

Sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales

A strategy and action plan (2013 – 2018)



April 2013

Summary

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) and Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAONB), in 2008, achieved the EUROPARC Federation's Charter for Sustainable Tourism. A re-assessment, to see if the area still meets the criteria for this award, will take place in 2013. As part of this process a new sustainable tourism strategy has been developed by the Dales Tourism partnership. This revised strategy replaces the interim strategy produced in 2010.

Much has happened in relation to tourism in the Yorkshire Dales over the last five years including:

- Formation of the Dales Tourism partnership following the demise of the area tourism partnership in 2010. Whilst the partnership is not a destination management organisation its aim is to guide, (through this strategy) and ensure the coordination and development of sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales;
- Formation of the Dales Tourism Business Network in 2010 by the YDNPA and NAONB to work effectively with businesses in the area; this now has more than 200 businesses actively involved, and is currently coordinated on a voluntary basis;
- Establishment of the Distinctly Dales project to help identify what is special about local areas and how businesses can use this as part of their USP in their promotion;
- Development of inspirational Brilliant Businesses case studies (available on www.yorkshiredales.org.uk) to help businesses share best practice;
- Promotion of the area through various media including through the highly successful Dales TV programme;
- Investment in sustainable tourism infrastructure:
 - the Pennine Bridleway and Way of the Roses cycle route;
 - the rights of way network – the number of routes in good repair has increased, and more routes are accessible to people with limited mobility;
 - Proactive management of the area's green lane network, to ensure the tranquillity and special qualities of the area are conserved – key natural assets that attract people to the area;
- A number of outreach programmes including Go Dales! and Mosaic have been/are running to bring people to the Yorkshire Dales who would not otherwise have the chance to visit; ultimately those returning will support the local tourism economy;
- Investment in sustainable transport:
 - The Dales & Bowland Community Interest Company now runs the DalesBus network. This has increased passenger numbers threefold since 2007;
 - The area is receiving an investment of £1m to support local sustainable transport solutions through the Dales Integrated Transport Alliance (DITA);
- The National Park Authority's own establishments becoming beacons for sustainable tourism:
 - The four National Park Centres (including Dales Countryside Museum) are accredited through the Green Tourism Business Scheme;
 - Dales Countryside Museum has been awarded Visit England's quality mark under its Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme.

For this revised strategy a new assessment of the area has been carried out, which includes a review of tourism facilities and services, a profile of visitors, and an analysis of tourism performance. To inform the strategy, surveys have been conducted with visitors and tourism businesses. There has also been wide consultation with organisations through the Dales Tourism partnership and with local communities as part of the National Park Management Plan consultation.

From this assessment and the consultation responses, a vision and series of objectives, to measure progress, have been developed for the area.

The vision for sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales is:

The Yorkshire Dales will be a UK-recognised quality destination for enjoying and experiencing a dramatic and tranquil landscape of limestone scenery, moorland and intimate individual dales. The area will be a well-managed destination with the strong involvement of the private sector and local communities. Greater numbers of businesses will be informing customers about what makes their area locally distinctive, and providing detailed information on ways to explore the area by foot, bike, horse back and public transport. There will be celebrated local food and drink, and vibrant arts and crafts businesses. Tourism businesses and visitors will seek to conserve and enhance the environment and heritage, including through visitor payback schemes and taking an active part in conservation. Initiatives will be in place to encourage more visitors during the winter period, and to provide more opportunities to appreciate the wildlife, habitats and cultural heritage of the Dales.

The aims for this strategy are:

- Aim 1. Promoting a distinctive, high-quality and sustainable destination
- Aim 2. Providing opportunities for experiencing and learning about the area
- Aim 3. Producing a positive environment for tourism businesses
- Aim 4. Encouraging environmental responsibility
- Aim 5. Ensuring positive benefits to local communities and volunteers

Underlying these five aims are a number of themes and actions which include many which are Management Plan objectives. (These will be refined further once the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan objectives have been set. The National Park Management Plan, and Nidderdale AONB Management Plan, both have other objectives of relevance to this strategy).

Key draft objectives (2013 to 2018)

- Establish the Yorkshire Dales National Park as a leading sustainable tourism destination in the UK renowned for its local distinctiveness:
 - implement three sustainable tourism campaigns by 2018
 - increase the number of businesses adopting responsible tourism practices from 17 to 80

- promote the local distinctiveness toolkit and develop initiatives at 5 key locations
- Maintain and develop strong Yorkshire Dales Business Networks covering farming, tourism, creative industries and knowledge-based businesses, and ensure that all businesses have direct access to business support within 30 minutes drive.
- Improve the quality, variety and marketing of the tourism 'offer' within the National Park to extend the season and get more visitors to stay overnight so as to increase the value of tourism by 20% in real terms by 2020.
- By 2014, establish a dynamic, up-to-date, and inspiring information hub about the National Park for visitors.

Key actions (to help deliver the objectives)

Yorkshire Dales National Park logo - Encourage local businesses to use the National Park logo, as part of their own promotion, destination branding and key messages;

Distinctly Dales project– continue to work with local businesses, to help them promote what is special about their area, to reinforce 'local distinctiveness' and 'sense of place';

Dales Tourism Business Network – continue to support the network as a point of contact between organisations and businesses, and to facilitate delivery (www.dalestourism.com);

Destination management – ensure a coordinated and focused approach to destination management, amongst relevant organisations, through the Dales Tourism partnership;

Campaigns - identify key niche markets and undertake appropriate PR, social media and marketing campaigns (eg encourage more visitors during the winter period, to explore the area without their car, appreciation of wildlife, cultural heritage and food and drink);

Green traveller - establish the area as a Greentraveller destination so that the area's businesses can benefit from its web site and niche marketing (www.greentraveller.co.uk);

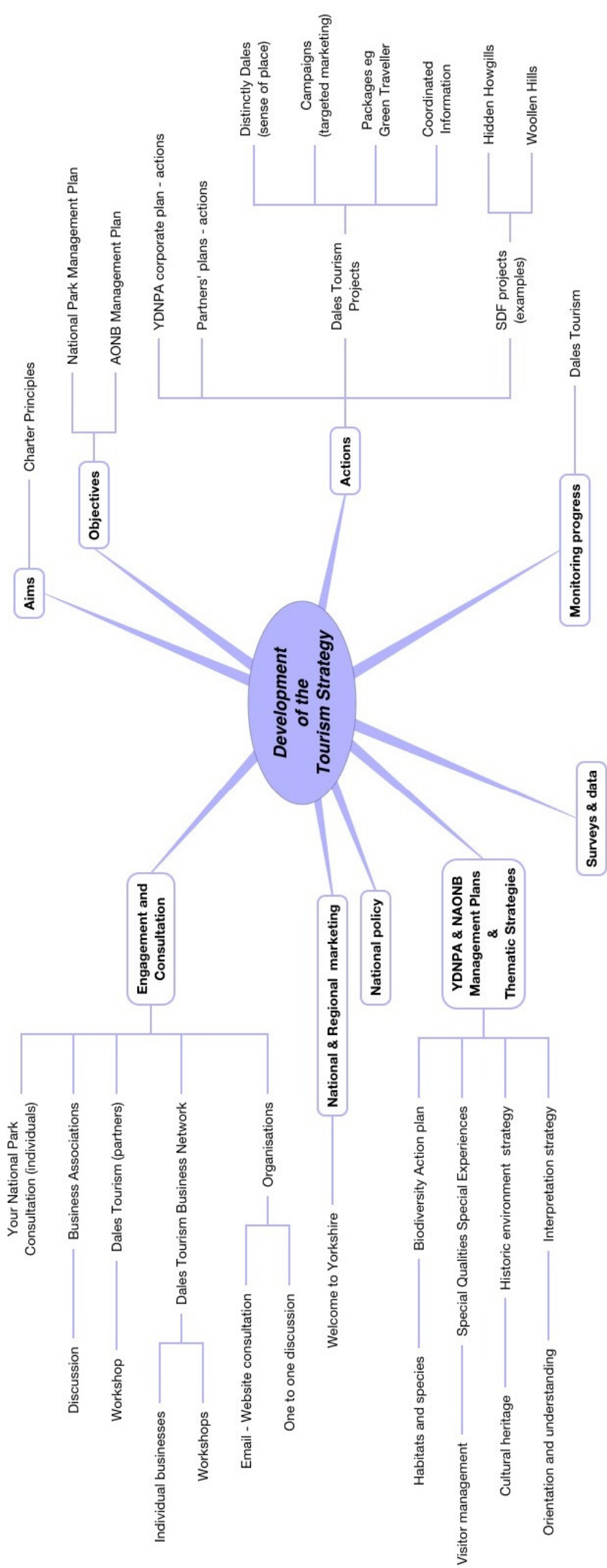
Visitor information hubs - National Park Centres to provide an enhanced 'hub' for visitor information and sustainable tourism services, encouraging discovery of what the area has to offer including walking, cycling and travel options, so people stay in the area longer;

Focused information – make it easier for potential visitors using the internet to plan a visit, book accommodation, and understand the wide range of different places to visit and things to do; use social media to strengthen the information, and back up with printed material;

Events – provide better coordination and booking facilities for events across the Yorkshire Dales;

Planning – review the National Park local plan policies in relation to visitor facilities.

Diagram showing how the Tourism Strategy has been developed



Contents

1 Introduction	3
1.1 About this strategy	3
- How is sustainable tourism defined?	
1.2 The area	4
- Designation	
- The importance of tourism to the area	
1.3 Administrative responsibilities	6
- Progress since being awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism	
1.4 How was this strategy and action plan prepared?	8
1.5 Taking the work forward – Dales Tourism	8
- The purpose of this strategy and action plan	
2. Assessment	11
2.1 Economic, social and environmental context	11
- Living and working in the Yorkshire Dales	
- The natural heritage of the Yorkshire Dales	
- The historic and cultural heritage on the Yorkshire Dales	
2.2 Tourism facilities and services	16
- Accommodation and attractions	
- Local food, drink and arts and crafts	
- Recreational facilities	
- Management of recreational activities	
- Accessibility and transport	
- Visitor Information	
- Encouraging visitors and the tourism industry to contribute to conservation	
- Commercial outdoor activity providers and tourism packages	
2.3 Tourism delivery structures	27
- Working with tourism businesses	
2.4 Tourism performance and our visitors	28
2.5 Progress since 2008	31
3. External influences and policy context	36
3.1 Policy context	36
- European context	
- National context	
- Regional context	
- Local context	

3.2	External influences on tourism in the Yorkshire Dales	41
-	Tourism trends	
-	Economic trends	
-	Social trends	
-	Environmental trends	
4	Informing the strategy	44
4.1	Tourism Business Survey	44
4.2	SWOT analysis	46
4.3	National Park Management Plan consultation	49
4.4	Other consultation	51
5	Moving forwards – the strategy	52
5.1	Partnership	52
5.2	Vision	52
5.3	Strategic aims and objectives	53
6.	Action plan 2013 to 2018	55
7.	Implementation and monitoring	72
7.1	Structures for coordination and action	72
-	The importance of Dales Tourism as the coordinating body	
-	The importance of the local authorities and other bodies	
-	Delivery through businesses	
7.2	Monitoring and indicators	73
7.3	Conclusion	74

1 Introduction

1. The Yorkshire Dales is a remote and wild gritstone and limestone landscape that straddles the Pennines. It is internationally important for wildlife and rich in historic features including prehistoric carved rocks and medieval lead mines. It is situated in the Northern Pennines, where much of the land is covered by landscape designations. The Yorkshire Dales part of this area is made up of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and small parts of the Forest of Bowland (1.6%) and North Pennines Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (1.5%).
2. The area is within easy reach of some large population centres. Nidderdale AONB and the south of the National Park are closest to the conurbation of West Yorkshire, the west of the National Park to the large population of East Lancashire, whilst the northern Yorkshire Dales have higher levels of visitors from the Tees Valley conurbation.
3. This strategy is focused on the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale AONB (NAONB) on whose behalf the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) made the original European Sustainable Tourism Charter application in 2008. The award of the Charter reflects the aims of authorities managing the designated (protected) areas, of local stakeholders, and representatives of tourism businesses, to support and encourage tourism that accords with the principles of sustainable development.

1.1 About this strategy

4. This is the second sustainable tourism strategy produced by the YDNPA and NAONB. It is a substantially revised strategy, as it has been produced on behalf of Dales Tourism - a *new* partnership of local authorities and organisations that now collectively seeks to manage tourism within this area, in line with the Charter Principles:

The Charter Principles for Sustainable Tourism

- 1 To involve all those implicated by tourism in and around the National Park area in its development and management.
- 2 To prepare and implement a sustainable tourism strategy and action plan for the protected area.
- 3 To protect and enhance the area's natural and cultural heritage, for and through tourism, and to protect it from excessive tourism development.
- 4 To provide all visitors with a high quality experience in all aspects of their visit.
- 5 To communicate effectively to visitors about the special qualities of the area.
- 6 To encourage specific tourism products which enable discovery and understanding of the area.
- 7 To increase knowledge of the National Park area and sustainability issues amongst all those involved in tourism.
- 8 To ensure that tourism supports and does not reduce the quality of life of local residents.
- 9 To increase benefits from tourism to the local economy.
- 10 To monitor and influence visitor flows to reduce negative impacts.

How is sustainable tourism defined?

5. The European Sustainable Tourism Charter commits signatories to implementing a local strategy for sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism is defined as:

“any form of tourism development, management or activity which ensures the long-term protection and preservation of natural, cultural and social resources and contributes in a positive and equitable manner to the economic development and well-being of individuals living, working, or staying in protected areas”.

6. This document is the local strategy as outlined by the European Charter. It takes into account the needs of the environment, local residents, local businesses and visitors, now and in the future. The concept of sustainability pervades the strategy and determines the balance of objectives and actions that are presented here. It is important to appreciate, however, that ‘sustainable tourism’ is not seen as a discrete and separate form of tourism. The approach is to apply the principles of economic, social and environmental sustainability to tourism as a whole, through partnership with all those involved.

7. The YDNPA also has a ‘visitor management’ strategy – Special Qualities Special Experiences, produced in 2010 which complements this strategy (see www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/ydnpa_sgse_final.pdf). Special Qualities Special Experiences is a policy document that helps the YDNPA fulfil its statutory purposes, by considering specifically the spatial distribution and visitor management aspects of tourism and recreation in the National Park. As such it helps to conserve the area’s special qualities and visitor experiences.

1.2 The area

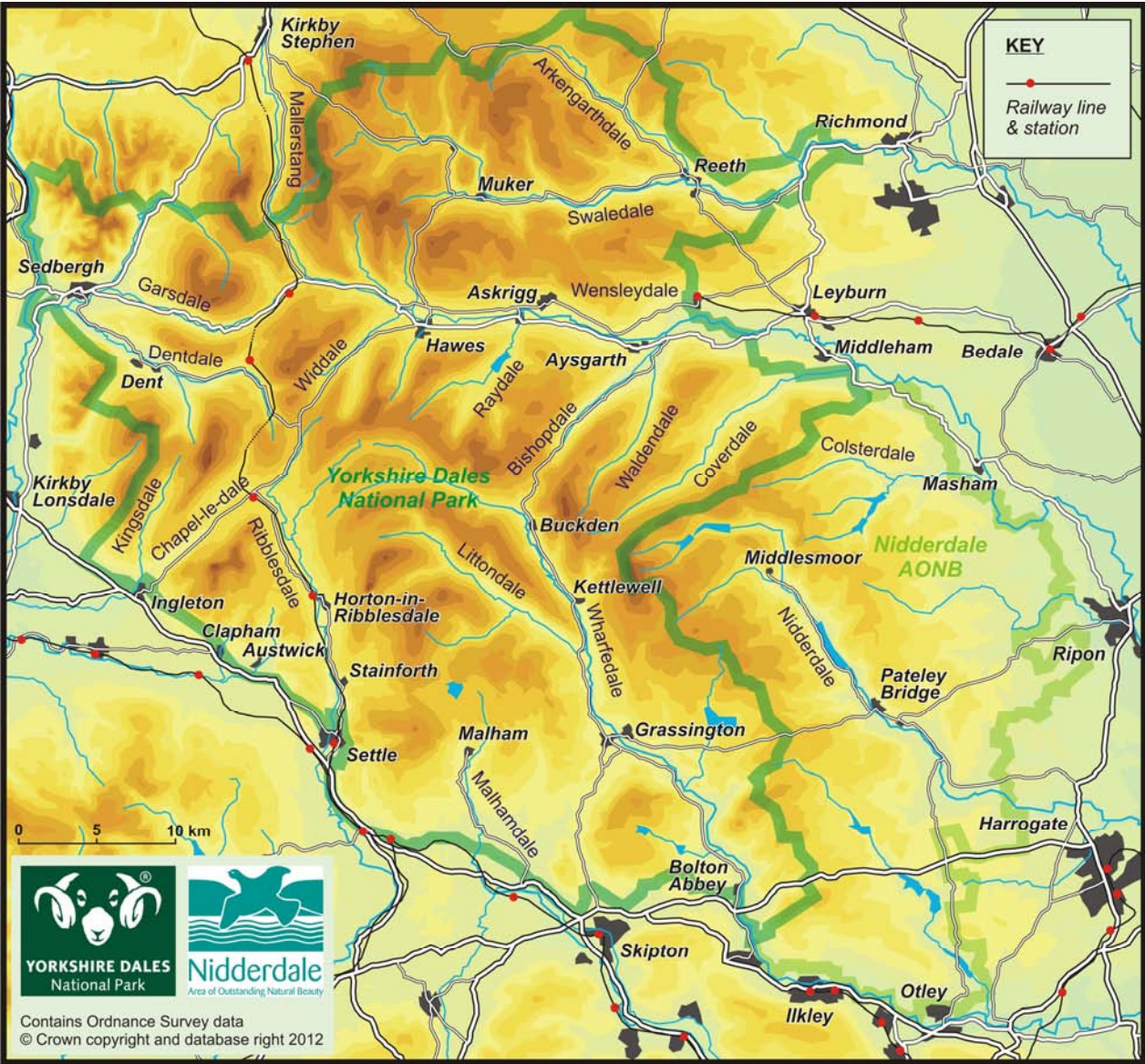
Designation

8. The Yorkshire Dales National Park was designated in 1954 and is an area of 1,762 square kilometres. It is an area of traditional meadows and hill country that rises to over 700 metres. Rivers have cut deep valleys (dales), each distinctive in character and atmosphere. From the classic limestone scenery in the south of the National Park, to the open moorland in the north, and the grassy rounded hills of the Howgills in the west, this is a striking landscape.

