

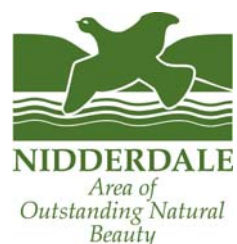
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A Yorkshire Dales Strategy for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism



YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority



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1. Introduction

1.1 The Yorkshire Dales - Pennine countryside of outstanding beauty

1. The Yorkshire Dales is a remote and wild gritstone and limestone landscape, internationally important for wildlife and rich in historic features including prehistoric carved rocks and medieval lead mines. It also provides endless opportunities, especially for the urban populations of nearby Leeds and Bradford, for enjoying the countryside.
2. It is situated in the Northern Pennines, where much of the land is covered by national landscape designations. The Yorkshire Dales part of this area is made up of several areas: the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and small parts of the Forests of Bowland and North Pennines Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (1.64% and 1.56% of the area, respectively).
3. The Forest of Bowland was awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism status in its own right in 2005 and North Pennines AONBs is considering seeking charter status at the present time. As such this strategy is focused on the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale AONB on behalf of whom the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) made the original Charter application. Together these two areas are collectively referred to as the 'Yorkshire Dales' or 'Dales' throughout this strategy.
4. This strategy is produced on behalf of the tourism partnership that manages tourism within this area.

Designated areas

5. The Yorkshire Dales National Park was designated in 1954 and is an area of 1,762 square kilometres. It straddles the Pennines and 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, the landscape is always striking. These protected areas are surrounded by fells and dales of similar landscape character to the west, and lower more arable land to the east.
6. 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, whilst to the east are the towns of Harrogate, Ripon and Masham. The southern boundary of the AONB follows the course of the River Wharfe close to the towns of Ilkley and Otley.
7. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's (YDNPA) statutory purposes are 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.

8. In addition, other public organisations¹ also must have ‘regard’ to these purposes in undertaking their own work. In pursuing these purposes the YDNPA have a statutory duty ‘to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park’.

9. Nidderdale was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1994. The primary purpose of Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAONB) is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Government guidance states that in pursuing the primary purpose account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment. Recreation is not an objective of AONB designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

Statutory Roles

10. The administrative responsibilities for the tourism partnership area of the Yorkshire Dales, covers two regions, so has: 2 regional development agencies (Yorkshire Forward and NW Development Agency), 2 Government Offices (Yorkshire and Humber and North West), 2 Counties (the area is predominately in the county of North Yorkshire, with parts also in Cumbria), 2 tourist boards (Yorkshire Tourism, Cumbria Tourism), 5 districts (Harrogate, Craven, Richmond, South Lakeland, Eden).

11. Under statute the YDNPA has a number of responsibilities within the National Park area. As the National Park Authority it is the planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Acts) and access and relevant authority (under the CRoW Act). Also it is the delegated highway authority for rights of way (on behalf of the county councils). Where as in the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty the Local Planning Authorities are the District Councils, with the county councils fulfilling the highway and access functions.

1.2 Tourism – is a traditional activity and a key feature of the Dales economy

12. 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 18th 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 19th century the railways had been built across the Yorkshire Dales, the most famous being the [Settle Carlisle line](#).

¹ Environment Act, section 62. In this context ‘other organisations’ includes other public bodies, e.g. Cumbria and North Yorkshire County Councils, and District Councils amongst others.

13. The real boom in tourism has taken place in the 20th 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 a few [see:

http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/getting_active.htm and <http://www.visitnidderdaleaonb.com>

14. 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. The natural attractions such as Malham Cove and Aysgarth Falls still draw people to the area but the area also has cultural offers such as museums, galleries and local crafts centres to encourage visitors to stay longer.

15. A large number of small businesses are dependent on tourism in the Yorkshire Dales for their livelihood. Over 99% 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 conservation bodies e.g. National Trust, Natural England, and estates and landowners via a partnership approach.

16. In addition the YDNPA and NAONB work in partnership via the area Tourism Partnership along with the district councils and tourist board, with shared arrangements with North York Moors National Park Authority. Both the YDNPA and NAONB do not have a direct economic remit but contribute to economic development through working with others.

