remain on course, with good progress in particular on:

- 19 affordable housing units were completed during the year (**CC1**);
- North Yorkshire County Council and Yorkshire Forward launched the 'Craven Hubs' initiative, providing flexible community transport services within the Craven Dales area (**CC2**);
- North Yorkshire County Council has completed Service Centre Transportation Strategies for Hawes and Settle (**CC4**);
- A range of events, activities and exhibitions have celebrated and shared cultural heritage including the 'Our Voices' dialect project led by Craven College (**CC7**).
- In Craven, a 'Community Climate Change Officer' is now working with communities and businesses to raise awareness and support climate change initiatives (**CC8**).
- The National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund supported 21 local economic, social and environmental projects, worth over £800,000 (**CC10**).

Issues

The National Park Authority's 'call for affordable housing sites' received 118 expressions of interest from local landowners. However, specific targets for increasing affordable and local needs housing will not be set until these sites have been assessed. A target for affordable housing and a preferred set of sites will be published as part of a draft Housing Development Plan later this year (**CC1**).

There is still only one walking and cycling route currently under investigation within the Park, and no funding has yet been confirmed for any such projects. This reflects the fact that the studies so far have not identified any significant demand for such routes (**CC3**).

ACCESS AND RECREATION

Progress against Objectives

There's been good progress on 7 of the 10 objectives. In particular:

- 89% of the Rights of Way in the Park are 'easy to use', although the figure is subject to the vagaries of a sampling system based on only 5% of routes (**AR1**);
- 26 of the 27 'green lanes' originally considered to be highly sensitive to damage now have active management plans in place (**AR2**);
- A promotional campaign was carried out with the British Mountaineering Council to promote responsible climbing (**AR5**)
- Over 8 km of rights of way were upgraded last year to make them accessible to wheelchair users, and a further 23 km have been enhanced so they are accessible for people with limited mobility (**AR7**)

Issues

Scheduled public transport services to bring visitors from the surrounding urban areas into the Park remain very limited. Access to organised events for those who do not have access to a car has continued to decline. However, the establishment of the Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company has safeguarded Sunday and Bank Holiday services. There is also an increasing emphasis on community transport schemes rather than bus services through, for example, the 'Craven Hubs' initiative (see CC2) (**AR6**).

No 'quiet lanes' schemes have been identified by, or put forward to, either County Council for consideration, and none are planned in the Park. For both County Councils this issue is now part of the wider consideration of quietening all rural roads. The Steering Group has accepted that this objective should, therefore, be abandoned (**AR9**).

92% of the Pennine Bridleway route through the Dales is now open for public use. However, the complexity of the remaining legal and logistical issues means that the full route will not now be completed until March 2011(**AR10**).

UNDERSTANDING AND ENJOYMENT

Progress against Objectives

Nine of the ten objectives are either on course or already achieved. Particular highlights in 2008/09 include:

- Surveys carried out in 2008 and 2009 showed that 50% of regular visitors and over 75% of residents were able to name three or more of the special qualities of the National Park. (**UE1**).
- The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, on behalf of the Tourism Partnership was awarded the EUROPARC Charter for Sustainable Tourism (**UE4**);
- With support from Sport England, Active Craven and Active Richmondshire, the National Park Authority launched the ‘Go Dales’ project, which will provide hundreds of young people with an enjoyable and ‘relevant’ experience of the national park (**UE6**)
- Volunteers for the National Park Authority participated in over 6,000 days worth of activity in the Park (**UE7**)
- The Tourism Partnership had over 600 events listed on its database last year, including a range of ‘Walking for Health’ events (**UE9**).

Issues

There are a number of objectives (notably **UE1** and **UE3**) on which progress can only be measured through large, infrequent surveys. While there’s no reason to suppose these objectives are not on course, we will not know for certain until the next surveys are carried out in 2010.

Nationally, the number of people who can name the Yorkshire Dales as being a national park has increased from 7% in 2001 to 9% in 2007. However, the original objective (10%) can not now be achieved before 2010– when the next national survey is carried out (**UE8**).

NATURE CONSERVATION

Progress against Objectives

Good progress has been made on the following objectives:

- 2,500 ha of land in Sites of Special Scientific Interest has been brought into 'favourable or recovering' condition. The total area in favourable or recovering condition now stands at 86% (**NC3b**);
- 92 ha of meadows have now been restored or significantly enhanced through the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust's 'Haytime' project (**NC4a**);
- 81% of the priority species identified in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan are either increasing or have a stable population. Those that are increasing include Peregrine Falcon and Black Grouse (**NC5**).
- For the first time, a Park-wide map of important habitats has been produced, together with reports to show the condition and status of priority habitats and species (**NC7**);

Issues

Delays in producing the first Park-wide habitat map have had a knock-on effect on other objectives. The Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum, Natural England, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, National Park Authority and the Yorkshire & Humber Environmental Data Network will now be working together in 2009 to identify key areas that could provide connections between existing habitat fragments (**NC2**).