9. Nidderdale AONB was designated in 1994. The AONB covers 603 square kilometres of the Pennine Dales in North Yorkshire. The western boundary of the AONB adjoins the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The AONB includes extensive areas of open moorland and the more pastoral landscape to the east. The geographical proximity and similarities in landscapes, means that the two designated areas work closely together, particularly on tourism related matters

10. The area is bordered by a series of historic market towns which form gateways into these landscapes. These include the towns of Skipton, Settle, Ingleton, Kirkby Lonsdale, Kirkby Stephen, Leyburn, Richmond, Masham, Middleham and Ripon. Together, the designated landscape and gateway towns make up the Dales Tourism area ie the wider Yorkshire Dales. A map of the designated areas and surroundings is shown below.

Area covered by this strategy



The importance of tourism to the area

11. Visitors have been attracted to the Yorkshire Dales long before National Park and AONB designations were confirmed. The dramatic landscapes of the area were sought out by writers and artists in the eighteenth century, during which time interest in recreational activities was growing. By 1781 there was already a tour guide to the caves in the Ingleborough and Settle area, and Weathercote Cave could be visited for 1 shilling with a guide. As transport links improved, the numbers of visitors started to increase. Aysgarth became a staging post for coach travellers who would probably have wandered down to view the Falls whilst waiting for their horses to be changed. By the late nineteenth century the railways had been built across the Yorkshire Dales, the most famous being the Settle-Carlisle line. Other railway lines were important for bringing visitors including the Ilkley to Skipton line which called at Bolton Abbey and the Wensleydale line between Northallerton and Garsdale. Both these lines were closed to passengers in the 1960s, but sections of both routes have been re-opened by enthusiasts and have serious ambitions to reconnect to the main railway network.

12. The real boom in tourism has taken place in the twentieth century with the rise in car ownership, and increased leisure time in the post-war years. Leisure interests have continued to expand and increase as people have found the time and money to travel and enjoy this special area. The Yorkshire Dales caters for these changes by offering a range of activities such as riding, walking, and caving to name but a few.

13. The change in the way people now take their holidays, with a main holiday and a number of short breaks throughout the year, has meant different visitor patterns for the Dales. Natural attractions such as Malham Cove and Aysgarth Falls still draw people to the area, but it also has cultural offers such as museums, galleries and local crafts centres to encourage visitors to stay longer.

14. A large number of small businesses are dependent on tourism in the Yorkshire Dales for their livelihood. Over 95% of the land is privately owned. A number of conservation bodies have interests in the management of the land such as The National Trust, Natural England and estate managers. Therefore, management of the land is in partnership with these conservation bodies and landowners.

15. Many organisations have an interest in tourism in the Dales and a clear way forward for tourism is required to balance the economic benefits with the needs of the community and environment. The area is of great significance within the North of England in terms of its conservation value and as a high profile tourism destination. To this end, the YDNPA and NAONB established the Dales Tourism partnership and Dales Tourism Business Network.

1.3 Administrative responsibilities

16. The administrative responsibilities for the Dales Tourism area covers two counties (the area is predominately in the county of North Yorkshire, with the western part in Cumbria), two regional tourism organisations (Welcome to Yorkshire and Cumbria Tourism), and five districts (Harrogate, Craven, Richmondshire, South Lakeland and Eden).

17. Under statute, the National Park Authority has two primary purposes to:

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

18. The National Park Authority has a number of statutory responsibilities within the National Park area. It is the planning authority, and access and relevant authority, under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act for the open access land in the National Park. In addition, it is the delegated highway authority for rights of way (on behalf of the county councils). Nidderdale AONB is administered by Harrogate Borough Council on behalf of a partnership comprising elected Members of County, District and Parish Councils, and representatives of farming organisations and third sector groups. The purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve natural beauty, while having regard to the interests of the local economy and rural communities.

19. Under statute, both Authorities have to produce a strategic management plan for the area, which includes objectives and shows how the area will be managed.

Progress since being awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism

20. Visitors coming to the Yorkshire Dales see distinctive dales and 'honeypot' locations such as Malham or Pateley Bridge, rather than two separate designated areas. It is for this reason that the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB put in a joint application for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in 2008.

21. Through the award of the European Sustainable Tourism Charter, the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale AONB joined a group of designated areas that are recognised as having the right structures and processes in place to ensure sustainable tourism. The challenge has been to continue this work, despite the many changes to the tourism management structure and funding across the area. Section 2.5 outlines the key achievements, over the last 5 years, relating to successful tourism and conservation achievements in relation to the earlier strategy and action plan (2008-13). This section also shows how we have addressed the issues raised from the EUROPARC Federation verification visit in 2008.

22. The Tourism Partnership for the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate was dissolved in 2010. This means the area does not now have a 'local' Destination Management Organisation (DMO). The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has set out what it is sees as a definition of a Tourism Body in its Tourism Policy 2011. Cuts to funding meant that the district and county councils, whilst having responsibility for the economic regeneration of the area, had fewer resources available for this work. To this end it is important to recognise that neither the YDNPA nor NAONB have an economic development remit. However, in setting up the Dales Tourism partnership both organisations recognise the inter-relationship between tourism, the economy, and the conservation of the area, and the overall importance of tourism to the area.

1.4 How was this strategy and action plan prepared?

23. This strategy has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the EUROPARC Federation and in close collaboration with Dales Tourism and other stakeholders. It forms the basis for the re-application for the Charter.

24. Importantly, this strategy has been developed alongside the consultation for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's new National Park Management Plan. This is a plan for the National Park not the National Park Authority, and provides the key strategic focus for the work of the National Park Authority, and its partners, over a five-year period from 2013 to 2018. The consultation responses relating to tourism and visitors have been used to shape this strategy, (the Management Plan for Nidderdale AONB is still current as it runs from 2009 to 2014).

25. The development of this strategy has been based on extensive research and consultation, including:

- Analysis of responses to the public consultation on the development of the National Park Management Plan in 2012. This involved publicity to encourage the public to participate in the process including returning postcards, a photo competition, as well as more traditional website surveys;
- An on-line and telephone survey of tourism businesses in the Yorkshire Dales conducted in 2012 which received 132 responses;
- The results of the Yorkshire Regional Visitor Survey¹ conducted between 2008 and 2011. This was a major questionnaire survey with over 8,000 respondents across 100 locations;
- A visitor survey conducted in 2008, by YDNPA, which consisted of 500 face-to-face questionnaire responses throughout the National Park, (this survey is undertaken every 5 years and will be repeated in 2013).

26. In addition, current policy documents, research studies and reports have been reviewed. Fundamentally, this strategy has been developed within the context of cuts in budgets to public sector organisations, the restructuring of the tourism sector, as well as the general squeeze on household budgets. The future presents a number of challenges and opportunities for supporting sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales.

1.5 Taking the work forward – Dales Tourism

27. Over the next five years 2013 -18, this strategy and action plan will shape the work of the Dales Tourism partnership, and the Dales Tourism Business Network.

28. Dales Tourism is a partnership between the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB to deliver and take forward the European Sustainable Tourism Charter, with the help of a steering group of interested parties, including tourism businesses. Each of the following bodies are invited to be represented on the Steering Group:

- Welcome to Yorkshire and Cumbria Tourism

¹ Yorkshire and Humber Regional Visitor Survey, 2011. QA Research.

- Craven District Council
- Richmondshire District Council
- Harrogate District Council
- Eden District Council
- South Lakeland District Council
- Yorkshire Dales Society
- Dales Tourism Business Network
- Bolton Abbey Estate
- Natural England
- English Heritage
- Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust
- The National Trust
- A community group
- Yorkshire Dales Access Forum

29. The partnership recognises that its role is to facilitate an environment which enables vibrant tourism businesses. Its vision (see section 5.1) can only be achieved through the tourism businesses in the area.

30. The Dales Tourism Business Network is an informal network of tourism businesses, pubs, shops, food producers and craftspeople which was first established on behalf of the National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB in 2010, through The Tourism Network Ltd. The Dales Tourism Business Network now represents over 200 businesses, and the number continues to grow.

The purpose of this strategy and action plan

31. The purpose of this strategy is to identify the key themes and priorities for managing, developing and marketing the Yorkshire Dales area as a quality visitor destination in line with sustainable tourism and the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. It takes account of the various national, regional and local policies relating to tourism, the environment and sustainable development.

32. Through the action plan this document brings together all current activity, future aspirations and priorities to determine the future direction of tourism across the Yorkshire Dales. This enables outputs and outcomes to be coordinated and monitored and helps to make the most of existing resources. It will also provide an indication of timescales and targets for achievement. This will help to establish the future direction of sustainable tourism in this area for the next 5 years.

Throughout this document the following terms are used:

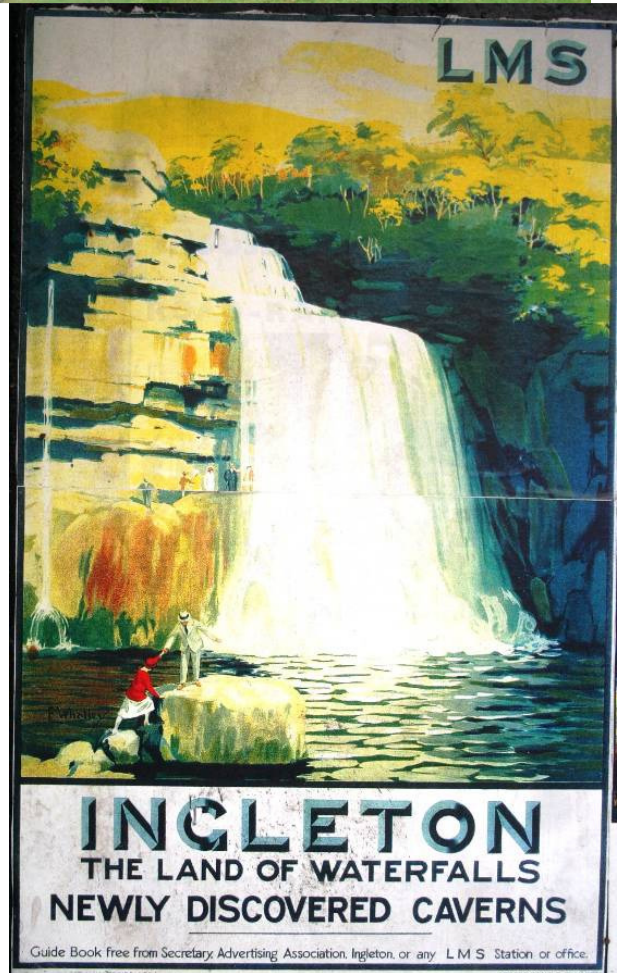
‘designated areas’ refers to the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale AONB. **‘Yorkshire Dales’** or **‘the Dales’** refer to the slightly larger geographical area which includes the surrounding market towns.

Where particular data, initiatives or planned actions only occur within one of the designated areas then this is made clear in the text.



The Yorkshire Dales

A stunning landscape from wild heather moorland to dramatic limestone features. It has been shaped by human activities over many centuries - dry-stone walls, field barns, stone-built villages and evidence of the presence of the Romans, Normans, and monastic power. People have been visiting the area to see its natural and man-made attractions for hundreds of years.



2. Assessment

33. This section provides the general context for tourism in the Yorkshire Dales. It gives a description of the Yorkshire Dales from a local community, wildlife and cultural heritage perspective as well as considering the tourism facilities and infrastructure which are present. It also outlines the structure for the delivery of tourism promotion, and looks at the data on tourism performance and visitor satisfaction. Finally, there is a look at the major achievements in tourism delivery over the last five years.

2.1 Economic, social and environmental context

Living and working in the Yorkshire Dales

34. The Yorkshire Dales is a living and working environment. The National Park and AONB boundaries are drawn to exclude the market towns on their edges, and some villages along their boundary can be part in and part out of the designated areas as the boundary mostly follows landscape features. The National Park has a population of 20,300 with only three settlements (Hawes, Reeth and Sedbergh) having a population of greater than 1,000 people, with Sedbergh being the largest town. Nidderdale AONB has a population of 15,670, with Pateley Bridge being the largest town with a population of 2,800. With a sparse population density it can be difficult to maintain rural services such as shops, pubs, post offices and bus services – visitors have a key role in helping to protect the viability of services alongside residents.

35. Principal services and employment centres are located around the edge of the designated areas. Many residents have to travel for one hour or more to reach a hospital or the nearest further education college. Whilst internet shopping can be delivered into the designated areas, the nearest large supermarkets and shops are all in the principal service centres on the edge of the designated areas or further afield. Existing services in the designated areas are being eroded, with primary schools, post offices, pubs and churches closing in some places. A number of innovative solutions are being tried to halt some of this decline through the provision of mobile and remotely accessed services, by community led voluntary projects, or post offices moving into other buildings such as youth hostels.

36. In 2001, there were approximately 8,363 households in the National Park, with 15% of properties classed as holiday or second homes. There are dense pockets of second and holiday homes which affect the seasonal vitality of some settlements². Housing is very expensive in the designated areas in relation to average household incomes (around 10 times average income). The lack of affordable housing was regarded as the biggest threat to the National Park according to a survey of residents in 2009, and meeting the needs of the local community for affordable housing is a key challenge currently being addressed by the National Park Authority through a recently adopted Housing Development Plan.

37. Employment is dominated by the agriculture/land management and tourism (accommodation/food) sectors - responsible for 19% and 18% of employment respectively

(compared to the regional average of 1% and 6% respectively)³. Education and wholesale/retail trade sectors are also important providers of local employment. The economy is highly reliant on self-employment and micro-businesses, with 78% of all businesses employing less than four people.⁴ Many of these are home based businesses.

38. The management of moorland for grouse is an important part of the landscape of the area. The moors on the western side of the AONB are home to some of the most famous grouse shoots in the country. There is significant economic activity generated by those visiting the area for shooting which improves trade for more remote hospitality and retail services during quieter autumn months. Alongside grouse moors, farming remains the dominant land use here. It forms the mainstay of the AONB's rural communities, along with new enterprises, some agriculture-based and others, such as catering.

39. The population profile of the designated areas is considerably older than the average for England and Wales, (approximately 10 years older), and the population profile is ageing at a quicker rate than the national average.

40. The quality of life of residents is high, and satisfaction with the local area as a place to live is 10 percentage points higher than the English average, at around 90% of all residents⁵.

41. A significant proportion of households are in fuel poverty, defined as spending more than 10% of household income on heating. This is due to the high cost of heating in a rural area where the majority of houses (75%) are not connected to the mains gas network, combined with the difficulty of insulating older stone properties of the type found in the Yorkshire Dales.

42. Mobile phone coverage remains patchy and unreliable, both for voice and mobile broadband. There are limited proposals to roll out improved coverage which puts residents at an increasing disadvantage compared with better served areas. Home broadband provision is however gradually improving with North Yorkshire County Council leading on improving broadband coverage and speed in a partnership with British Telecom.

The natural heritage of the Yorkshire Dales

43. The Yorkshire Dales is one of the most important areas of the United Kingdom for its rich and diverse wildlife and habitats. This ranges from the wildflower hay meadows and pastures in the dale bottoms, to the moorland fringe with its rush pastures (important for wading birds), to the windswept uplands with their open heather moorland and blanket bog, and its unique limestone pavements.

44. The Yorkshire Dales National Park includes 506 square kilometres designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), with a further 160 square kilometres in Nidderdale AONB. Overall, this represents approximately 26% of the total designated area. There are a wide variety of SSSIs; some small sites often related to specific gills and meadows; the UK's finest karst landscape around Ingleborough; and extensive

³ Employment and business activity by sector (2008); Defra Rural Statistics Unit

⁴ York and North Yorkshire Economic Development Strategy 2010.

⁵ <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=9701> STREAM CLG Place survey 2008 and YDNPA residents survey 2009

moorland SSSIs some of which straddle the two designated areas. Large SSSIs include: the East Nidderdale Moors; West Nidderdale, Barden & Blubberhouses Moors; Malham-Arncliffe; Ingleborough; Whernside; Lovely Seat-Stainton Moor; Arkengarthdale, Gunnerside & Reeth Moors; and Mallerstang-Swaledale Head.

45. Much of the land covered by SSSI status is also included within internationally designated Special Areas of Conservation and/or Special Protection Areas. There are five National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and one Ramsar site (Malham Tarn).

46. In 2012, 98% of the Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the designated areas were in 'favourable' or 'recovering' condition; this is a significant increase from 2008.

47. Maintaining this wealth of habitats and species requires active management, both within the areas covered by SSSI designation and in surrounding land which is also often of high conservation value. The vast majority of land in the designated areas (approximately 95%) is in private ownership, with only relatively small holdings owned by public or conservation bodies such as The National Trust, Natural England and Yorkshire Water. This means that farmers and landowners are predominantly undertaking the practical nature conservation work within the Yorkshire Dales, guided by their agri-environment schemes. There has been considerable success in working with farmers and land managers to get their land into these agri-environment schemes, and in April 2012 the total area of the National Park and AONB within schemes was over 1700 square kilometres, which is 72% of the total area.