17. 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.

18. Through the award of the Charter, the Yorkshire Dales has joined a group of designated areas that are recognised as having the right structures and processes in place to ensure that tourism is sustainable.

1.3 The purpose of this strategy and action plan

19. The aim 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. The document brings together all current activity, future aspirations and priorities to determine the future direction of tourism across the Yorkshire Dales. It has been prepared in consultation with the many public, private and voluntary sector organisations, involved in the development and promotion of tourism.

20. The activities have been developed into an Action Plan. 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 when targets have been

achieved. This will help to establish the future direction of sustainable tourism in this area for the next 5 years.

21. This strategy and action plan takes account of the various national, regional and local policies relating to tourism, the environment and sustainable development. It has also been drawn up to comply with the requirements of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, promoted by the EUROPARC Federation.

1.4 Embracing the concept of sustainable tourism

22. This is a strategy for sustainable tourism, as underlined by the European Charter. This means that the strategy 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.

1.5 The work behind this document

23. For many years the Local Authorities in the Yorkshire Dales have worked in together in a partnership, via the 'Dales Tourism Forum', and its marketing arm the 'Yorkshire Dales Joint Promotions Initiative' (JPI). The Dales Tourism Forum was made up of local business representatives, with the JPI being made up of tourism officers from the local authorities. This partnership sought a responsible approach to promoting the area and managing visitors. The 'Coach Drivers Guide for the Yorkshire Dales' was instigated by the Dales Tourism Forum in response to a need to promote suitable routes to and through the Dales for larger vehicles and the associated facilities they require.

24. In 2004, following a regional wide review of tourism, a new tourism delivery structure was created – 'the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Tourism Partnership'. This partnership included both local authority and commercial members and involves the wider representation of 348 businesses through a business registration scheme with the local district councils in promoting the area.

25. Currently, the Tourism Partnership is again evolving, with a stronger sub-regional level link with the Moor and Coast Tourism Partnership. At the time of writing this strategy the outcomes are still awaited. It is anticipated that this strategy will influence and will be guided by any subsequent Tourism Partnership action plan.

26. Given the history of tourism promotion in the Yorkshire Dales a range of related strategies were already in existence at the time of the application to achieve the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected. The application was based on pulling together the existing policies of the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Tourism Partnership (YDHTP) and partner organisations. This was approved by Europarc Consulting, on the understanding that this approach would be re-visited in line with the renewal of the existing tourism strategy for the YDHTP and the updating of the National Park Authority's own

Integrated Access Strategy (now called Special Qualities, Special Experiences) which integrates policy and principles for access, recreation, diversity management and sustainable tourism, and puts forward a spatial approach to recreation and tourism development in the National Park.

Co-ordination of this strategy

27. This strategy and Action Plan has been developed on behalf of the area Tourism Partnership. The process to bring the various documents together, into this one strategy, has been co-ordinated by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

2. Assessment

28. The assessment presented in this chapter is based on data and documents obtained from a range of organisations, surveys undertaken, local views and professional judgement. The chapter contains a factual analysis of tourism resources and markets and feedback from a range of different stakeholders.

29. The chapter concludes by summarising the assessment in a statement of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

2.1 Economic and social situation

30. Tourism accounts directly and indirectly for a significant part of the region's economy and is worth approximately £2billion a year at the present time. The Yorkshire Dales is already an important regional asset and makes a significant contribution to the regional economy.

31. Tourism in the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate has a total value of approximately £575m per annum (Cambridge 2007). Of this 42% or £247m is spent by staying visitors and 53% or £309m by day visitors to the area. The remaining 5% of tourism spend is described by the Cambridge model under 'other expenditure'.

32. Tourism is one of the largest economic sectors within the rural areas of North Yorkshire, accounting for 40,000 jobs in the sub-region. This sector is vulnerable to changing situations in a highly competitive market place, in particular the growth of budget airlines, cheap package holidays, the growth of cities and non-traditional tourist areas as destinations and a change in the aspirations of the customer.