57% of the priority habitats identified in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan are in favourable or recovering condition. Very significant investment in habitat restoration has been made in recent years – notably by Natural England – and this is planned to continue in future years. However, the time lag between action and effect - combined with the practicalities of carrying out repeat surveys – mean that it is very unlikely that we will be able to report that the objective has been achieved at the end of 2010 (**NC3a**).

No floodplain wetland has yet been created, although the National Park Authority will be carrying out an audit of potential wetland restoration sites in 2009 (**NC4b**).

Through the efforts of the Forestry Commission, Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, National Park Authority, Natural England and private landowners, the area of broadleaf woodland has increased by a further 72 hectares. However, much higher levels of planting will be needed in the next two years if the objective is to be achieved (**NC4d**).

While 81% of Local Biodiversity Action Plan species are stable or increasing, there are no known mechanisms to halt the current decline in one of the species (White-clawed crayfish). It will not, therefore, be possible to stabilise all species by 2010 (**NC5**).

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Progress against Objectives

Eight of the ten objectives remain on course to be achieved. Progress has been especially good on the following in 2008:

- Almost 2,000 new records were added to the Historic Environment Record by the National Park Authority (**HE2**).
- All data on the condition of designated buildings, monuments and features held by English Heritage and the National Park Authority is up to date (**HE3**).
- The number of Scheduled Monuments that English Heritage considers to be 'at high risk' has fallen by 31% (**HE5**)
- The first annual 'Built Environment Forum' meeting was held in March 2009, and was attended by architects & agents from across the Park. Its primary purpose was to debate the content of the forthcoming Design Guide, and it focused on the role of modern architecture in the Park (**HE8**)
- A review of the Settle Conservation Area by Craven District Council means 16 Conservation Areas (43%) now have up-to-date character appraisals (**HE9**)
- English Heritage has completed a scoping study to looking at the socio-economic benefits of heritage in National Parks. This will be used to identify current gaps in information prior to the commission of a full study (**HE10**).

Issues

The National Park Authority has put back the production of a research strategy for the historic environment. This is to allow resources to be directed towards assisting Natural England to complete an expanded programme of scheduled monument and field barn restoration in 2009 (**HE1**).

Staff vacancies at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority meant that only one listed building was brought off the 'at risk' register in 2008 – slipping slightly behind the target. However, a number of other projects are at an advanced stage of development and the Authority expects to make up the shortfall by tackling 8 buildings in 2009/10 (**HE4**).

ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

Progress against Objectives

Not all of the objectives contain specific targets so making judgements on progress is more subjective. However, progress so far is generally positive, with six of the ten objectives on course, and some progress on the others. Notable achievements include:

- The Yorkshire Dales LEADER bid was successful, and the programme – worth £2.5 million over the next 4 years – is now getting underway. It will support regeneration activity based around three broad themes: innovative community service provision; village regeneration; and cultural heritage (**EE2**)
- The area was awarded the Europarc Sustainable Tourism Charter in recognition of the work being done to promote the area as a green tourism destination (**EE3**).
- Plans have been developed for a number of major projects to support sustainable farming and tourism, which should start in 2009. These include the Yorkshire Upland Peat Project and a green business accreditation scheme (**EE7**).
- North Yorkshire County Council's Adult Learning Service has continued to widen the range of adult training and learning opportunities available even in the most isolated areas (**EE10**).

Issues

There's been little progress in developing a 'quality of place' brand. The award of the Europarc Charter for Sustainable Tourism is one potential mechanism that could be used to help promote the quality of the area (**EE1**).

Co-ordinated business and environmental advice to farmers is not yet in place. However, through the Yorkshire Dales Leader programme, a 'Farmer Network' will be created in 2009. It will help to co-ordinate advice from a variety of sources including Business Link Yorkshire, other Yorkshire Forward-funded sources of advice under the 'Landskills' programme; and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's farm & countryside service. The latter will now also include advice on more sustainable agricultural practice for farmers in Raydale, the Lune and Ribble catchments as part of the England Catchment Sensitive Farming initiative (**EE4**).

A further 0.56 ha of land has been granted planning permission for economic development – but now some way behind the target line, and likely to be a challenging objective to achieve in the current economic climate (**EE6**).