48. There are also a number of projects taking place focused on habitat or species conservation. The most significant of these projects is the Yorkshire Peat Partnership which is aiming to restore 14,000ha of degraded upland bog habitat primarily through grip blocking.

49. On behalf of Natural England, the National Park Authority delivers elements of the Catchment Sensitive Farming Initiative to reduce diffuse water pollution from agriculture, and is leading on projects at Semerwater and the Upper Lune catchments. Nidderdale AONB is the lead partner in the Nidd Catchment Partnership and since 2008, has been providing farm-gate advice, soil testing, developing nutrient management plans and holding farmer events and demonstrations. By the end of the first phase of the project in March 2011, at least 50% of the farmers who had received visits or advice have taken action to make a significant contribution to mitigating diffuse pollution from their farms.

50. Species conservation is directed by the Local Biodiversity Action Plans covering the Yorkshire Dales, and the designated areas authorities' work with partner organisations and local communities to implement these. There are 17 volunteer community groups within the National Park actively involved with nature conservation work in their local area, with a further three planned by 2013.

51. The reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and budget restrictions on new Higher Level Stewardship agreements will present a key challenge over future years, particularly in delivering nature conservation improvements through land management.

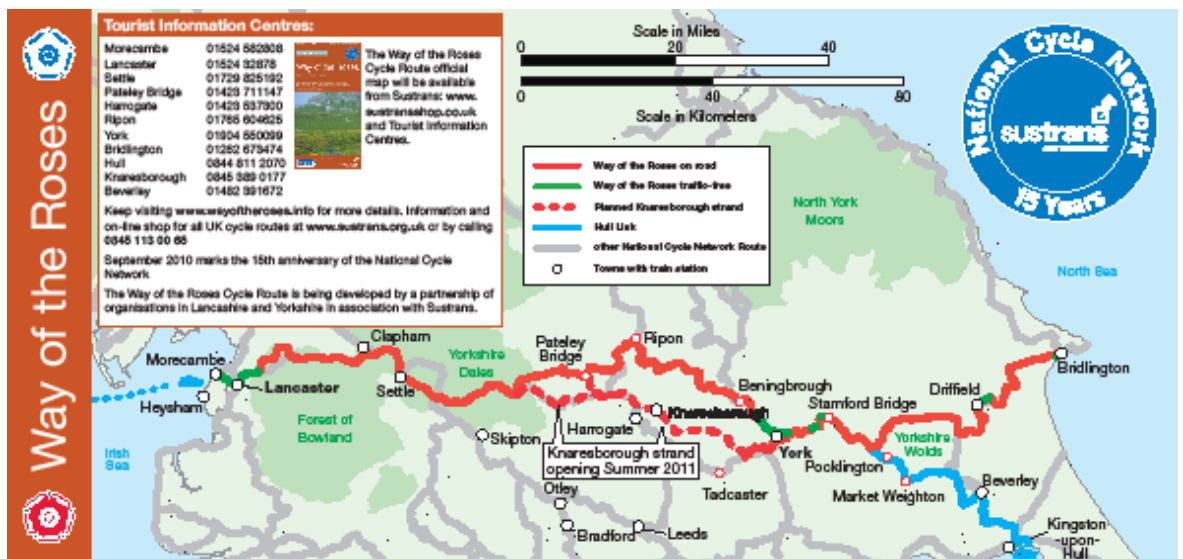
New ways to enjoy the area



Two major new long-distance routes have been opened through the Yorkshire Dales in the last five years. In 2005, the first part of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail opened in the National Park with the full route opening in June 2012.



The Way of the Roses is a coast-to-coast cycle route which opened in September 2010 and has proved extremely popular.



Another key challenge over the longer term will be the impact of climate change, which could cause changes in distribution and balance of species (both flora and fauna) due to rising year-round temperatures: species emigration (uphill or north) or extinction at certain sites (for example, arctic juniper, black grouse), and species immigration from the south (for example, comma butterfly). There will also be an increasing threat from non-native species, pests and diseases.

The historic and cultural heritage on the Yorkshire Dales

52. The Yorkshire Dales, like all of England, is a landscape created by human activity. By providing a tangible link with the past and an inspiration for the folklore of the area it makes a major contribution to local character and sense of place, influences how we identify ourselves as individuals and communities, shapes our relationship with nature and the spiritual world and enhances our quality of life.

53. The first farmers settled in the Yorkshire Dales sometime after 5000 BC, clearing woodland to provide grazing for sheep, goats and cattle and fields to plant cereal crops in, and the influence of farming on the landscape forms a key part of the cultural heritage of the area to this day. The influence can also be seen of the Roman invasion through evidence of their road building and military constructions. Viking farmers have also left a trace on the landscape in their place names, but the arrival of the Normans left a more visible presence with impressive stone castles such as those at Skipton, Middleham and Richmond. The Norman lords gave considerable amounts of land to monastic houses such as those at Bolton Priory and Fountains Abbey, who between them at one time owned three quarters of the land, which is now inside the National Park boundary.

54. During the eighteenth century, the Industrial Revolution began to sweep through the Yorkshire Dales. Small rural communities were transformed by the arrival of wool, and then later, cotton processing mills. Some of these mills are now seeing new uses such as Farfield Mill near Sedbergh and Gayle Mill near Hawes. Mineral resources such as lead and coal were exploited as never before. Canals and better roads meant that farmers no longer needed to grow their own corn, and during the eighteenth century more and more farmland was given over to grazing cattle and sheep.

55. The long influence of livestock farming has produced a traditional pastoral landscape of international importance which includes an intricate patchwork of dry-stone walls and stone built field barns. These field barns form the largest group of historic buildings in the Yorkshire Dales and a unique resource. It is estimated that there are some 4,500 'field barns' (located outside the farmstead) within the National Park⁶. Maintaining the condition of these field barns is a key challenge, particularly those which have no obvious modern usage. In Nidderdale AONB, a Traditional Farm Buildings Survey is currently underway, which aims to record around 1000 farm buildings. The information gathered will help to understand changes in farming practice over the centuries, and the contribution these farm buildings make to Nidderdale's landscape and history.

56. The designated areas' Historic Environment Records are the core source of information about the historic environment of the Yorkshire Dales. The National Park Historic Environment Record contains references and descriptions of over 32,000 features.

⁶ *Field Barns A Wasting Asset*, R White, 1998

Designated historic features in the designated areas include 2,371 listed buildings, 326 Scheduled Monuments, and 51 Conservation Areas. The number of Scheduled Monuments demonstrates the rich history including Medieval settlements, Roman sites, remains of the mining industry and monastic sites. The Conservation Areas include many of the towns and villages and the length of the Settle to Carlisle railway line. There is also a World Heritage Site, Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal.

57. The artists and craftspeople of today are continuing to add to the cultural heritage of the area, often deriving their inspiration from the surrounding landscape. This includes the dramatic Coldstones Cut, a large open air sculpture at Greenhow Hill, which opened in 2010 to great acclaim. There is a very successful Open Studios event which takes place annually in North Yorkshire. In 2012, this featured over 131 artists and craftsmen, with over 70 of these being in the Yorkshire Dales part of the county. Each August artists come together at Art in the Pen. Set in the cattle auction in Skipton, Art in the Pen transforms the sheep and cow pens into art stalls selling modern, conceptual and contemporary art in all its forms. Throughout the year local arts and crafts are sold and displayed at many venues such as cafes, pubs, village halls and National Park buildings.

58. Traditional agricultural shows and village galas, some with origins in medieval fairs and saints' day, have long been at the heart of communities in the Yorkshire Dales - many can be traced back over a century and have their own distinct local traditions. Featuring activities like fell races, livestock judging, silver and brass bands and sheepdog trials these shows have always been a chance for isolated farming families to get together and are now a great day out for all.

2.2 Tourism facilities and services

Accommodation and attractions

59. There is a good range of accommodation options in the designated areas from B&Bs to high quality small hotels. Campsites are scattered about the area and there is also a small number of caravan parks concentrated on Hawes, Grassington and Pateley Bridge. There are four youth hostels and six independent hostels within the designated areas, and a further eight in the wider Yorkshire Dales area. There are six members of Farm Stay UK in the designated areas and a further 15 in the wider area. It is surprisingly difficult to find out exactly how many self-catering and catered accommodation providers there actually are, as there is no comprehensive central register, but we believe there to be around 1500 currently operating in the Yorkshire Dales area.

60. The larger hotels and a number of large static caravan parks are found outside the designated areas.

61. Whilst the majority of the natural attractions are to be found to the west of the area, the major historic sites are in the east. These include castles such as those at Richmond, Middleham, Ripley, Bolton Castle and Skipton, and stately homes and gardens such as Newby Hall and Ripley Castle. There are also important monastic sites such as Bolton Priory and the World Heritage Site at Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal.

62. The railways have left a significant mark on the area with several attractions either bringing a disused line back into use for visitors and residents, such as the Wensleydale Railway or Embsay and Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, or utilising old railway buildings such as The Station at Richmond which now houses meeting rooms, a café and cinema. The Settle-Carlisle railway line was famously saved from closure during the 1980s and has become a visitor destination in its own right, with around 900,000 passengers annually. The Dales Countryside Museum at Hawes helps document this heritage and utilises old railway buildings and railway carriages. This fascinating museum, managed by the National Park Authority, tells the story of the people and landscape of the Yorkshire Dales past and present, and stimulates visitors to think about its future (106,31 visitors in 2011/12). Displays interpret the development of the Yorkshire Dales from prehistoric times to the present day.

63. There are a number of other museums celebrating the cultural heritage of the area including the Swaledale Museum at Reeth, Nidderdale Museum in Pateley Bridge, Craven Museum in Skipton and the Upper Wharfedale Museum in Grassington, as well as other attractions based on the cultural heritage of the area such as Gayle Mill.

64. Natural attractions featuring water or waterfalls are also of great importance to the area. Waterfalls such as the famous Hardraw Force with its 90ft (27 metre) single drop and the series of waterfalls at Aysgarth draw in tens of thousands of people annually (122,087 people visited Aysgarth Falls in 2011/12). One of the main attractions at Ingleton is the privately-owned Ingleton Waterfalls walk where visitors follow a circular riverside path which passes a series of waterfalls. How Stean Gorge is a key visitor attraction within Nidderdale AONB where high numbers of visitors use the aerial footbridges, or scramble their way through the gorge. There are also a large number of lesser-known waterfalls which form part of the hidden attractions of the area.

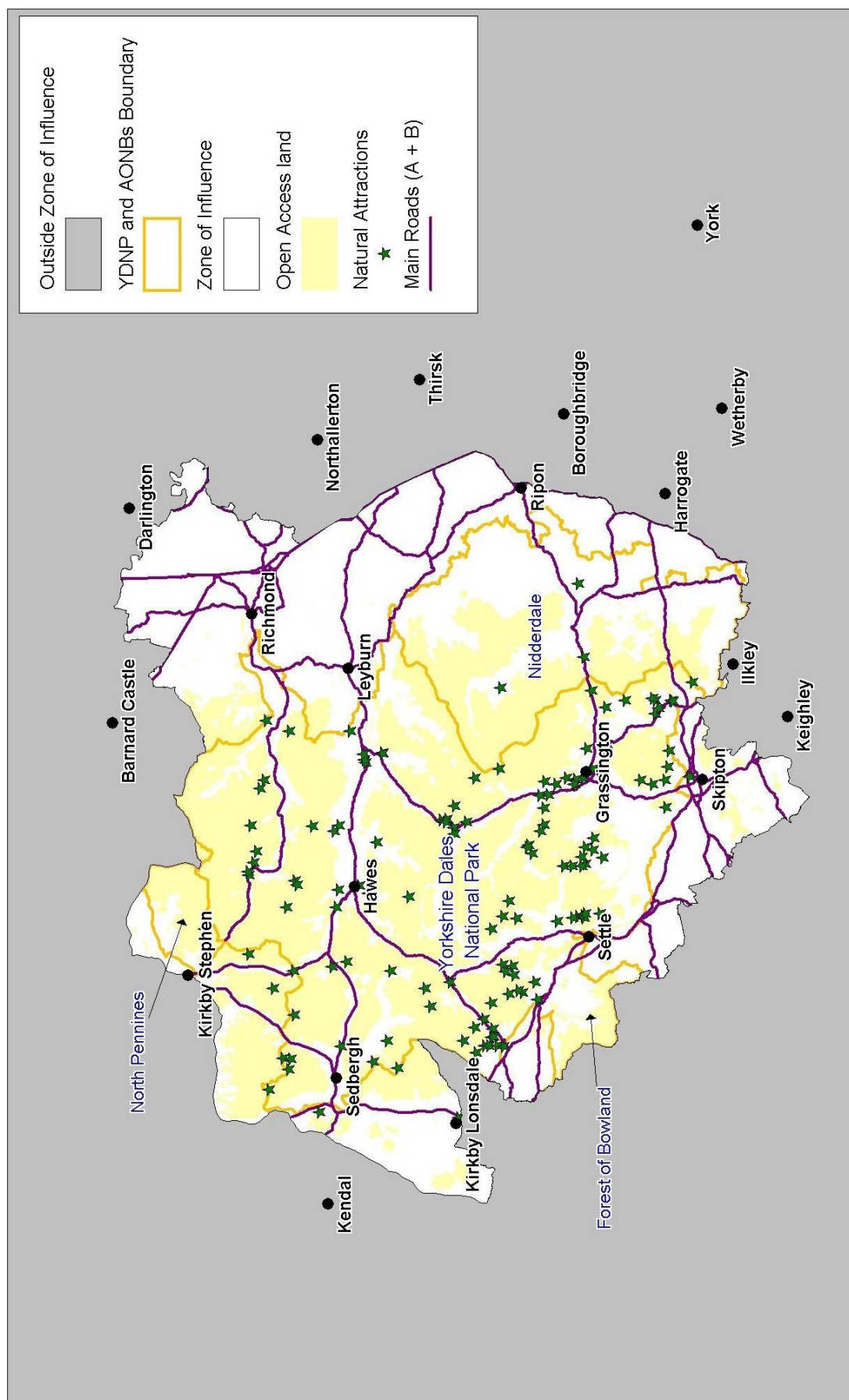
65. Three of the designated areas' key attractions are show caves open to the public for tours - White Scar Cave near Ingleton, Ingleborough Cave near Clapham and Stump Cross Caverns near Greenhow. Other geological attractions are the steep cliff of Malham Cove and the unusual rock formations at Brimham Rocks.

66. The long history of livestock farming in the designated areas means that it is not surprising that there are a number of farms which have diversified into becoming attractions in their own right such as Hesketh Farm Park, Hazel Brow Farm Park, Holme Open Farm and Thornton Park. These all attract large numbers of families to see farm animals, eat in the cafes and play in the family-friendly play parks.

67. There are historic gardens open to the public at Parcevall Hall, Constable Burton Hall, Thorpe Perrow Arboretum and Ripley Castle.

68. Bolton Abbey Estate is a significant draw to the area. The site covers more than 12,000 hectares and includes 135km of footpaths. Within the Estate are the ruins of the Priory, tea rooms and cafes, a hotel, gift shops and areas suitable for riverside picnics.

69. In addition, there are the more unusual modern visitor attractions such as the Forbidden Corner. There is a growing number of new businesses offering more hands-on and learning experiences such as ArtisOn near Masham.



Locations of major natural attractions

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Local food, drink and arts and crafts

70. Agriculture continues to be an important industry in the Yorkshire Dales and the low intensity farm techniques provide high quality meat, game and dairy produce. The production of vegetable and cereal crops is concentrated to the east of the area. The marketing of these products to realise their full economic potential can be problematic because of the large number of small producers, although there are some innovative attempts such as Chris Wildman's development of Paganum. One clear example of the successful marketing of a local food is Wensleydale Cheese, which now has high numbers of visitors to its Creamery in Hawes where they can see the production process and sample the cheeses.

71. Another approach is combining local produce with other activities to draw people in – an example of this is Kilnsey Park Trout Farm which offers fishing, kids' activities and the chance to see captive red squirrels in addition to a restaurant and farm shop.

72. National Park Centres sell local produce as do a number of other local shops and farm outlets. A significant number of local B&Bs, guesthouses and pubs have a great reputation for serving meals based on local produce.

73. Probably the area's best known export is beer. Masham is said to be the centre for Yorkshire Dales ale with two breweries located there - Black Sheep and Theakstons. However, there are also a large number of other small and micro-breweries including Dent, Copper Dragon, Litton Ale, Richmond Brewing Company, Rooster's Brewery, Daleside, WharfeBank Brewery, Wensleydale Brewery and the Yorkshire Dales brewery.

74. There are many local craft outlets throughout the area ranging from clothing and textiles to handmade items. These businesses are increasingly using the internet as a sales channel. Local craftspeople and artists sell individually produced, generally high value items, at Farfield Mill Arts and Heritage Centre, near Sedbergh and King Street workshops in Pateley Bridge and from local shops and outlets further afield.

Recreational facilities

75. The designated areas have an extensive and well-maintained rights of way network with 2188km of footpaths, 788km of bridleways and 60km of byways. In addition, there are over 100km of unsurfaced unclassified roads which are effectively used as part of the network as well. Additionally, 61% of the designated areas is mapped as 'open country' and registered common land which means that the public have a right of access on foot for recreation such as walking, running and rock climbing. The rights of way network in the National Park is monitored using an indicator, which looks at how easy they are for the public to use; in 2011, 89% of rights of way were 'easy to use' (up from 77% in 2007/08). It is not surprising that around 80% of all visitors go for a short or long walk during their visit to the designated areas.

76. A number of multi-day routes have been developed using the rights of way network and minor roads. These include two National Trails – the Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway – and regional routes such as the Dales Way, Nidderdale Way and the Coast to Coast. These routes attract significant numbers of users – for the Coast to Coast this is

5000-7000 people per annum, and for the Dales Way, around 4000 people per annum⁷. They are very important to a number of local businesses.