33. Within the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Partnership area 15,000 people are employed in tourism which is equal to 13% of all employee jobs in the area. This can be compared with the regional figure of 7.9%.

34. The tourism industry of the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate comprises a diverse range of business types and sizes, which are either classified as being directly or indirectly dependent upon tourism and leisure activity, such as accommodation establishments, pubs and restaurants, retail establishments, service industries, petrol stations and transport operators. A high proportion of these businesses are independent small to medium-sized enterprises that, in isolation, have little profile in the market place.

35. Furthermore, all these businesses attract and benefit from visitor and resident spend, and form components of the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate tourism product.

36. The visitor profile of North Yorkshire is dominated by domestic visitors, many of whom come from within the region. The overseas visitor market for the rural areas is very low and any growth has been slower than the rest of the region. In addition, room occupancy levels are lower across North Yorkshire compared with York. The sub-region's

rural areas are home to some of the region's most visited attractions, have extremely high quality landscapes and attractive market towns.

37. The majority of visitors to the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate are repeat visitors, some 79%. 18% of visitors surveyed in 2008 stated that this was their first visit to the area and 92% said they were likely to return in the next two years. (Welcome to Yorkshire Visitor Survey, 2008).

38. The strategic framework for the visitor economy (Yorkshire Forward, *Visitor Economy Strategy 2008-2013*) recognises that, whilst the tourism industry in the sub-region is more mature than in other parts of the region, growth has been slower and the quality of the tourism product needs to be improved. The focus is on spend rather than numbers and also visitor management issues, particularly in remote rural areas where visitors place pressure on local infrastructure and facilities. The sector may also benefit from extending the visitor season into the 'shoulder months' at the beginning and end of the season and increasing visitor numbers all year round.

Research

39. Considerable research has been conducted over recent years in to the tourism potential of the Yorkshire Dales and how tourism should be developed through a partnership approach.

40. The research at a regional level in the Sub-regional Strategic Economic Assessment and a sub-Regional Rural Evidence Base was established for the Regional Economic Strategy. Other more localised studies have looked at parts of the area or at themes, products or methods of delivery. They included:

- ECOTEC (2003) Craven Enhancement and Promotion Study
- Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM)
- Making Tourism in the Yorkshire Dales Truly Sustainable (Travelwatch)
- Yorkshire Dales Product Evaluation Study (Yorkshire Tourist Board)
- Tourism Support Structures in York and North Yorkshire (Team Tourism Consultants)
- Implementation Plan for Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Area Tourism Partnership (Team Tourism Consultants)
- Yorkshire Dales Brand Development Study Research (?)
- Market Segmentation Research (Yorkshire Tourist Board)
- Northern Holiday Destination Perceptions Study (Questions Answered Ltd).

Dates?

41. A brief summary of the findings of these various reports is included, where appropriate, in this document as it provides the background to the development of this strategy.

42. The strategic framework of the *Visitor Economy Strategy* should form the framework for future growth in the sector. In particular: achieving growth in the visitor economy through sustainable tourism; fostering innovation and product development; supporting business growth, development and skills and improving our understanding and market

intelligence of the sector to assist in the sector becoming more competitive by targeting high spending visitors.

2.2 Natural and cultural resources

The natural environment

43. The Yorkshire Dales is one of the most important areas of the United Kingdom because of its rich and diverse wildlife heritage. This ranges from the wildflower-rich hay meadows and pastures in the dale bottoms, through to the moorland fringe with its rush pastures so important for wading birds, through the windswept uplands with their open heather moorland and blanket bog, to the unique limestone pavements. The combination of geology, natural processes and human influences have created the particular conditions that now support a rich and diverse wildlife.

44. The distribution of limestone country habitats is directly linked to the extent of Carboniferous limestone and is concentrated in the uplands around Ingleborough, Malham and Wharfedale. The Great Scar Limestone, laid down on seabeds some 300 million years ago, dominates the landscape and forms the giant outcrops of Malham Cove and Kilnsey Crag as well as extensive limestone pavements. The soils lying over this rock are usually very thin and of low fertility and, with consistent grazing, this often results in a rich diversity of lime-loving grasses and wildflowers for which the limestone country is famous. Outside this area, are extensive heather moorlands, more associated with the Yoredale Series which overlays the Great Scar Limestone further north.