77. The amount of the rights of way network in the National Park available for people with limited mobility or for wheelchair use is restricted (6% and 0.6% respectively). This proportion has increased in recent years, but is still low despite a considerable push to increase these facilities; constraints such as topography and landowner agreements limit development. There are, however, some useful facilities provided privately such as those at Bolton Abbey Estate, which are available for less able visitors.

78. There are a number of 'honeypot' sites within the designated areas which attract high numbers of visitors for recreation. Casual walkers are attracted to Malham and Fewston Reservoir for example, whilst the busiest area for more experienced walkers is the Three Peaks area centred on Horton-in-Ribblesdale.

79. Promotion of the walking opportunities in the designated areas is largely through private sector publications, but the National Park promotes walking routes for the less able and those with less experience. The 'short walks' page of the National Park Authority website is among the most popular pages on the site. There is also an extensive guided walks programme organised by the National Park Authority and a number of partner organisations and run largely by volunteers: the Dales Volunteers service of the National Park, Friends of Settle-Carlisle line, The National Trust and Dales Bus Ramblers. Many walks and events are brought together under the Flowers in the Dales Festival programme organised by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, and the Ride to Stride walking festival based on the Settle-Carlisle railway line corridor. There are also a number of walking festivals each year.

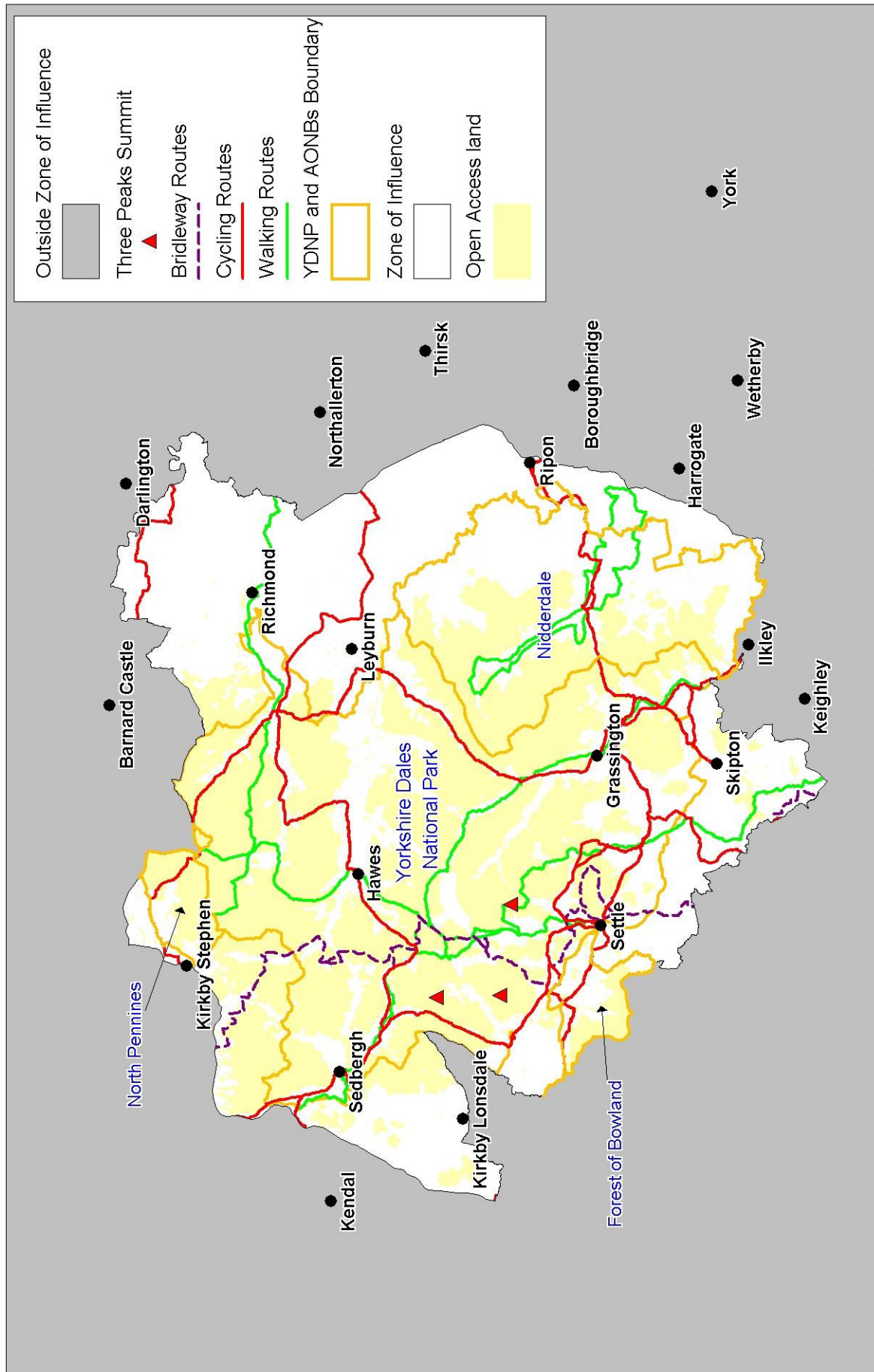
80. Both mountain biking and road cycling are very popular activities in the Yorkshire Dales, despite there being few opportunities for novice cyclists and people with young children. The area appeals to more experienced cyclists who come for challenging riding in great scenery and some of the best cross-country mountain biking in the country.

81. Cycling is a recreational activity where there has been considerable investment to attract more users – both through the development of better infrastructure and better promotion. There has been considerable investment in the bridleway network to bring it up to a better standard and make it more 'weather-proof' as well as providing higher quality gates and latches. The Pennine Bridleway National Trail section through the Yorkshire Dales opened in June 2012 and will provide a focus for horse riding and mountain biking.

82. On the road, there is the Yorkshire Dales Cycleway and the Way of the Roses cycle route. The latter route, which opened in September 2010, runs from coast to coast between Morecambe and Bridlington through both designated landscapes.

83. Complementary infrastructure for cyclists has also been put in place - water taps, cycle lockers and cycle stands are available at over 100 locations in the designated areas. Promotion is primarily through a number of print publications and two dedicated websites – www.mtbthedaes.org.uk and www.cyclethedaes.org.uk.

⁷ X:\Park Services\Research and monitoring\Surveys and data\People counters



Map of location of multi-day walking and cycling routes in the Yorkshire Dales

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Horse riding has always been a minority activity in the Yorkshire Dales, but is receiving a boost at the moment. In addition to the opening of the Pennine Bridleway, there are two projects looking to develop horse-riding loops for promotion linked to staying overnight in the area – Ride the Dales and the Northern Dales Riders. There are also horse riding centres at Kilnsey, Arkle Moor and near Gill Edge near Bainbridge.

85. Due to the geology of the Yorkshire Dales, the cave systems are some of the most dramatic and extensive in the country with over 2,000 caves and potholes (vertical shafts) and more than 400km of surveyed passage. The southern part of the Yorkshire Dales has some of the best examples of classic limestone scenery in Britain with extensive areas of limestone pavement, dry valleys, sink holes and cave systems. Caving has a long history in the Yorkshire Dales from the early explorations by candlelight and poor quality ropes, to today's exploration using LEDs and Single Rope Techniques. However, the activity still retains its challenge and fascination and for many people it is the only true exploration left.

86. The area is also justifiably popular with rock climbers. A number of the limestone cliffs are of national importance, in particular Kilnsey, Gordale and Malham. There are also a series of gritstone edges and outcrops which attract climbers such as those at Crookrise and Brimham.

Management of recreational activities

87. The popularity of the designated areas for recreational activities inevitably brings challenges, from traffic management to physical erosion of paths. For example, Malham draws large numbers of visitors and education groups who visit the Cove and village. The main issue here is traffic management and parking along the narrow approach road. At Horton-in-Ribblesdale the visitors are more often walkers, and people undertaking the Three Peaks challenge. This puts considerable pressure on the rights of way network and has led to significant erosion in the past, and many millions of pounds have been invested to help ensure the long-term sustainability of the route. There are also traffic management issues in the village on days when large events and charity fundraisers are using the route. The National Park Authority has little power to control this activity, as the route is open to all, and events do not have to 'register' or seek 'approval' to use the route. However, through the Three Peaks Project the National Park Authority liaises with event organisers to make them aware of the options for transport for competitors and spectators – to try and limit their impact on the local environment.

88. The National Park Authority's approach is to take the 'least restrictive approach' to managing activities where ever possible, intervening only where there is a need to minimise negative impacts on the special qualities of the area. There are a number of good examples of this approach:

- **Large-scale events.** The designated areas provide a great location for challenge events and charity fundraisers but they have the potential to impact on the area and local communities. There is a long history of events, many of which are celebrated as being an important part of the heritage of the area – the Three Peaks Fell Race has been running for over 50 years, and there are other long standing fell races and motorcycle trials. The National Park Authority look to engage with organisers at an

early stage to mitigate any negative impacts, and at the same time maximise benefits to the local economy and competitors.

- **Recreational motor vehicles.** The use of motor vehicles for recreation on the unsurfaced roads and byways of the Yorkshire Dales is an emotive and controversial issue. The National Park Authority has taken a pro-active approach to managing this activity. A detailed assessment of individual routes was undertaken, which has enabled it to focus on those tracks that are the most important for conserving the special qualities of the National Park. A range of management tools has been used, from voluntary and statutory restrictions, to targeted repair works. This is also an important issue within Nidderdale AONB, but progress is reliant on the support of North Yorkshire County Council.
- **Climbing.** Rock climbing has the potential to cause disturbance to nesting birds – in particular to ravens and peregrine falcons in the National Park. The Authority works closely with the British Mountaineering Council and local activists to agree a programme of voluntary restrictions to protect birds whilst giving as much access as possible.

89. The National Park Authority is guided in much of this work by the Local Access Forum which has a membership drawn from landowners, recreational users, local businesses and other interests. The Forum has a number of sub-groups which look at issues in more depth – these include one looking at recreational motor vehicle use and another at access for climbing and caving. Membership of the sub-groups is a mixture of Local Access Forum members and co-opted members, brought on to the groups for their skills and experience of the specific issues. Nidderdale AONB receives advice from the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum.

Accessibility and transport

90. The Yorkshire Dales is easily accessible by road, being bounded by the M6 to the west, the A1(M) to the east, A66 to the north and A65 to the south. Visitors, particularly day visitors, tend to access the part of the Yorkshire Dales which is closest to them. The vast majority of residents and visitors (around 90%) to the Yorkshire Dales come, and move around, by car. In many cases, this causes few issues, but at a number of ‘honeypot’ locations informal parking can be unsightly and the place can feel congested. Parking in formal car parks, which are generally well-screened, is encouraged and the county councils have worked to eliminate roadside parking at a number of locations. The National Park Authority runs a network of ten car parks, with additional car parks provided by the District Councils and major attractions. Revenue generated by the National Park Authority-owned car parks provides vital funding for conservation and recreation work in the National Park.

91. There are also good connections to the rail network especially through the East Coast Mainline. This provides a fast, frequent and efficient service from London to Leeds and York. Onward travel to the towns of Skipton and Ilkley is also frequent and well used for accessing the southern part of the National Park. Nidderdale and the northern Yorkshire Dales can be reached from Northallerton and Darlington stations, and the western part of the area from the West Coast Mainline. The Skipton to Carnforth line runs just to the south of the National Park, and the heart of the National Park is accessible by

rail using the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle line service. Although less frequent, this is still a vital link for residents and visitors alike, running through stunning countryside and stopping at Settle, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, Ribbleshead, Dent, Garsdale and Kirkby Stephen. It is well used by walkers and cyclists coming to the National Park to undertake circular and linear walks and rides. The Settle-Carlisle line has its own Friends group and Development Company which carry out improvement works to station facilities, promotion and publicity, and run a trolley service on the trains. The Wensleydale Railway operates a heritage railway between Leeming Bar and Redmire.

92. Providing alternatives to the private car in a rural area is challenging, particularly with reductions in public sector budgets. There are examples where visitors can help support these services, most notably on the Settle-Carlisle line. The responsibility for running core bus services rests with the county councils who have increasingly worked in partnership with the voluntary sector to develop community transport solutions. The bus services are concentrated on the main dales where people live; Wharfedale, Nidderdale, Swaledale and Wensleydale - these tend to operate a Monday to Saturday service. They are complemented by a number of year round and Summer Sunday services catering more for the visitor market. The latter services are organised by the Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company – a not-for-profit organisation – and operate under the DalesBus banner. Since taking over responsibility for running the DalesBus network in 2007, Dales & Bowland CIC have increased total passenger numbers five-fold. In 2011, a local volunteer sector-led partnership called Dales Integrated Transport Alliance (DITA) was successful in a bid to receive funding to further develop public and community transport in the Yorkshire Dales over a three year period.

Visitor Information

93. Despite increasing use of web-based media and mobile technology, National Park and Tourist Information Centres still play a major part in providing information for visitors once they have arrived in the area. There are four National Park Centres (and one partnership centre) and seven Tourist Information Centres in the Yorkshire Dales. The public sector budget cuts have led to a re-examination of these services. They are still highly thought of by the local businesses and communities, and so methods of retaining the services with less input from district councils have been looked at. In some cases this has led to them becoming community-run centres utilising local volunteers.

94. Tourism marketing takes place using a ‘funnel’ approach with Visit Britain and Visit England working at a national level while Welcome to Yorkshire and Cumbria Tourism promote the wider area at a regional level. Welcome to Yorkshire has campaigns that include the designated areas and the focus that they provide for visitors looking for a countryside experience. Both have Outdoors Campaigns, which have been running for several years, and have been very successful in raising the profile of the area. The National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB provide more local promotion through their websites (www.yorkshiredales.org.uk and www.nidderdaleaonb.org.uk). These sites provide extensive information for visitors including attractions, self-guided walks, activities and events, local businesses and villages as well as more general information. Finally, there are the business associations, individual tourism businesses and some sites at a dale level. Recent projects have aimed to ensure businesses convey more detailed

information about the area to their visitors so they become an integral part of the visitor information delivery structure.

95. The National Park Authority, and tourism bodies, make extensive use made of social media – Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and blogs – and a mobile phone app has also been developed for the National Park.

96. The main print publications aimed at tourists are The Visitor (produced by the National Park Authority) and Visit Nidderdale (produced by Nidderdale AONB). A small number of other print publications are produced for specific themes and guidance, with a number of attractions producing their own publications promoting their business as well.

97. Promotion is aimed at attracting new visitors to the area, inspiring them with what they can do when they get here, and targeting those people with less knowledge and experience. This is supported in a number of ways:

- **Virtual visits** have been developed for eight locations in the National Park. These can be viewed on the National Park Authority website and have 360° views and interactive information on nature, archaeology and easy access walks in the eight locations;
- **A selection of short walks** with detailed descriptions are publicised in the designated areas, and are aimed at people who lack the confidence to make up their own routes and read a map. There is always a selected waymarked short walk from all National Park Centres. Yorkshire Water owns a number of sites in the area and ‘around the reservoir’ walks are always popular. Fewston and Swinsty reservoirs are particularly popular with a wide range of users. Walks are also published by the National Trust, the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Railway and others;
- **Accessibility.** Some of the short walks are accessible to people with limited mobility and a smaller number for people using wheelchairs. These accessible opportunities are publicised through print publications and the web;
- **Audio trails** are another approach to attracting a different audience, and also give an opportunity for providing additional information about the area. There are eight audio trails available that have been developed by the National Park Authority;
- **Smartphone applications** have been developed by a number of organisations. The National Park Authority has developed a guide covering Dent, Hawes, Malham and Reeth to give area-based information on walks, cycle rides and places of interest. There is an application that has been developed for the Settle-Carlisle railway and others are likely to follow; ;
- **Geocaching** is an activity which has developed with the increasing use of GPS receivers. There are a large number of caches in the Yorkshire Dales and the National Park Authority has produced four themed trails for people to follow with over 30 geocaches. It also offers GPS receiver hire in the National Park Centres.

98. There is still a place for interpretation panels in the countryside and these remain a popular method of drawing visitors’ attention to points of interest and providing information about the special features of a place. There is an interpretation strategy for the National

Park and a brand for panels which is used by the different organisations that provide these facilities.

Encouraging visitors and the tourism industry to contribute to conservation

99. There are a number of different schemes which enable visitors and businesses to put something back into conserving the area. The Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust is a charity established to raise and distribute funds for projects in the Yorkshire Dales to enhance environmental, social and economic well-being. They also deliver a number of projects themselves where this is the best method of achieving the outcomes. Examples of some recent programmes which are directly relevant are People in the Dales, which provides experiences of the Yorkshire Dales for disadvantaged groups, and the Flowers of the Dales Festival, which brings together over 130 events designed to help people appreciate the wildflowers of the area.

100. Another innovative scheme is run by the National Park Authority as part of the Three Peaks Project. This has engaged with the organisers of large-scale events in the Three Peaks area and most of them now include a supplement of £1.00 per participant which goes to the Ranger Service to be directly used for rights of way maintenance.

Commercial outdoor activity providers and tourism packages

101. There is good outdoor activity provision in the Yorkshire Dales with a range of activities on offer: walking, climbing, caving, gorge walking, canoeing, sailing, mountain biking, horse riding and even llama trekking. This range of outdoor activities can be tailored towards different groups: school and youth groups, management training, groups of friends, and individuals. This means that there are a number of outdoor activity providers – both local authority and commercial operators. There are seven outdoor centres in the Yorkshire Dales offering instruction and accommodation, and a large number of instructors who operate in the area – some based in the designated areas but many outside it.

102. Group activities can put considerable pressure on certain locations, but in the Yorkshire Dales the variety of locations that can be used has so far meant that these pressures have not needed formal management.

103. The development of tourism packages to combine natural and cultural experiences with overnight stays and tourism businesses is still an area where work is in its infancy. There have, however, been a number of promising developments in recent years with walking and cycling packages being prominent. There has also been a holiday cottage operator who came up with the novel idea of teaming up with local dry-stone wallers to offer opportunities to learn about walling as part of a holiday. There are almost certainly many more examples but there is a need to provide better marketing for these developments.

2.3 Tourism delivery structures

104. Following far reaching changes to funding and tourism structures in 2010 the previous tourism partnership for the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate was disbanded. In 2011, Dales Tourism was formed, this is a partnership between the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB which will deliver and take forward the European Sustainable Tourism Charter, with the help of a steering group of interested parties, including tourism businesses. The focus of the group is the development and delivery of this Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan.

105. In 2010, a local business was employed by the National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB to facilitate contact with tourism businesses and to develop a business network. This established the Dales Tourism Business Network. The network is a private sector-led organisation, coordinated by the Tourism Network Ltd on a voluntary basis, supported by the National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB. The aim of the Dales Tourism Business Network is to enable tourism businesses in the Yorkshire Dales to build on existing success, and improve performance where appropriate by capitalising on the area's nationally designated environmental and recreational assets. In response to feedback from the businesses, the Network is an informal collection of businesses with no membership fees. The structure is very simple and the emphasis is on practical support, including workshops and events, newsletters, and the DalesTourism.com website. This informal approach and focus on clear actions has helped it achieve over 200 members.

106. Many of the activities undertaken by the National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB, either directly or by working with partner organisations and landowners, contribute to the performance of the area as a tourism destination. These include the management and provision of car parks, toilets and information services, management and maintenance of the rights of way network, interpretation, and looking after the landscape and wildlife that visitors come to enjoy.

107. A number of organisations are active in providing support for the tourism sector including marketing and relevant infrastructure where appropriate. These include:

- Welcome to Yorkshire
- Cumbria Tourism
- Welcome to Harrogate
- County and District Councils. Each is involved to varying degrees with the provision of relevant infrastructure, information delivery and business support services.

108. The Local Enterprise Partnership for York and North Yorkshire are working with Visit England to drive 'innovation' in tourism businesses in the sub-region. This is a project which will develop further in 2013.

Working with tourism businesses

109. There has been a change in national policy over recent years with regard to the need for properties to be inspected before being promoted. The 2011 Government Tourism Policy made some recommendations, which resulted in changes to the previous policy of only promoting businesses participating in the Visit England accreditation

scheme. The current arrangements, which have been adopted in the Yorkshire region, mean that businesses must be accredited via the nationally recognised quality assurance scheme, or be a member of Welcome to Yorkshire and as such sign up to its quality charter. At the time of these changes there were implications for businesses wishing to become green accredited via the Green Tourism Business Scheme, and for businesses wishing to become European Charter businesses, as both required participation in the formal national accreditation scheme.

110. The National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB are no longer actively encouraging tourism businesses to accredit through the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS). There are 17 businesses (2011 figures) within the Yorkshire Dales that have joined GTBS, and have seen it as a useful method of improving their sustainability, or for 'badging' their business. However, other businesses, although very committed to sustainability, have not joined the scheme or are now dropping out. Feedback suggests that this is partly due to the bureaucratic approach of GTBS, and also because they do not feel the cost is balanced by any marketing advantage.

111. Instead, Dales Tourism is now working with businesses to address the core issues covered by GTBS but in a non-accredited manner. It is hoped that in this way a larger number of businesses will be influenced to take small and important steps towards better sustainability practices but without the cost of the 'badge' from GTBS. Where particular businesses do feel that GTBS is the right route for them, then the designated area authorities will continue to support this.

2.4 Tourism performance and our visitors

112. Information on tourism performance and visitors to the Yorkshire Dales is available from a number of sources, including a visitor survey conducted in 2008 in the National Park, a Regional Visitor Survey conducted in 2008 through to 2011, a tourism business survey from 2012, and annual STEAM (economic tourism model) data. However, whilst these various surveys give useful trend information and visitor profiles, they can never provide definitive answers to questions such as how many people visit and how much they spend in the Yorkshire Dales.

113. According to the STEAM report for 2011 there were 9.44 million visitors to the Yorkshire Dales, and between them they spent 12.60 million visitor days in the area. This extended area has a total population of 157,429 compared to the population within the designated areas of 35,771.

114. For the Yorkshire Dales, the headline figures from the STEAM model for 2011 are:

- Visitor numbers in 2011 were almost the same as 2010 estimates at 9.4 million;
- The majority of visitors are day visitors (88%) but they account for only 66% of the days spent by visitors in the area;
- Staying visitors number 1.10 million but spend 4.25 million visitor days in the area. Overall, they spend approximately the same as day visitors;
- In 2011, visitors spent an estimated £527.9 million. This was 1% more than in 2010;
- The revenue generated by non-serviced accommodation is greater than in serviced accommodation;

- Staying with friends and relatives accounts for 6% of revenue generated;
- Expenditure is spread over a number of sectors: accommodation, food and drink, recreation, shopping and transport;
- Direct employment in the tourism industry is estimated to be 7,735 with accommodation being the largest sector;
- It is estimated that there are over 800,000 visitor days each month through March to October inclusive. The busiest month is August followed by May, then July.

115. The actual visitor profile to the National Park has been identified through questionnaire surveys⁸ which have shown:

- The majority of visitors (87%) are in the social grades B, C1 and C2;
- The vast majority of visitors (97%) class themselves as being white;
- Visitors to the National Park tend to be older than a national profile of visitors to the countryside with 77% over 45 years in age;
- 8% of visitors class themselves as having a long-term disability;
- Visitors are nearly all domestic with the majority coming from Yorkshire and Lancashire. Smaller numbers come from the Midlands, London and the South-east but they generally stay longer;
- 90% of visitors come to the area by car;
- Over 80% go for a walk while visiting, be that a short stroll or a long walk of several hours'.

116. The Regional Visitor Survey⁹ adds to this information on the visitor profile although it covers a wider geographical area:

- There is a high level of repeat visiting. The mean number of visits in the past two years was 7.13 per year. This does mean that the number of first time visitors is relatively low (19%);
- Not surprisingly, this means that many visitors plan their trip using previous knowledge/experience (73%) or following recommendation (16%). 7% plan their trip using the internet with 12% using leaflets, guidebooks and magazines. For first time visitors 19% use the internet and 25% leaflets, guidebooks and magazines.
- The number of family groups is relatively low (30%), with over half (58%) of visitors being couples;
- The general atmosphere, appearance and feeling of welcome are rated highly by visitors (4.7 out of 5);
- 89% are quite likely or very likely to return in the next two years, and 94% are very likely to recommend the area.

117. The reasons why people choose to come to the National Park have been explored through a number of surveys, and have been consistent over the years with the natural beauty and scenery of the area, together with its peaceful and tranquil nature being cited as important.

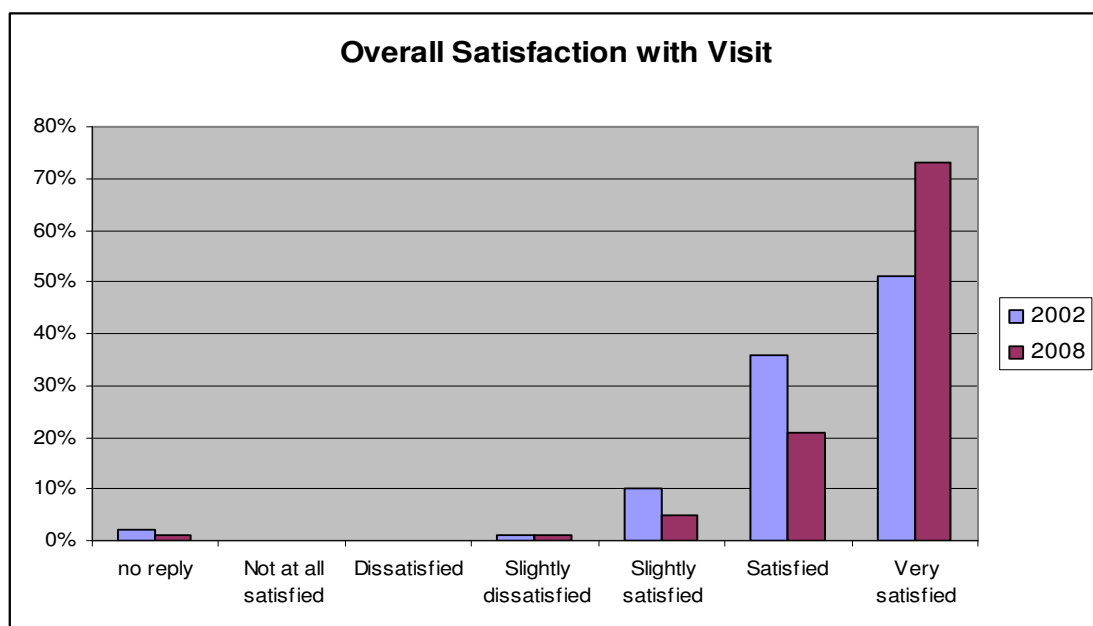
⁸ *Best Value Survey 2002, Social Inclusions Visitor Survey 2004 and Customer Satisfaction Survey 2008, QA Research*

⁹ *Yorkshire and Humber Regional visitor survey 2010/11, QA Research*

118. In the 2008 Customer Satisfaction Survey an unprompted question was asked about what respondents considered to be the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales:

84%	Natural beauty/scenery/views
39%	Open space/freedom/remoteness
34%	Walks and walking
22%	Peace/tranquil
12%	Hills/dales/valleys
10%	Villages/traditional buildings
7%	Clean/unpolluted
6%	Limestone scenery
4%	Wildlife/nature
2%	Outdoor activities
2%	Waterfalls
2%	Barns and walls
1%	Social History
25%	Other

The Best Value Customer Survey 2002 and the Customer Satisfaction Survey 2008 asked visitors to state their overall satisfaction with their visit to the National Park on a scale of 1 - 6 (where 1 is not at all satisfied and 6 is very satisfied).



119. Over 94% of visitors rated their satisfaction as satisfied or very satisfied (5 and 6), with only 1% of visitors rating their satisfaction as below average (3 or below). The survey will be repeated in 2013.

120. The level of satisfaction of visitors with the services and facilities they use in the National Park has been looked at in more detail through three surveys. Satisfaction levels have shown a steady increase across a range of services (with the exception of public transport provision and information).

	Combined satisfaction score (5 and 6) 2002	Combined satisfaction score (5 and 6) 2008	Difference between 2008 and 2002
Picnic sites	76%	92%	16%
Information boards	77%	90%	13%
NP centres	80%	94%	14%
Toilets	61%	75%	14%
National Park leaflets	86%	93%	7%
Car Parks	71%	82%	11%
Cafe/pub/restaurant	78%	91%	13%
Rights of way	82%	92%	10%
Guided walks	93%	94%	1%
Public transport provision	67%	55%	-12%
Public transport information	71%	53%	-18%

(A score of 6 being the highest score - very satisfied)

121. A number of other surveys look at visitor satisfaction in particular areas including trips to National Park Centres, experiences as part of guided walks and feedback from specific events.

2.5 Progress since 2008

122. The vision for Tourism in the Yorkshire Dales set out in the 2008 strategy was:

The Yorkshire Dales has a clear identity, which is widely recognised, as a destination for a countryside holiday based on enjoying and experiencing landscape, tranquillity and wildlife. There are many different ways of exploring and appreciating the Dales, and these are effectively promoted and very clear to all initial enquirers and to people arriving or living in the surrounding area. Demand for outdoor activities holidays has strengthened and the opportunities for further marketing developed. People are coming for short breaks at all times of the year. There are many accommodation and catering enterprises throughout the area offering a high quality of service and food. Tourism enterprises and visitors are increasingly recognising the importance of the Dales environment and heritage and are seeking to conserve and enhance it. The Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Tourism partnership is well established and supported, and is providing an effective basis for partnership initiatives between the National Park Authority, Nidderdale AONB, local authorities, private enterprises and other organisations interested in tourism or affected by it.

123. There has been good progress in implementing the sustainable tourism vision for the area and the objectives that sit underneath this, within the wider context of managing the area. Notable achievements have been:

- **The formation of the Dales Tourism Partnership.** Following the dissolving of the area Tourism Partnership, the opportunity was taken to form a new steering group

which has been more focused on the delivery of the EUROPARC sustainable tourism priorities.

- ***The formation of the Dales Tourism Business Network in 2010.*** Although there was some communication with tourism businesses prior to the establishment of the Network, it was on an occasional basis. The Network has grown rapidly and now has over 200 members who actively communicate with each other through social media and at workshops. The Network is now coordinated, on a voluntary basis, by one of the private sector businesses.
- ***Distinctly Dales.*** A local distinctiveness project ran in 2011/12 which actively engaged tourism businesses through a series of events. The aim of these workshops was to ascertain from businesses what they believed to be special and distinctive about the designated areas; and to develop this into a local distinctiveness toolkit. This toolkit incorporates the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales and encourages businesses to use this in marketing their services and products.
- ***Brilliant Businesses.*** As a method of spreading good practice on sustainability issues a series of case studies were developed. These have been available through the National Park Authority website and have received further publicity through The Visitor publication, and the Dales newspaper which is targeted at residents.
- ***New routes to enjoy the area in a sustainable way.*** The Pennine Bridleway is a new National Trail for walkers, cyclists and horse riders and currently runs from Derbyshire to Kirkby Stephen in Cumbria. The route in the National Park (funded by Natural England, and implemented by the National Park Authority) was opened in 2012. The 'Way of the Roses' cycle route from Morecambe to Bridlington has been developed by local authorities and Sustrans and was launched September 2010, passing through the southern part of the designated areas. In June 2010, the Six Dales Trail was launched in Nidderdale AONB. This 38 mile route passes through the entire length of the AONB from Otley in Wharfedale, northward to Middleham in Wensleydale.
- ***Management of the rights of way network.*** In the National Park, the condition of the rights of way network is measured by the ease of use indicator. In 2007, 77% of rights of way were easy for members of the public to use – by 2011, this has been increased to 89%.
- ***Accessibility.*** There has been a drive to provide more opportunities to enjoy the area for those with limited mobility or sensory impairments. The amount of rights of way in the National Park fully accessible for wheelchair users has increased to 13km (0.6%), and 128km (6%) is accessible to those with limited mobility. A sensory trail has been trialled at Malham and the National Park Authority organises a highly successful annual visit for disabled ramblers using 'tramper' type vehicles. In Nidderdale AONB in 2007, a Breakfree Countryside for All pack was produced in conjunction with Open Country. It consists of 12 route cards suitable for people of varying abilities. In addition, several of the Yorkshire Water-owned reservoirs in the AONB are easily accessible for those with limited mobility.
- ***Outreach.*** The YDNPA runs activities and events to encourage people who do not traditionally visit the area to come and learn about the National Park. One such group

are people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. In 2007, visitor surveys showed that only 1% of visitors were from a BME background – by 2011, surveying showed this to have risen to 3%. This work has been complemented by that of other organisations, most notably People in the Dales run by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust which has brought over 3,500 people from disadvantaged backgrounds to the Dales. Nidderdale AONB has recently run a Heritage Lottery Funded project called Source to City, which involved upper primary age children in both the rural areas of Nidderdale, where several reservoirs are located, and the urban areas of Leeds and Bradford where the water from the reservoirs ends up.

- **Volunteers.** Over 5,000 volunteer days have taken place for the National Park every year since 2007. The total number of days provided from 2007 to 2012 is 29,515. These provide people from all backgrounds with the opportunity to make a difference to the long-term conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the National Park. Nidderdale AONB has a strong volunteer network of about 150 people, who are involved in a wide variety of tasks such as woodland management, heritage and wildlife surveys and dry-stone walling. Around 20 of these people volunteer on a regular basis (one day a week) with others on a more ad hoc basis.
- **Understanding.** The regional visitor survey in 2008 showed that 50% of regular visitors to the Yorkshire Dales were able to name three or more of the special qualities of the National Park. A survey of residents in early 2009 showed that over 75% of residents could name three or more of the special qualities of the National Park.
- **Sustainable transport.** This has been a challenging period in the provision of public and community transport services. Between 2007 and 2012, responsibility for the management of all Sunday and Bank Holiday DalesBus services has passed to the Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company. During this period, passenger numbers on the DalesBus network have increased fivefold, and between Easter and October 2012 all major catchment towns and cities enjoyed direct DalesBus services to and through central areas of the National Park. The Dales Integrated Transport Alliance (DITA) has been successful in securing £1.1 million for 2011-15 to develop solutions for public and community transport in the Dales.
- **National Park Centres.** The four National Park Centres went through the accreditation process for the Green Tourism Business Scheme in 2011. They have since implemented additional sustainability measures where funding has been available, and are hoping to increase the level of their awards when they are re-accredited in 2013.
- **Renewable energy.** Almost 100 small-scale renewable energy developments have been granted planning permission in the National Park since 2007. This includes three larger hydropower schemes at Halton Gill, Bainbridge and Linton Falls, which were all installed in 2011. The National Park Authority has installed PV cells and a ground source heat pump at its offices in Bainbridge and a biomass boiler at the offices in Grassington. These initiatives and other measures led to the Authority winning the Low Carbon Council of the year award in 2012.

124. A number of key objectives related to the natural and heritage conservation of the designated areas were also achieved through this period including:

- the area of the National Park and Nidderdale AONB which is covered by agri-environment schemes delivered by the farmers and landowners has increased dramatically, and now 72% of the designated areas are covered by such schemes;
- 98% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (covering almost 50,000 hectares) are now in 'favourable or recovering' condition compared to only 76% in 2006;
- the National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund has funded 175 local economic, social and environmental projects, worth £3,352,000. In 2011/12 financial year, the AONB funded eight projects through its SDF fund totalling £20,400;
- over 6,000 hectares of upland heath and blanket bog has been restored to more natural drainage;
- 510 hectares of native, broad-leaved woodland has been planted;
- there are now only 19 Scheduled Monuments on English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' Register in the designated areas. Overall, the number of Monuments 'at high or medium risk' in the National Park has been reduced from 82 in 2008 to 44;
- over 200 hectares of hay meadow have been restored (35 hectares restored in 2011 and a further 16 hectares planned for 2012).