45. The moorland and moorland fringe areas are extensive and internationally important for their populations of breeding birds, including merlin and golden plover. Moorland is defined as unenclosed open upland. The moorland fringe is the area dominated by marginal hill pastures and associated habitats between the more improved enclosed pastures and the open moorland. Some moorland fringe habitat is enclosed in large moor-edge grazing allotments.

46. The Dales are recognised internationally for their traditional agricultural landscape of hay meadows and pastures divided by drystone walls. This landscape and its flower-rich meadows attract the majority of people to visit the area. The most species-rich of these grasslands have been managed in a consistent, low intensity manner for decades. Little or no inorganic fertiliser has been applied; meadows are cut once a year and pastures grazed lightly with a summer resting period. This has led to diverse and species-rich flower meadows and pastures. The cranesbill meadows are internationally recognised. Grassland habitats are generally more intensively managed than other habitats and are particularly vulnerable to changes in farming practices such as the use of artificial fertilisers and silage-making.

47. There are six main river catchments which rise in the area - the Swale, Ure, Wharfe, Aire, Ribble, Nidd, and Lune. All are upland in character where they flow through the area are generally of high water quality with good populations of brown trout and other fish. Many of the rivers flow across limestone bedrock and are nationally important for their populations of Atlantic white-clawed crayfish.

48. Two Biodiversity Action Plans cover the Dales; Nature in the Dales and The Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Plan, both have been prepared following wide consultation. The overall aims are to conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats and species). Both seek to increase public awareness of, and involvement in, conserving biodiversity, and contributing to the conservation of biodiversity nationally and internationally. The Special Qualities, Special Experiences Strategy considers further how the area can be enjoyed whilst these interest are safeguarded in the National Park.

49. The Yorkshire Dales National Park area includes 505.8 square kilometres or 27% designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This also includes 39,990ha Natura 2000 designated, 11.6 square kilometres of National Nature Reserves (NNR) and one Ramsar site (Malham Tarn) - 286ha.

50. The Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAONB) area includes about 16,000 square kilometres or 27% designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The area contains 25,000 ha of Natura 2000 designated moorland. There is also one World Heritage site (Fountains Abbey).

51. The eastern side of the AONB is a much softer, pastoral landscape influenced by the underlying magnesian limestone with historic parks and gardens like Hackfall Wood, and great country houses such as Swinton Castle and Fountains Abbey. Fountains Abbey is a World Heritage Site and one of the National Trust's most famous properties.

52. The moors on the western side of the AONB are home to some of the most famous grouse shoots in the country. Alongside grouse moors, farming remains the dominant land use. It forms the mainstay of the AONB's rural communities, with new enterprises, some agriculture-based and others such as catering.

Historic and cultural heritage

53. The natural beauty of the area is matched by its rich historic environment and cultural heritage of settlements. In particular its traditional architecture of local stone and stone slate roofs gives the area a distinctive building heritage that has developed in harmony with its landscape setting. Whilst its archaeological interest is extensive and varied, ranging from Roman forts to 19th century industrial remains.

54. Despite harsh and challenging conditions, the Dales have supported communities and industry over several millennia. Owing to the slow rate of change, evidence of generations of occupation and activity survive in the landscape, providing an intriguing record of the area's social and economic history from Palaeolithic times. The extent and range of this survival is exceptional.

55. Livestock farming over several centuries produced a traditional pastoral landscape much of which survives. This historic landscape is of great beauty and acknowledged as of international importance, comprising:

- an intricate network of drystone walls that create a patchwork of enclosures across valleys and valley sides.
- traditional, stone-built field barns, the density of which, notably in Swaledale, Wharfedale and Wensleydale, is unique.

- Traditional, herb-rich, hay meadows which draw many visitors in early summer.

56. The legacy of former rural industries adds to the character and interest of the landscape. The Dales is scattered with the remains of former mineral extraction and processing sites, especially lead and lime industry remains, whilst its many mills are imposing reminders of how the area's resources were harnessed.