125. There are also a number of areas where progress has been more limited or where challenges remain. For example, little progress has been made on extending the visitor season or providing additional wildlife watching opportunities. The way in which the area is marketed still provides challenges, and it is likely that private sector involvement will need to increase in the future. There is also still a need to increase the visibility of the National Park and Nidderdale AONB brands, so that they are seen as a quality destination label for the area and the special tourism experience of visiting the area is built upon.

126. We are also in a period of change for quality assurance with the beginning of a move away from formal accreditation schemes towards a more customer-led process using websites such as Tripadvisor.

127. A report showing a full analysis of performance against all of the actions in the 2008-2013 action plan is available on the Dales Tourism pages of the National Park Authority [website](#).

Brilliant Businesses

A series of case studies, available on the National Park Authority's website have been produced, to showcase the measures taken by Yorkshire Dales businesses to provide excellent customer service and a high quality product, whilst also taking action to minimise their impact on the environment and support the local economy.



3. External influences and policy context

128. The development of this strategy and action plan takes place within a national, regional and local tourism policy context. There are also a number of external influences on tourism at a national level which may be important in the Yorkshire Dales. These factors are outlined in the following section.

3.1 Policy context

129. There are relevant policies at both a European and national level which need to be considered in the development of this strategy and action plan.

European context

130. The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas aims to encourage good practice by identifying those designated areas which are meeting the agreed charter requirements for the sustainable management and development of tourism. The Charter is awarded by the EUROPARC Federation, an umbrella body of over 400 designated areas across 35 countries.

131. Any designated area can apply for EUROPARC recognition that they are meeting the requirements of the Charter. It is important to appreciate that the Charter is about recognising designated areas which are following the right approach in developing and managing sustainable tourism. The European Charter Network now¹⁰ includes 88 designated areas from eight European countries, with 12 of these being in the UK. There are also a further six Candidate Charter areas in the UK.

132. Designated areas seeking recognition through the Charter need to agree to a set of ten principles, all of which have been taken into account in the development of this strategy. These ten principles are:

1. To involve all those implicated by tourism in and around the protected area in its development and management.
2. To prepare and implement a sustainable tourism strategy and action plan for the protected area.
3. To protect and enhance the area's natural and cultural heritage, for and through tourism, and to protect it from excessive tourism development.
4. To provide all visitors with a high-quality experience in all aspects of their visit.
5. To communicate effectively to visitors about the special qualities of the area.
6. To encourage specific tourism products which enable discovery and understanding of the area.
7. To increase knowledge of the protected area and sustainability issues amongst all those involved in tourism.
8. To ensure that tourism supports and does not reduce the quality of life of local residents.
9. To increase benefits from tourism to the local economy.
10. To monitor and influence visitor flows to reduce negative impacts.

¹⁰ Figures from 2012

133. The Charter is awarded to the designated area, which in this case is the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale AONB.

National context

134. The UK Government department with responsibility for tourism is the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS). This department, working closely with the national body with responsibility for promotion of tourism in England (Visit England), has developed the UK's first Government Tourism Policy which was put in place in 2011.

135. This document, provides strategic direction in a national context, and has addressed, for the first time, issues such as accreditation, inspection and the ease of booking tourism products.

136. Visit England has used this policy to work with organisations to develop a series of action plans which include Rural Tourism and Wise Growth (previously 'sustainable tourism'). The Rural Tourism action plan contains three key objectives which all fit well with the EUROPARC model:

1. To diversify and modernise rural tourism products to generate business opportunities suited to local environments and communities, and to develop a year-round visitor offer.
2. To increase consumer awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the products and experiences available in rural areas.
3. To encourage rural communities and economies to benefit from the value of rural tourism by taking ownership for the development, management, protection and conservation of rural assets and locations.

137. The relevant objectives from the Wise Growth action plan are:

1. Embed the principles of Wise Growth into communications strategies with visitors and residents to enable them to cherish the places they visit, live and work.
2. Help tourism businesses engage in Wise Growth, by articulating the business case and providing access tools and resources.

Regional context

138. Welcome to Yorkshire has a five year strategy for the Yorkshire brand called '5 years. 5 ways we will grow the Yorkshire brand.' Covering the period 2012-17. The five ways in which they plan to grow the Yorkshire brand are:

- Keep Yorkshire front of mind;
- Keep developing Yorkshire pride;
- Grow inward investment;
- Yorkshire's voice must be heard;
- Speak with one voice.

139. Welcome to Yorkshire promotes the region with the Yorkshire Dales as one of its major destinations.

140. Both Cumbria Tourism and Welcome to Yorkshire market the Cumbria part of the Yorkshire Dales. Cumbria Tourism has recently produced a destination management plan for the sub-region, that covers the priorities and aspirations for the next three years (see www.cumbriatourism.org/tourism-in-cumbria/destination-development.aspx).

Local context

141. The key strategic documents for the designated areas are their management plans; the National Park Management Plan 2013 - 2018 and Nidderdale AONB Management Plan 2009 – 2014. These documents are plans for the designated areas and are produced following wide consultation. They set out the vision for the designated areas, identify key issues, and provide specific objectives that many different organisations work to achieve.

142. Both plans have a similar scope, with objectives covering landscape, natural and cultural heritage, promoting understanding, recreation, communities, employment and the economy. Although there are specific tourism objectives covered within the economy and employment section, there are other relevant objectives throughout the document, particularly promoting understanding, access and recreation and communities and culture sections. This document should be read in conjunction with the National Park Management Plan see www.yorkshiredales.org.uk and Nidderdale AONB Management Plan, see www.nidderdaleaonb.org.uk. The tourism objectives for the National Park Management Plan, and Nidderdale AONB Management Plan are reflected in the objectives for this tourism strategy.

143. The second key strategic documents for the designated areas are the Local Development Plans. The National Park Authority is the planning authority for the National Park, developing policy and determining planning applications. The current Local Plan was adopted in 2006 and is now being reviewed. The first section to be looked at was the Housing Development Plan which was approved in 2012. Planning policies relating to employment, visitor facilities and the economy will be reviewed through 2012 and 2013. This will consider issues such as ‘market testing’ of change of use of existing visitor accommodation.

144. Outside the National Park, the planning function lies with the relevant district council which in the case of Nidderdale AONB is Harrogate Borough Council.

145. Both designated areas have long-standing policies of resisting large-scale developments and infrastructure projects such as new roads, large telecommunications masts and large wind farms, which would have a detrimental impact on their landscapes. This has included resisting major developments outside the designated areas which would have a negative impact on their natural beauty.

146. There are also clear policies to ensure that new development in the designated areas is carried out to a high standard of design, materials and environmental performance.

147. The other key document within the National Park is the 'thematic strategy' Special Qualities, Special Experiences (2010). The role of a 'thematic' strategy is to explain the National Park Authority's policies that guide the actions under the National Park Management Plan's aims and objectives. (For those relating to the National Park see www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/nationalparkpolicies). The Special Qualities, Special Experiences strategy provides the National Park Authority's policies and principles for access, recreation, visitor management, diversity and tourism. As well as the aims and objectives taken from the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan, it is underpinned by the aims and principles of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. This visitor management strategy replaced the earlier 'Integrated Access Strategy' and looks specifically at visitor management and spatial distribution of tourism and areas of sensitivity, following on from the EUROPARC verification visit recommendations in 2008.

148. The landscapes that make up the Yorkshire Dales are diverse and support a wide range of access and recreational experiences. Across the Yorkshire Dales there are both quieter and busier areas, which for the most part reflect the relative remoteness and accessibility of different areas. Distinctions can be made between main and tributary dales, dale heads, uplands and watershed areas, and there is a general pattern that underpins the relative remoteness and wildness of individual areas. The typical landscape units of the Yorkshire Dales each have different sensitivities with regard to tourism, access and recreation. Special Qualities, Special Experiences seeks to maintain the diversity reflected by the landscape character of these individual units. To this end, it outlines a spatial approach, adopted by the National Park Authority, that seeks to direct new opportunities for recreation and visitor facilities to areas offering the best opportunities, least sensitivity and accessibility by sustainable transport where possible.

149. Many of the policies within the Special Qualities, Special Experiences are relevant to this strategy, but of particular relevance are its sustainable tourism policies:

Green accreditation

Promote sustainable tourism by working with all interests to improve the environmental performance of all sectors of the tourism and visitor industry through the adoption of agreed standards and methods, such as green accreditation schemes.

Accommodation

- (a) Lobby VisitEngland and DCMS to allow greater flexibility within their inspection scheme to ensure that different types of accommodation are of the appropriate standard and are quality assured.
- (b) Undertake research to identify how the Authority can help maintain an appropriate range and balance of visitor facilities, so that people of all ages and abilities from every sector of society have the opportunity to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park. This will be used to help develop the Core Strategy for the Local Development Framework.

Working with businesses

Work with businesses to:

- (a) Develop a tourism sector that supports National Park purposes and delivers key messages that emphasise environmental best practice;
- (b) Facilitate diversification of businesses through our policies and allow businesses to adjust to changes in market conditions or tourist preferences;
- (c) Promote local produce and products that will help deliver sustainable tourism and achieve a high quality visitor experience.

Marketing

Influence people's opinion about the area, and help them understand what the area has to offer:

- (a) Work with businesses to help them support and become 'ambassadors' for our 'key messages';
- (b) Try to ensure our key messages are featured in marketing material, and that images of the area reflect the special qualities of the National Park;
- (c) Continue to promote the Yorkshire Dales National Park, through UK Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) and the Britain's Breathing Space's brand, as a place for physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

Adventure activities niche market

Enhance the economic opportunities within the Yorkshire Dales outdoor-activity industry:

- (a) Develop opportunities for niche marketing – for example, by taking an active part in the 'ad cap' (Cumbria Tourism) and 'outdoor adventure - transformational theme' (North Yorkshire geographical programme);
- (b) Work with businesses to ensure a variety of opportunities for outdoor activity and instruction are available;
- (c) Use existing partnerships, such as the Go Dales! Project [no longer in operation], to help develop a vibrant outdoor-activity industry that meets the needs of residents and visitors.

Sustainable tourism

Work with partner organisations, businesses and communities in and around the National Park boundary to maximise the benefits to and from these visitors. Through partnership, encourage sustainable tourism that recognises the special qualities of, and builds on the environmental assets of, the National Park:

- (a) Develop an all-year-round tourism product that safeguards and/or enhances the character and environmental assets of the area;
- (b) Encourage more 'staying' rather than 'day' visits through sustainable tourism initiatives;
- (c) Work as a key regional influencer to ensure that sustainable tourism is high on the agenda of those with this remit.

3.2 External influences on tourism in the Yorkshire Dales

150. There are a number of national trends that have been identified which may be applicable at the local Yorkshire Dales level. It is important that these changes in people's behaviour are considered as part of the development of this strategy and action plan.

Tourism trends

- According to research conducted by Visit England, in 2010 and 2011 more people chose to holiday in the UK than abroad, with 69% holidaying in England (2011). The main group involved in this trend are 35-54 year olds with children, who are choosing to replace an overseas holiday with a UK-based one.
- In addition, the Great Britain Tourism Survey outlined that more short trips are taken than longer trips. In 2010, 64% of all British holiday trips were short trips (up to 3 nights), with 36% being longer trips (4 nights plus).
- The shorter trip trend culminates in the so called 'daycation' phenomenon, with more UK residents taking day breaks instead of overnight trips.
- There is a trend towards late bookings which avoid long-term plans, which people are unwilling to commit to because of the continuing uncertainty of the economic situation. This approach also provides perceived opportunities to get better deals on accommodation costs.
- There appears to be a tendency towards more caravan and camping holidays, which offer a more cost-effective alternative for financially squeezed families.
- Visitors are becoming more attracted to destinations which can demonstrate their local distinctiveness and different special qualities, and give people the opportunity to experience them. For example, VisitEngland research found that over half of consumers would choose accommodation supplying local food.
- There is increased interest in hands-on and learning experiences, rather than simply sightseeing.

Economic trends

- The economic recession and concerns over the future will continue to have an impact on peoples' behaviour. This can be positive in the sense of more people choosing to stay and holiday in the UK, or negative in that they may not spend as much when on holiday. The impact on day-visiting is perhaps harder to foresee, but businesses are clearly concerned that it will reduce particularly with increasing fuel costs.
- The exchange rate, particularly with the Euro, will be significant. Although the volume of overseas visitors to the Yorkshire Dales is small they are high spenders. Whilst the exchange rate remains favourable the opportunity to attract more visitors particularly from Germany, the Netherlands and France is there.
- The cuts in public spending on marketing, business support and infrastructure will mean that a strengthening of engagement with the voluntary and business sector becomes more important.

Social trends

- The internet continues to increase in significance and importance for all aspects of life including tourism. With 76% of the UK population using the internet, it is currently considered to be the main source of information to find out about potential destinations to visit, and for holiday bookings.
- The internet is now moving to more mobile platforms which provide instant information delivery within a destination, as well as prior to a visit. This also provides opportunities to enhance the visitor experience through the use of new interpretation experiences. A rural area such as the Yorkshire Dales with patchy mobile phone reception and areas of low broadband speed may need to see how this can be accommodated.
- Word of mouth customer recommendations continue to be vital for businesses. Again there is an opportunity to use new technology as the internet and social media become more important for customer reviews and feedback.

Environmental trends

- Only a small number of people will make their holiday choices based solely on ethical or environmental concerns, but for many more they provide an additional factor which can sway their decision in destination or accommodation choice. VisitEngland research shows that the majority of consumers are happy to accept sustainable elements such as reusing towels or rooms with only a shower. However, whilst happy to accept sustainable elements to their holiday people do not want to 'work' at being green. Clearly, tourism businesses need to make it easy for visitors to behave in a sustainable way without this in any way detracting from the holiday experience.¹¹
- Issues related to climate change are difficult to predict. Extreme events and unpredictable weather patterns will affect the basic conditions for tourism, but the impact overall is difficult to determine.

¹¹ Sustainability consumer research, 2010. Visit England



Promoting understanding and enjoyment is a key purpose of the National Park and AONB. Visitor centres, guided walks, publications, signs and new media such as smartphone apps, are all important for the provision of information and interpretation.



4. Informing the strategy

151. The assessment outlined in Section 2 has been supplemented by direct engagement with business associations, individual businesses and partner organisations. The primary additional pieces of work were a Tourism Business Survey, the development of a detailed SWOT analysis, and workshops with businesses. The key findings of these are outlined in the following section.

4.1 Tourism Business Survey

152. A Tourism Business Survey was carried out in 2012 covering the Yorkshire Dales area, and 132 businesses took part. The majority of businesses (72%) are well established and have been operating for more than five years. The majority of businesses (82%) are small and employ between one and five full-time members of staff, although additional seasonal workers are also often taken on.

153. Businesses were asked a range of questions covering marketing and promotion, environmental practices, working in partnership and the main opportunities and challenges that they face. The key headline results are outlined below, with full details on www.yorkshiredales.org.uk.

154. Businesses were asked about their income over the last three years which revealed a patchy result with 25% having seen a decline, 32% staying the same, and 32% seeing an increase.

155. Businesses are seeking more visitors in the winter months between November and March inclusive, with February seen as the month that could do with the most growth. Only 11% of businesses are happy with their level of business throughout the year.

156. Businesses backed up the findings of visitor surveys in recognising the importance to their enterprises of repeat customers and word of mouth recommendations. They also recognise the importance of their own and a number of other websites in driving customers to their business. Again though, traditional methods using leaflets and tourist information centres are still seen as important.

157. Businesses want to see greater awareness of the Yorkshire Dales as a destination – this is seen as vital, but an area where the performance is only moderate. Increasing the awareness of the Yorkshire Dales as an environmentally friendly destination is also seen as important by businesses, but is an area where they felt performance was generally poorer.

158. Promotion of guided walks, events and festivals is seen as both important and an area where performance is relatively strong. However, businesses would like to see greater promotion of local produce and arts and crafts.

159. Provision for outdoor activities is seen as both important and an area of good performance. However, the survey suggests that businesses would welcome greater provision for people with limited mobility and more opportunities for nature tourism such as

bird watching. Businesses were also asked if they would like to see packages bringing together accommodation and activities, but this was seen as a less important issue. The greatest disparity between views on the importance of providing something and the current delivery of that service was in the provision of buses and trains, with businesses seeing the current standard as poor, whilst seeing providing a good service as very important.

160. The survey also shows that there is considerable scope to improve networking between businesses, and keeping businesses up-to-date on tourism issues.

161. Businesses were also asked what they saw as the two greatest challenges and opportunities facing tourism in the Yorkshire Dales.

162. The main **challenges** identified were:

Financial climate and the cost of fuel – there is a real concern that reductions in disposable incomes, in part through the increased costs of petrol and diesel, will result in fewer visitors, or visitors coming less often.

Restrictive planning controls – there is a feeling amongst businesses that ‘restrictive’ planning controls within the National Park are hampering business development and increase costs. However, there was a recognition that the area needs to be protected from development which would damage what visitors are coming to see.

Length of stay – increasing the length of stay of visitors is seen as a key challenge.

Spend – increasing the amount of spend especially by day visitors.

Public Transport – both to and around the area is seen as a challenge and a restriction on the number of visitors. It is also believed that a better public transport provision would bring a younger audience.

Competition – the need to address competition from other areas both in the UK and cheap overseas destinations is a common concern.

163. The main **opportunities** identified were:

Short breaks and staycation – these are both seen as potential growth areas which can be exploited.

Landscape and people – there was a strong feeling that the Yorkshire Dales is relatively unknown and has great natural beauty, plenty to do, and friendly local people.

Promotion – the success of the recent Dales TV series in raising the profile of the area was mentioned by many businesses.

More than a place to stay – an opportunity was seen as offering more than a place to stay and to provide a complete holiday experience without making it a package tour.

4.2 SWOT analysis

164. Based on the assessment and knowledge gained through the various consultations, the following SWOT analysis provides a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for tourism in the Yorkshire Dales. This is reflected in the strategy's objectives and action plan. However, there needs to be a recognition that some factors identified are beyond the ability of organisations, and businesses, to influence.

Strengths

- The Yorkshire Dales' scenery and landscape is seen as its key strength including the valley landscape of walls and barns, and the open moorlands and limestone grasslands;
- The traditional stone vernacular buildings along with villages and pubs;
- The diverse wildlife and rich nature conservation product;
- The local people and warm welcome;
- Lots of excellent local foods and crafts;
- Seen as somewhere to get away from it all, and doesn't feel too touristy;
- Great resource for outdoor activities particularly walking, cycling, mountain biking and caving. Excellent multi-day trips including National Trails, Dales Way and the Coast to Coast;
- A strong, enthusiastic business community who love the area;
- High profile promotion of the region from Welcome to Yorkshire with a strong awareness of the Yorkshire Dales as a destination;
- Close to large urban areas with easy access into the Yorkshire Dales;
- Enthusiastic visitors who come back time and time again.
- Support for businesses through Welcome to Yorkshire's membership scheme

Weaknesses

- Limited capacity of sensitive landscape to absorb large visitor numbers;
- Poor weather when there is a reliance on outdoor activities, which contributes to seasonality;
- Lack of campsites in some areas;
- Poor broadband speeds;
- Poor brown tourist signage from main roads;
- Accommodation quality variable;
- Poor public transport provision especially once beyond the main transport corridors;
- Fragmented links between businesses;
- Organisations working in isolation leading to a duplication of resources and a lack of coordinated marketing and promotion;
- Low penetration into international markets;

- Need for more proactive marketing - currently very reactive;
- Non-promotion of local products and over promotion of landscape;
- Confusion regarding the individual dales and their character/attractions;
- Many tourism businesses have a low-level of local knowledge;
- Patchy data on businesses such as limited information on occupancy and visits to attractions.

Opportunities

- Modern technology (social media, smartphones);
- Still capacity to grow within the tourism sector;
- Activity holidays increase profile of the designated areas;
- Some excellent new products and tourism businesses;
- Development of niche markets (eg. astronomy, wildlife watching, geodiversity, field sports);
- Food and drink offer;
- Things to do on an evening other than go to pub (product development);
- Country sports (shooting and fishing);
- Rise in desire for authentic experiences, and an emergence of a younger, more affluent market willing to pay for this;
- Distinctly Dales - opportunity to build on the project and the brand;
- Dales Tourism Business Network with 200 businesses engaged. There is a willingness amongst businesses to collaborate. Better understanding between the public and private sector could be developed;
- strengthen inter-business trading within the Dales, and to work more closely with tourism businesses;
- Coordinated marketing/joint promotions. The international market is seen as being under-developed;
- Craven Dales Landscape Partnership if funding bid successful.

Threats

- Some concern over the potential sustainability of the area;
- Declining public funding and resources including reduced Welcome to Yorkshire funding;
- People economising and not going away;
- Changes to Common Agricultural Policy support (impacting negatively on farmers and landscapes);
- Competition from other areas especially the Lake District;
- Not enough joined up thinking and working, and a lack of shared focus particularly in relation to web-based information;
- Organisations not working together to pool limited resources;
- Reduced support for businesses due to the reduction of resources in the Public Sector ie Local Authorities, Business Link etc
- Businesses not 'promoting' similar messages about the area to reinforce each others' marketing.

Introducing new people to the Yorkshire Dales

The Yorkshire Dales has a loyal visitor base who come to the area time and time again. Some people, however, need help with overcoming barriers – real or perceived – to enable them to enjoy the area. A number of organisations run outreach activities to introduce different groups to the Yorkshire Dales – young people, those with disabilities and people from ethnic groups who have no tradition of visiting.



4.3 National Park Management Plan consultation

165. The development of this sustainable tourism strategy has run alongside the revision to the National Park Management Plan. Clearly much of the consultation involved with the latter is of relevance to this strategy. The initial National Park Management Plan consultation was focused on a six-week period from 19 March to 30 April 2012. A range of ways to feed into the National Park Management Plan was provided.

166. The questionnaire received 535 responses. The table below shows the five issues that were mentioned most frequently by residents with a summary of what, within these issues, they specifically highlighted.

Top five mentions for residents

Issue	Number of mentions
Homes and planning	69
Landscape and beauty	57
Transport / travel	41
Thriving communities	34
Footpaths / bridleways	33

167. The theme that received the highest number of mentions from residents was **Homes and Planning**. There were a number of suggestions related to barns and farm outbuildings, calls for more affordable homes and modern design for new buildings, annoyance with 'inconsistent' planning decisions, and appreciation of 'strict planning rules' that prevent 'too much' development. The fact that there are no large-scale wind turbines in the National Park was also appreciated.

168. **Landscape and beauty** was the second most mentioned theme by residents. More than half of the respondents who commented on this theme mentioned the beauty and diversity of the National Park's landscape. Annoyances related to quarrying, calling it a 'scar' on the landscape.

169. In relation to **transport and travel**, comments were focused on suggestions for provision of more public transport – for example more weekend bus services to bring in visitors, reducing the volume of quarry traffic and addressing problems with lack of parking spaces.

170. **Thriving communities** received 34 mentions from residents. The general theme of the comments related to helping communities to prosper in the future, supporting young families to stay, provision of services and nurturing a 'sense of community, not a place to commute from'.

171. The fifth most mentioned issue by residents was **footpaths and bridleways**. There were two main lines of comment here – the first was praise for the quality of footpaths and level of their maintenance with a number of mentions of the Ranger Service. The second

groups of comments under this heading focused on requests for more bridleways and routes for cyclists.

172. The table below shows the five issues that were mentioned most frequently by visitors, with a few comments on what – within these issues they specifically highlighted.

Top five mentions for visitors

Theme	Number of mentions
Landscape and beauty	72
Footpaths/ bridleways	60
Leisure and enjoyment	41
Remoteness and tranquillity	37
Visitor facilities	36

173. The theme that received the highest number of mentions from visitors was the **landscape and beauty** of the National Park. Most of the comments were positive - appreciating the distinctiveness and variety of the National Park's landscape and making a plea for it to be looked after in the future.

174. **Footpaths and bridleways** were the second most mentioned theme with a roughly 60/40 split between positive and negative comments. There was appreciation of the extensive network of well-maintained rights of way, and positive comments that signage is 'not overdone'. Negative feedback on this theme focused on the popularity of charity walks that 'spoil' routes, the perceived difficulties of access to privately owned land and the need for access agreements for mountain biking and caving.

175. **Leisure and enjoyment** also featured highly in visitors' feedback. There was general appreciation of the opportunities to simply enjoy the countryside and open spaces – the variety of the landscape and its distinctiveness and the numerous opportunities for walking, cycling and other outdoor activities. There were a couple of mentions of animals in fields being scary to walkers!

176. **Remoteness and tranquillity** was the fourth most mentioned theme for visitors – most of these responses related to an appreciation of the peace and solitude that the National Park has to offer. On the negative side within this theme respondents felt tranquillity was being spoiled by noisy traffic – in particular motorbikes.

177. The quality of shops, cafes, pubs and other **visitor facilities** featured under the heading of visitor facilities, along with a plea for more camping facilities (for tents).

178. The 'Your National Park' consultation helped to identify the priority issues and concerns of residents, visitors and interest groups. This summary and more detailed feedback separated into relevant categories was provided to the drafting groups and used for reference throughout the development of the new National Park Management Plan.

4.4 Other consultation

179. The Dales Tourism steering group have been involved throughout the development of this Sustainable Tourism Strategy. They approved a draft version of the strategy for wider consultation and this took place in August and September 2012. The consultation was publicised through the National Park Authority website and the document sent to a number of organisations and individuals with an interest in conservation and tourism. The comments that were received have been incorporated into this final version.

180. Input on the action plan was also gathered from more than 70 individual businesses participating in two Dales Tourism Business Network events in early October. These used workshop sessions to look for detailed actions that could be taken forward for specific areas of concern – lengthening the season and local marketing.

5 Moving forwards – the strategy

181. This section presents the overall strategic direction for sustainable tourism in the Dales between 2013 and 2018. It is informed by the assessment and analysis which is presented earlier in this document, together with the consultations which have taken place. It is written to be in line with the requirements of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Designated Areas, and the current tourism policies for the UK, region and local area.

182. The five years covered by this strategy are likely to be a challenging time for those involved in tourism – both in the public and private sectors. The vision, objectives and action plan need to be realistic about what can be achieved through this period. With challenges come some opportunities, and tourism businesses will need to continue to be proactive and dynamic in their response to the economic recession.

5.1 Partnership

183. The Dales Tourism partnership has a shared vision for sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales (taken from the partnership's terms of reference):

- a broad and inclusive appeal based on the special qualities of the area resulting in greater understanding and responsible use, as well as a more vibrant and economically viable tourism sector;
- a culture of continuous improvement in the quality of the tourism product that aims to achieve the highest levels of visitor satisfaction;
- a genuinely sustainable tourism industry that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

5.2 Vision

184. The vision for this sustainable tourism strategy is:

The Yorkshire Dales will be a UK recognised quality destination for enjoying and experiencing a dramatic and tranquil landscape of limestone scenery, moorland and intimate individual dales. The area will be a well-managed destination with the strong involvement of the private sector and local communities. Greater numbers of businesses will be informing customers about what makes their area locally distinctive, and providing detailed information of ways to explore the area by foot, bike, horse back and public transport. There will be celebrated local food and drink, and vibrant arts and crafts businesses. Tourism businesses and visitors will seek to conserve and enhance the environment and heritage, including through visitor payback schemes and taking an active part in

conservation. Initiatives will be in place to encourage more visitors during the winter period, and to provide more opportunities to appreciate the wildlife and cultural heritage of the Dales.

5.3 Strategic aims and objectives

185. In developing the strategic aims and objectives, the management plans of the designated areas and Charter Principles have been taken as the starting point. This has led to the development of five key aims which are set out below, together with a number of related themes. These key aims and associated themes will be delivered by the actions in the Action Plan which have been made SMART wherever possible.

Aim 1. Promoting a distinctive, high-quality and sustainable destination

- 1a Increasing the use and recognition of the National Park and AONB brands as a 'quality' badge for the area.*
- 1b Improving the quality and variety of the marketing of the Yorkshire Dales with the aim of increasing out of season visiting and persuading more day visitors to stay overnight.*
- 1c To provide high quality visitor information through print, web and social media.*
- 1d Encourage new product development based on the special qualities of the area, and the packaging of accommodation and activity for visitors.*
- 1e Promote local food and drink to visitors, residents and other businesses, and further develop a vibrant arts and crafts sector*

Aim 2. Providing opportunities for experiencing and learning about the area

- 2a Maintain a high quality rights of way network which acts as the principle method for people to explore the Yorkshire Dales.*
- 2b Further develop cycling and horse riding facilities.*
- 2c Provide a range of outreach opportunities to enable new groups to visit the Yorkshire Dales.*
- 2d Organise and promote a range of events and activities aimed at the general public.*

Aim 3. Producing a positive environment for tourism businesses

- 3a To continue to develop the Dales Tourism Business Network as a key method of communication, networking, sharing best practice and supporting businesses.*
- 3b To improve the quality of broadband speed and coverage, and the coverage of mobile phone reception.*
- 3c Seek opportunities for small-scale sustainable development, and encourage small-scale renewables*
- 3d Work with businesses to improve local knowledge, visitor welcome, and customer care and encourage businesses to adopt sustainable practices.*

Aim 4. Encouraging environmental responsibility

- 4a Maintain the tranquility and sense of remoteness of the Yorkshire Dales, and investigate becoming a Dark Skies area. The Dark Skies initiative also has the potential to increase staying visits at a quieter time of year.*
- 4b Ensure that there is good management of recreational activities where these could have negative impacts on local communities, natural and cultural heritage features or recreational infrastructure. This includes providing information to encourage responsible use – dog walkers around livestock and nesting birds, and the use of unsurfaced routes by motor vehicles for example.*
- 4c Work to improve the provision of public and community transport and its promotion to visitors and residents.*

Aim 5. Ensuring positive benefits to local communities and volunteers

- 5a Provide a diverse range of volunteering opportunities for the local community, schools and visitors to help support the conservation of the area.*
- 5b To provide methods for visitors to put something back into an area that they love and want to help to conserve.*
- 5c To use the Sustainable Development Fund to encourage new projects to bring environmental, social and economic benefits to the Yorkshire Dales.*

186. The detailed action plan building on these strategic aims is in Section 6 of this document. Progress will be measured through the SMART actions including the Management Plan objectives (to be finalised once the National Park Management Plan objectives are finalised):

6. Action plan 2013 to 2018

187. The five-year action plan is summarised in the table below. ***The plan is focussed on the delivery of aims related to sustainable tourism. The designated areas also have key aims relating to the preservation of the landscape and cultural and natural heritage of the area, and these are set out in their Management Plans.***

188. The table below indicates:

- Key projects and/or themes showing the 'threads' that run through the actions;
- The level of priority of the action – based on the National Park Authority's 'priority work programmes'. Priority actions are shown by a star *;
- The year in which it is likely that the action will be addressed. For many this will be on-going throughout the plan period, but some actions require a focus of attention in a particular year;
- An indication of the level of financial resources that will be required to implement an action using the bands:
 Low under £15,000
 Medium £15,000 - £75,000
 High over £75,000;
- Key agencies to implement the action starting with the lead agency;

Key to abbreviations used:

YDNPA	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority	NAONB	Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
WtY	Welcome to Yorkshire	DCs	District Councils (South Lakeland, Craven, Richmondshire, Eden)
DTBN	Dales Tourism Business Network	CCs	County councils (North Yorkshire and Cumbria)
YDMT	Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust	NE	Natural England
CT	Cumbria Tourism	NT	National Trust
DITA	Dales Integrated Transport Alliance	LCs	Local communities
SDF	Sustainable Development Funded project	DBCIC	Dales & Bowland Community Interest Company
DT	Dales Tourism	EH	English Heritage
FoSCL	Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line	YDPTUG	Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Users Group

Aim 1. Promoting a distinctive, high-quality and sustainable destination

1a Increasing the use and recognition of the National Park and AONB brands as a 'quality' badge for the area.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
	Promote the use and increase awareness of the YDNP and Nidderdale AONB brands and templates amongst businesses		2013	Low	YDNPA NAONB
	Increase the numbers of National Park social media followers by 65% between 2012 and 2015	*	2013-18	Low	YDNPA
1b Improving the quality and variety of the marketing of the Yorkshire Dales with the aim of increasing out of season visiting and persuading more day visitors to stay overnight.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective D1	Promote the Yorkshire Dales National Park as a leading sustainable tourism destination in the UK renowned for its local distinctiveness.	*	2013-18	Medium	Dales Tourism YDNPA, NT, NE, RSPB, YDMT, YHA
	Implement three sustainable tourism campaigns by 2018				Dales Tourism YDNPA, NOANB, NT
	Promote the local distinctiveness toolkit and develop initiatives at 5 key locations				YDNPA, NAONB
	National Park Centres and Tourist Information Centres to provide enhanced 'hubs' for visitor information and sustainable tourism services, encouraging discovery of what the area has to offer including walking, cycling and travel options.	*	2013-18	High	YDNPA DCs, LCs

	Build on Distinctly Dales – the local distinctiveness project, so businesses can make the most of what their area has to offer to attract people to their area	*	2013-18	Medium	YDNPA NAONB DTBN
	Provide support to local communities marketing their town/dale to ensure a coordinated approach to promoting the area				LCs, DCs, YDNPA, WtY SDF
Management plan objective E4	Improve the quality, variety and marketing of the tourism ‘offer’ within the National Park to extend the season and get more visitors to stay overnight so as to increase the value of tourism by 20% in real terms by 2020.	*	2013-18	Medium	Dales Tourism Business Network Welcome to Yorkshire
	Run themed campaigns around topics which could extend the season eg the outdoors, heritage and food and drink		2013-18	Medium	WtY
	Support at least two websites/initiatives looking to develop particular niche markets such as country sports.		2013-18	Low	Private sector WtY
1c To provide high quality visitor information through print, web and social media.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
NOANB LW14	Provide visitors to the AONB with information about activities, events, attractions and services provided by local tourism businesses.	*	2013-14		NAONB
	Maintain and market ‘hidden gems’ from regionally important multi-day walking and riding routes		2013-18	Medium	YDNPA NE Dales way Assoc Sustrans
	Coordinate and improve website information for visitors. Ensure high levels of satisfaction with yorkshiredales.org.uk (88%) and increase the numbers of users by 30% between 2012 and 2015.	*	2013-18	Medium	YDNPA NAONB

	Develop the provision of information and interpretation through using mobile technology and develop at least two new smartphone 'apps'		2013-18	Medium	YDNPA NAONB
1d Encourage new product development based on the special qualities of the area, and the packaging of accommodation and activity for visitors.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
	Take forward the Woollen Hills and 'Flock to Frock' projects working with businesses on product development and marketing based around the theme of sheep farming.		2012-13	Medium	Private sector YDNPA NAONB YDMT
	Establish the Yorkshire Dales as a Green traveller destination with businesses and web-based product guide, and launch in 2013	*	2013	Low	YDNPA NAONB
	Work in partnership with National Trust tenants to encourage the sensitive development of new products and services which will facilitate more people enjoying the outdoors and nature and experiencing for themselves the distinctiveness and spirit of the area.		2013-18	High	NT
1e Promote local food and drink to visitors, residents and other businesses, and further develop a vibrant arts and crafts sector					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
	Use the project Yorkshire Dales Food – a Celebration! to promote local food to businesses and visitors through running 10 events		2013	Medium	YDNPA