57. The Dales are characterised by numerous small, attractive and compact villages and hamlets, most of which have been there for over a thousand years. They are still largely unspoilt and retain a very traditional and intimate atmosphere as well as a sense of continuity and stability. Many are still bordered by small, ancient, often unimproved fields accessed by narrow lanes and tracks between meandering stone walls, giving the villages an historic, timeless setting.

58. The Settle-Carlisle Railway Line is unique and displays impressive engineering and conserved Midland Railway architecture. It offers a special way of enjoying the dramatic landscape along its route.

Landscape character

59. The Yorkshire Dales has a sense of place that is unique. Its special qualities result from a combination of nature and culture, the beauty of the landscape, and the way it has been shaped by people over time. It also includes the more intangible qualities appreciated by residents and visitors, such as peace, solitude, space, inspiration and escape from urban living.

60. The character of a landscape is created by the combination of its patterns of geology, landform, soils and vegetation, land use, field patterns and human settlement. At the broad scale, landscape character makes each part of Britain distinctive and gives each its sense of place. At the local scale, there may be distinct differences in landscape character between different parts of a single valley or dale.

61. At the national scale, England has been divided into 159 areas with similar landscape character. These are called Joint Character Areas (JCAs). The YDNP mostly falls in the Yorkshire Dales JCA but is also covered in its western extreme by the Howgill Fells JCA.

62. The National Park Authority has published a report, Landscape Character Assessment and Quality of Life Capital Assessment of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The report identifies 40 distinct 'landscape character areas', of which 34 are on a dale-by-dale basis. The remaining six are separately identified upland character areas.

63. The Dales character areas are:

- Swaledale and Arkengarthdale
- Cumbrian Dales
- Wensleydale
- Craven Dales
- Malhamdale and south west fringe
- Wharfedale and Littondale

- Nidderdale

64. The upland character areas are:

- Southern Howgill Fells
- Yorkshire Moors and Fells

65. A Landscape Character Assessment for Nidderdale AONB was produced in 1991. It was refined and updated in 2004 by Harrogate Borough Council.

66. The 1991 study identifies eight major Character Areas;

- Moorland Plateau
- Upper Valley
- Middle Valley
- Grassland Plateau
- Upland Fringes
- Vale Fringes
- Lower Valley
- Wharfedale (northern side)

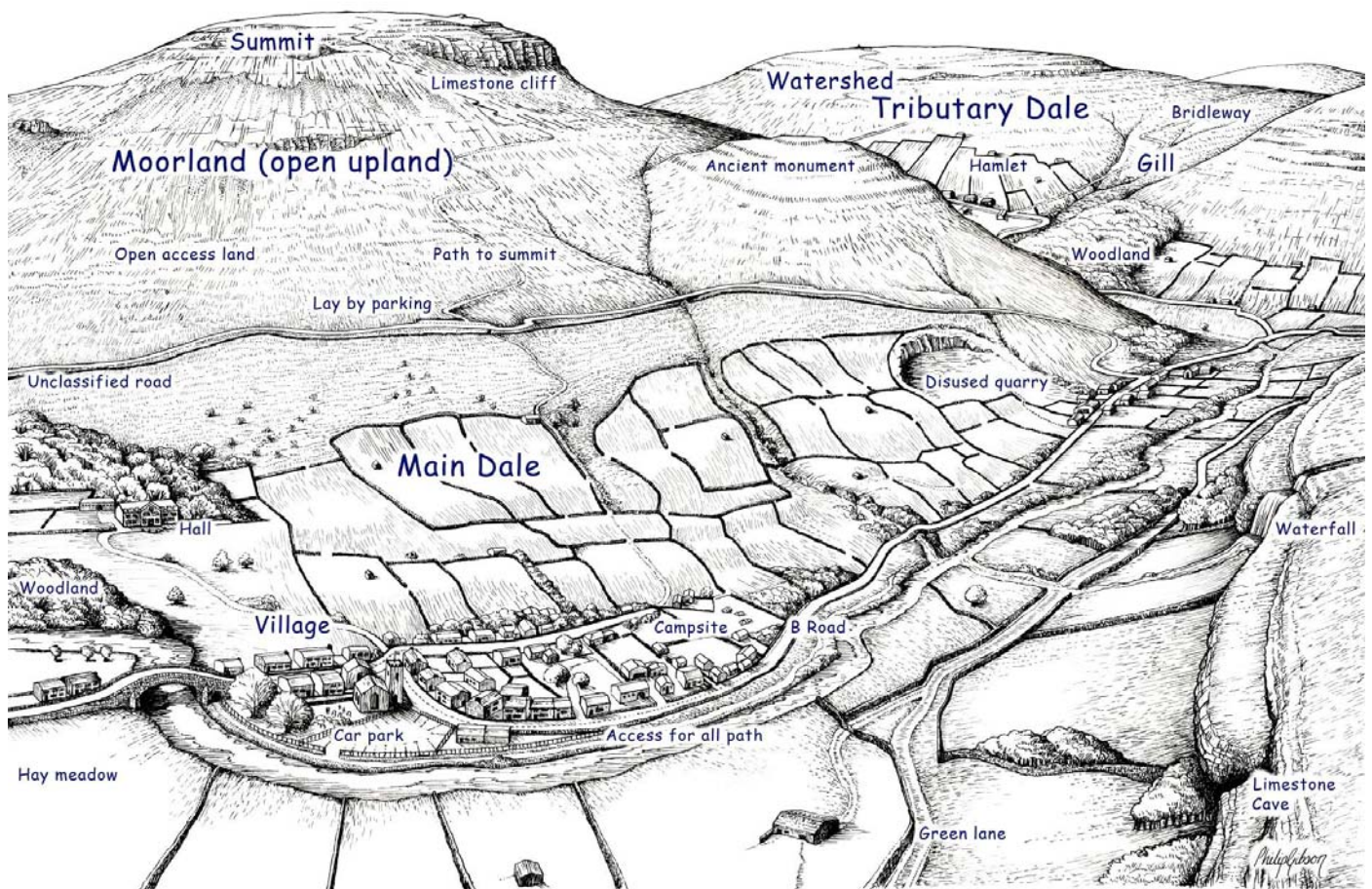
Safeguarding the Special Qualities

67. Visitor surveys consistently show that most people choose to visit the Yorkshire Dales because of its landscape quality, its opportunities for outdoor recreation, and/or peace and tranquillity. These are all part of the special qualities.

68. The Yorkshire Dales National Park receives approximately 8 million visitor days a year and visitors undertake a wide range of activities during their visit. In both protected areas the number of visitor days has remained fairly static over the past 20 years, but there is a trend towards shorter trips with more frequent visits, such as long weekends, rather than annual week-long holidays. Visitor management is the process of managing visitors so that they can enjoy the environment whilst not harming the very qualities that make it special. The YDNPA strategy 'Special Qualities, Special Experiences – A recreation and tourism strategy for the Yorkshire dales 2009' explains more about how the area is managed so that visitors do not harm the very thing they come to enjoy. It also advocates a spatial approach to visitor facilities that respects the landscape character of the area. The strategy provides an illustrated description of the features of a typical Dale and how these features provide opportunities for recreation, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Special qualities of a 'typical' dale and surrounding uplands, and opportunities for access and recreation

Source: Special Qualities. Special Experiences YDNPA (2009)



Tourism facilities and services

69. Tourism infrastructure supporting the economy can take many different forms. From the opportunities for access and recreation, to car parks, visitor accommodation, tourist information centres and National Park Centres.

The rights of way network and Open Access land

70. The Yorkshire Dales National Park has an extensive network of rights of way there are 1,455 km of footpaths, 620 km of bridleways, 1 km of restricted byway and 43 km of byways open to all traffic (BOATS). In the Nidderdale AONB there are 736 km of footpaths, 172 km of bridleways, 1.45 km of restricted byway and 0.48 km of byways open to all traffic (BOATS). The Yorkshire Dales National Park, also has 62% of land is mapped as 'open country' (mountain, moor, heath and down) and registered common land whilst in Nidderdale AONB there is 58%. This land has a public right of access on foot for 'open-air recreation' (including walking, running and climbing) as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act).