Aim 2. Providing opportunities for experiencing and learning about the area

2a Maintain a high quality rights of way network which acts as the principle method for people to explore the Yorkshire Dales.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective D2	Maintain and promote the network of public rights of way – including the Pennine way, Pennine Bridleway and other recognised regional route and trails - so that on average 90% are ‘easy to use’ each year.	*	2013-18	High	YDNPA CCC, NYCC
Management plan objective D5 NAONB UE1	Carry out works to improve access on appropriate routes so that 170 km (8%) of rights of way are suitable users of all ages and abilities by 2018, and introduce 5 short, waymarked walks from Aysgarth, Grassington, Hawes, Malham and Reeth. Improve the quality and accessibility of the rights of way network in the AONB with the provision of at least two new easily accessible routes.		2013-18	High	YDNPA NAONB, NYCC
	Maintain and promote the Nidderdale Way and Six Dales Trail		2013-18	High	NAONB NYCC

2b Further develop cycling and horse riding facilities.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective D10	Work with local people to deliver a world class Tour de France event in 2014 that showcases the National Park, and develop a range of new opportunities for people to explore the National Park by bicycle, including creating 3 new routes for family-friendly, traffic free cycling by 2018.		2013-18	Medium	YDNPA YDMT, NT
NAONB UE5	Improve opportunities for cycling in the AONB.				NYCC, NAONB, Sustrans
	Support the Ride the Dales project and Northern Dales Riders project in developing equestrian tourism in the Dales through promoting at least 10 suitable routes		2013	Low	YDNPA YDMT SDF
	Look to develop an electric bike network: • Trial two electric bikes to give businesses a chance to try them • Investigate a long-term sustainable funding model		2012/13	Medium	Private sector YDNPA SDF
	Further improve the website and improve signage associated with the Long Preston Wet Grassland Project.		2013	Low	YDMT

2c Provide a range of outreach opportunities to enable new groups to visit the Yorkshire Dales.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective D7	Make the Yorkshire Dales National Park accessible and relevant to a diverse range of groups, including: providing 1,000 session places for local disadvantaged people; and working with the MOSAIC youth project 'young champions' to introduce 1,200 young people to the National Park by 2015		2013-15	Medium	YDNPA YDMT, NT
NANOB HE10	Enable people to enjoy heritage through education, by removing barriers to access and by encouraging participation in events to celebrate the AONB's heritage.				NAONB
	Through the Getting Outdoors and Closer to Nature Programme develop links with local community groups to reach out to a diverse range of audiences to encourage healthy walks and associated beneficial activity with the aim of getting more people enjoying the outdoors more often and feeling closer to nature.		2013-18	High	NT
	Provide 49 events attended by at least 700 people from disadvantaged urban groups in 2013 through People in the Dales project.		2013	seeking funding to extend	YDMT
	Undertake an outreach project which encourages new groups to visit Upper Nidderdale		2015	High	NAONB
	Provide specific events for people with disabilities through People and the Dales project		2013	seeking funding	YDMT

2d Organise and promote a range of events and activities aimed at the general public.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
NAONB UE8	Provide information and organise activities and events that help people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the AONB.		2013-18		NAONB
	Provide an annual programme of 60 events, and 10 education visits through Dales Volunteers. Provide a programme of 50 events through the National Trust per annum to enable people to enjoy and understand the area. Deliver a programme of activities aimed at all ages and abilities to connect people to the outdoors from our Great British Walk festival, to Easy Walks and a range of ways to connect people with nature. Run 12 Wild Wednesday type activities each year aimed giving discovery experiences to family audiences Provide a programme of events at the Dales Countryside Museum to encourage learning about the cultural heritage of the area		On-going	High	YDNPA NT NT YDNPA NAONB YDNPA
	Publish an annual events programme, and visitor information through The Visitor newspaper and Visit Nidderdale		On-going	Low	YDNPA NAONB
	Market the events programmes of a number of organisations under umbrellas such as 'Flowers of the Dales' and 'Ride to Stride' to maximise publicity and attendance.		Seeking funding for 2013.	Medium	YDMT LCs

Aim 3. Producing a positive environment for tourism businesses

3a To continue to develop the Dales Tourism Business Network as a key method of communication, networking, sharing best practice and supporting businesses.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective E3	Maintain and develop strong business networks covering farming, tourism, creative industries and knowledge-based businesses, and ensure that all businesses have direct access to business support within 30 minutes drive.	*	2013-18	Medium	Business Networks; District Councils
	Continue to support the Dales Tourism Business Network including holding at least two events annually		2013-18	Low	YDNPA NAONB Private sector
	Publicise good practice examples of businesses providing high quality, sustainable products - 'Brilliant Businesses', including at least 5 new case studies		2013-18	Low	YDNPA NAONB WtY
	Increase the number of tourism businesses offering sustainable tourism products from 17 to 80, by 2015	*	2013-18	Medium	DTBN YDNPA NAONB
	Make information on walks available for businesses to download and use for their clients, including those using public transport.		2013	Low	YDNPA
	Make information on increasing accessibility of businesses, and attractions and facilities which are easily accessible available to businesses in the Dales.		2013	Low	YDNPA

3b To improve the quality of broadband speed and coverage, and the coverage of mobile phone reception.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective E2	By no later than 2015 bring access broadband of at least 2mbps across the whole Park, and super-fast broadband (+24 mbps) to significant centres of population in the National Park.		2013-17	High	NYCC/CCC Broadband Delivery UK; YDNPA
Management plan objective F8	Provide at least basic mobile phone coverage to all significant clusters of properties across the National Park by no later than 2015.		2013-15		North Yorkshire County Council, NYnet Ltd, Broadband Delivery UK; YDNPA
3c Seek opportunities for small-scale sustainable development, and encourage small-scale renewables.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective E8	By 2015 prepare a new Local Plan that sets out how the local planning system will be used positively to seek opportunities for development that helps to achieve the vision and objectives in the National Park Management Plan	*	2013-15	Medium	YDNPA
NAONB L10	Encourage small-scale sustainable development to create ... new enterprise based on environmental qualities including farm diversification and green tourism ventures.				NAONB
Management plan objective C2	Reduce carbon emissions and improve the viability of local businesses and communities by increasing the take up of small-scale renewable energy so		2013-18		

	that at least 1 mW has been installed by 2018.				
	Work with National Trust tenants to reduce reliance on fossil fuel derived energy and encourage environmental awareness and best practice.		2013-18	Medium	NT
3d Work with businesses to improve local knowledge, visitor welcome, and customer care and encourage businesses to adopt sustainable practices.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
	Work with businesses to improve local knowledge, visitor welcome, and customer care		2013-18	Medium	WtY CT YDNPA DTBN

Aim 4. Encouraging environmental responsibility

4a <i>Maintain the tranquility and sense of remoteness of the Yorkshire Dales, and investigate becoming a Dark Skies area. The Dark Skies initiative also has the potential to increase staying visits at a quieter time of year.</i>					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective B5	Maintain the National Park as a place where a true sense of tranquillity, remoteness and solitude can be found, and over the period of this plan implement a range of measures to enhance and promote enjoyment of its dark skies.		2013-15	Low	YDNPA NE, Dales Tourism Business Network
4b <i>Ensure that there is good management of recreational activities where these could have negative impacts on local communities, natural and cultural heritage features or recreational infrastructure. This includes providing information to encourage responsible use – dog walkers around livestock and nesting birds, and the use of unsurfaced routes by motor vehicles for example.</i>					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective D3	Maintain and keep under review appropriate measures to manage the use of recreational motor vehicles on sensitive green lanes; review the current 10 Traffic Regulation Orders by 2014 and continue to work with enforcing agencies as required.	*	2013-18	Medium	YDNPA Police Authorities, Local Access Forum
NAONB UE2	Reduce the environmental impact of recreational vehicles using unclassified roads and the rights of way network ...				NYCC, NAONB

Management plan objective D4	Work with the organisers of large-scale events to ensure that they are well run, and provide positive benefits for local communities and businesses, and establish a fund to cover the full cost of maintaining the 3 Peaks route.		2013-18	Low	YDNPA Friends of the Three Peaks
	Develop a traffic management plan for Horton-in-Ribblesdale to reduce the impact on the local community of large scale events		2013	Low	LCs NYCC
4c Work to improve the provision of public and community transport and its promotion to visitors and residents.					
		Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective F7	Maintain and improve public and community transport services to meet the needs of local communities and visitors to the National park, so that the: a) main visitor locations in the Dales are accessible from their main catchments between Easter and October on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays; and, b) key transport corridors linking Harrogate, Ilkley, Ingleton, Kendal, Leyburn, Richmond, Settle and Skipton have Monday to Sunday access all year.		2013-18	High	DITA, County Councils D&B CIC
NAONB UE6	Ensure that local people and visitors have access to reliable, year-round bus services within the AONB, to services linking urban populations on the edge of the area and to seasonal services targeted at attractions.				

Management plan objective E8	Support the Settle-Carlisle Railway and the re-opening of other rail lines, including Bolton Abbey to Skipton and reinstatement of the Wensleydale railway from Redmire to Aysgarth by 2020, and thereafter the remainder of the link with Garsdale.		2013-18		
	Promote opportunities to explore the area by bus and rail such as through Dales Rail Trails and Dales Bus Ramblers		2013	Low	FoSCL D&B CIC YDPTUG

Aim 5. Ensuring positive benefits to local communities and volunteers

5a Provide a diverse range of volunteering opportunities for the local community, schools and visitors to help support the conservation of the area.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective A6	Work with parish councils, local community groups and landowners to increase from 20 to 45 the number of sites that are being managed for nature by local community or volunteer groups by 2018.	*	2013-18	Low	YDNPA with PC's, landowners, community groups
NAONB LW5	Facility community action to conserve the AONB's landscape and to enhance the environmental sustainability of rural settlements.				NAONB
Management plan objective D8	By 2014 establish a partnership to deliver learning and training for schools or groups about the special qualities of the National Park, and encourage their active engagement in conservation on key, publicly-accessible sites across the National Park.		2013-14	Low	YDMT, YDNPA, NE, NT, RT, YWT (possibly YHA and RSPB)
Management plan objective D9	Give people from all backgrounds an opportunity to enjoy and make a difference to the the National Park by continuing to provide at least 5,000 volunteer days per year, with 10 % of individuals coming from under-represented groups by 2018.	*	2013-18	High	YDNPA, YDMT, NT
	Provide 1000 volunteer days per annum through the Nidderdale volunteers programme of activities contributing to the maintenance of the area and its natural and cultural heritage.				NAONB
	Broaden the range of the volunteering role and make available to a diverse range of individuals. Provide		2013-18	Medium	NT

	opportunities and development of roles for walk and activity leaders and support new product development.				
	Into the Meadows project – enable 250 school children per year to take part in educational activities and meadow activities over the next 3 years.		2013-15	Medium	YDMT
5b To provide methods for visitors to put something back into and area that they love and want to help to conserve.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
	Continue the YDMT Tree Dedication scheme with the aim to receive over 1500 dedications per year.		2013-18	Low	YDMT
	Identify two new methods for visitor payback, to help businesses and visitors contribute directly to the conservation of the area		2013-18	Low	YDMT
	Increase membership of the Friends of Nidderdale AONB By 10% annually		2013-18	Low	NAONB

5c To use the Sustainable Development Fund to encourage new projects to bring environmental, social and economic benefits to the Yorkshire Dales.					
	Action	Priority	Year	Financial implication	Key agencies
Management plan objective F4	Use the Sustainable Development Fund, New Homes bonus and other funding sources to support at least 20 new projects each year that bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the National Park. Use the Sustainable Development Fund and New Homes bonus, and other funding sources to support at least 5 new projects each year that bring economic, social and environmental benefits to Nidderdale AONB.	*	2013-18	High	YDNPA, District Councils YDMT NAONB

7. Implementation and monitoring

189. The previous section set out the key sustainable tourism aims and actions for the Yorkshire Dales, identified the level of resources likely to be required and the main organisations who will deliver each action. The following section, below, summarises the necessary structures for overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the plan, the processes for monitoring the impact of tourism on the area, and the process for reviewing the plan.

7.1 Structures for coordination and action

The importance of Dales Tourism as the coordinating body

190. As explained in Section 1, the Yorkshire Dales is a complex area administratively. A number of local authorities contain a part of the designated areas including North Yorkshire and Cumbria county councils and five district councils: South Lakeland, Eden, Richmondshire, Craven, and Harrogate. Two regional tourist organisations cover the area – Cumbria Tourism and Welcome to Yorkshire. There are also a number of landowners with large land holdings within the designated areas, including the National Trust, which is a charitable body, the Bolton Abbey Estate, Ingleborough Estate, and Yorkshire Water.

191. Tourism interests within the private sector are brought together through the Dales Tourism Business Network, which covers the wider Yorkshire Dales area, and there are also a number of business associations at a local level covering particular towns or dales.

192. There are also organisations such as Dales Integrated Transport Alliance, and the Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company which has taken on the responsibility for running the Dales Bus network for visitors, and the Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Company which looks to encourage sustainable commercial development of the railway.

193. This complexity underlines the need for a single body that can take overall responsibility for sustainable tourism and oversee the strategy and action plan. Whilst there is no local ‘destination management organisation’ to fulfil this role, the value of a partnership body to the designated area authorities cannot be understated. The European Charter also requires that there should be a ‘permanent forum or equivalent arrangement established between the protected area authority, local municipalities, conservation and community organisations and representatives of the tourism industry’.

194. Dales Tourism meets the requirements of a coordinating body. It has a membership embracing the public and private sectors and conservation interests, and covers the whole of the Yorkshire Dales area. The coordinating role of Dales Tourism involves:

- Bringing together different interests to agree on priorities and an action plan;
- Allocating responsibilities for delivering actions;
- Checking on the progress of the actions and the results.

195. In most cases, the actions will be delivered by individual organisations working alone or together. It is, therefore, vital that there is a strong commitment to the strategy and action plan which is maintained throughout the plan period.

The importance of the local authorities and other bodies

196. The designated area authorities have a key role in implementing this strategy, as they have responsibility, or an influencing role, for many of the aspects of the plan such as information, interpretation, planning, access and conservation. The National Park Authority and Nidderdale AONB's statutory purposes mean they have a key role in balancing the conservation of the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales with promoting their enjoyment and understanding by the public. The National Park Authority provides the secretariat support for Dales Tourism as part of this role.

197. At a district and county level local authorities also have a role to play, notably they have the economic development remit for the area. As well as responsibility for the provision and maintenance of infrastructure and public facilities, and as the planning authorities outside the National Park.

198. Welcome to Yorkshire and Cumbria Tourism are also key partners in the delivery of the strategy and action plan. Their role is to market the area through their regional and sub-regional promotion as well as provide support to their business members within the area.

Delivery through businesses

199. The delivery of the action plan will only be successful if individual businesses are also engaged in the process and work towards its goals. Working with businesses is vital to the success of the strategy, and the Dales Tourism Business Network has a key role in facilitating this. Regular email newsletters, website information, the use of social media and twice yearly workshop meetings will be used to keep businesses informed and for the designated authorities to receive feedback from them to help with future developments. It is also recognised that to remain engaged with the network, businesses will want to see stimulating projects and actions delivered which help their profitability as well as aiding the sustainability of the area. To this end, it is hoped that the network, will help delivery in the future. Though funding will need to be found as it is run on a voluntary basis currently.

7.2 Monitoring and indicators

200. The successful implementation of the action plan and progress against the objectives in this strategy will be monitored, annually, by the Dales Tourism steering group meetings.

201. There are also a number of surveys and key data that feed into an annual monitoring report on Tourism and Recreation for the National Park, produced by the National Park Authority. These include:

- National Park Authority visitor surveys every five years (next is due in 2013). This is a questionnaire survey providing information on the profile of visitors, their reasons for visiting and activities undertaken, together with their satisfaction with their visit and facilities used;
- STEAM data which gives trend data on the number of visitors, number of overnights, and amount of money spent in the local economy and the number of jobs supported. This data is available for the National Park area and for the wider Yorkshire Dales;
- Traffic counters are in place on a number of roads giving straightforward information on the number of vehicle movements;
- Numbers of people using National Park Authority car parks;
- Numbers of people visiting National Park Centres;
- People counters are in place on a number of paths including major long-distance routes;
- Business survey. The survey of businesses conducted in 2012 provided valuable information in the development of this strategy. It is planned to repeat this again in five years time;
- Number of businesses in a green accreditation scheme or taking key environment management actions in the Yorkshire Dales.

202. Informal feedback from businesses and communities is also gained through day-to-day contact with staff and partner organisations. For instance, the National Park Authority operates a Ranger Service with each ranger having a specific geographical area to cover. They have close contact with the local communities and attend parish council meetings. This provides an informal method of picking up on local concerns and helps fill in gaps.

203. Monitoring of the condition of SSSIs, the amount of land within agri-environment schemes and the implementation of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan are reported separately, as is progress against all objectives in the National Park Management Plan and the Management Plan for Nidderdale AONB.

7.3 Conclusion

204. This strategy and action plan demonstrates the continuing commitment to sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales. It will form a key part of the process of re-accreditation for the EUROPARC Federation Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, in 2013.

205. The Dales Tourism partnership has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this strategy and action plan. The different actions are led by a number of organisations and these are clearly shown in the action plan. Through a partnership approach everyone is working together to the common goal of sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales.

206. The way in which the area is marketed still provides challenges, and it is likely that private sector involvement will need to increase in the future. There is also still a need to increase the visibility of the National Park and Nidderdale AONB brands, so that they are seen as a quality destination label for the area and the special tourism experience of visiting the area is built upon.