71. The ECOTEC study (2003) assessed the economic value of the rights of way network and countryside access to the economy of Craven District part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

72. The study highlighted that the rights of way network is at the heart of the visitor product of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, and there is considerable scope to improve the provision and accessibility of walking, cycling and riding opportunities in line with sustainable tourism. It recognised a need to improve and make more accessible information on walking and outdoor activities opportunities and the considerable potential for new or expanded marketing activities to boost participation and encourage longer stays. There would be considerable economic benefits for individual businesses and the local economy from these activities.

Outdoor adventure activities

73. The environmental assets and special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales provide a wide range of natural attractions throughout the area, as well as nationally renowned and readily accessible forms of outdoor recreation. Hill walking, climbing, mountain biking, caving, cycling, horse riding, fell running and water sports are among the many outdoor activities in the area. The area's historic and extensive network of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways, BOATS (byways open to all traffic) and other routes with public access, extensive areas of Open Access land, rivers, crags and caves mean that it has some of the best recreational opportunities found anywhere in England.

74. The Craven area of the National Park has some of the best examples in Britain of classic limestone scenery, with its crags, pavements, and extensive cave systems. The predominantly vertical cave systems are the best of their type, with many long and challenging trips. For the more casual visitor there are show caves at White Scar Cave which is near Ingleton, Ingleborough Cave near Clapham and Stump Cross Caverns

between Grassington and Greenhow. In terms of rock climbing the massive limestone crags of Malham, Gordale and Kilnsey are justifiably famous, supporting some of the hardest sport climbing routes in the world. There are, however, many other limestone and gritstone crags in the area with worthwhile, easier traditional and sport climbing routes. In addition some disused quarries are gaining interest for climbing activity.

75. The Yorkshire Dales caters for a wide variety of activities that provide quiet enjoyment. Though the popularity of activities varies between different sectors of the population. Young people, for example, are more likely to be drawn to 'high adventure' activities such as mountain biking or climbing. The majority of visitors, however, choose to experience the historic built environment linked to picturesque villages and the quintessential Yorkshire welcome, craft shops, tea shops and pubs rather than take part in adventure activities. Most visitors undertake some sort of physical activity – usually a walk, however, during their visit.

Accommodation

76. Traditionally the area has a wide range of accommodation types on offer to suit all tastes and pockets. These range from camping and caravan sites and bunk barns to bed and breakfast and high class country hotels. To help in marketing and to ensure visitors can be confident of the standard of accommodation on offer, only accommodation that is part of the national inspection scheme, and has been quality graded, is promoted by the local authorities. This scheme is overseen by Visit England, and businesses have to pay to be included. Currently there are approximately 700 accommodation businesses in the Yorkshire Dales which have been awarded a grading from a national inspection scheme.

77. As well as the national inspection schemes, there are other schemes run by Visit England aimed at specific target markets such as the families, pets, accessible (for those with disabilities), walkers or cyclists welcome schemes. Currently nearly 130 accommodation businesses have one or more of these awards. Through the Craven Integrated Rural Development Project (funded by Yorkshire Forward) we have, in the past, offered grants to encourage businesses to take up the walkers and cyclists welcome schemes. In addition, YDNPA has produced a guide for businesses explaining how they could adapt their premises and services for a range of disabilities called '[Access for All to Services in the Yorkshire Dales](#)'. Whilst it is desirable for all accommodation to meet high standards of accessibility for those with disabilities, this is not a statutory requirement. However some modifications are relatively simple and cheap to make, but providers may not be aware of how their premises/services can be adapted.

78. Only promoting inspected accommodation can be problematic along some multi-day routes where we wish to encourage sustainable travel, because there is limited accommodation and providers have chosen not to sign up to an inspection scheme. Some providers do not take bookings from people who stay one night before moving on, which is often the case for individuals on multi-day walking/cycling routes through the area.

79. The full range of accommodation types are spread throughout the main dales, market towns and tributary dales. There are, however, relatively few larger hotels and guest houses within the protected areas so catering for a number of larger groups requiring accommodation within the protected areas can be problematic.

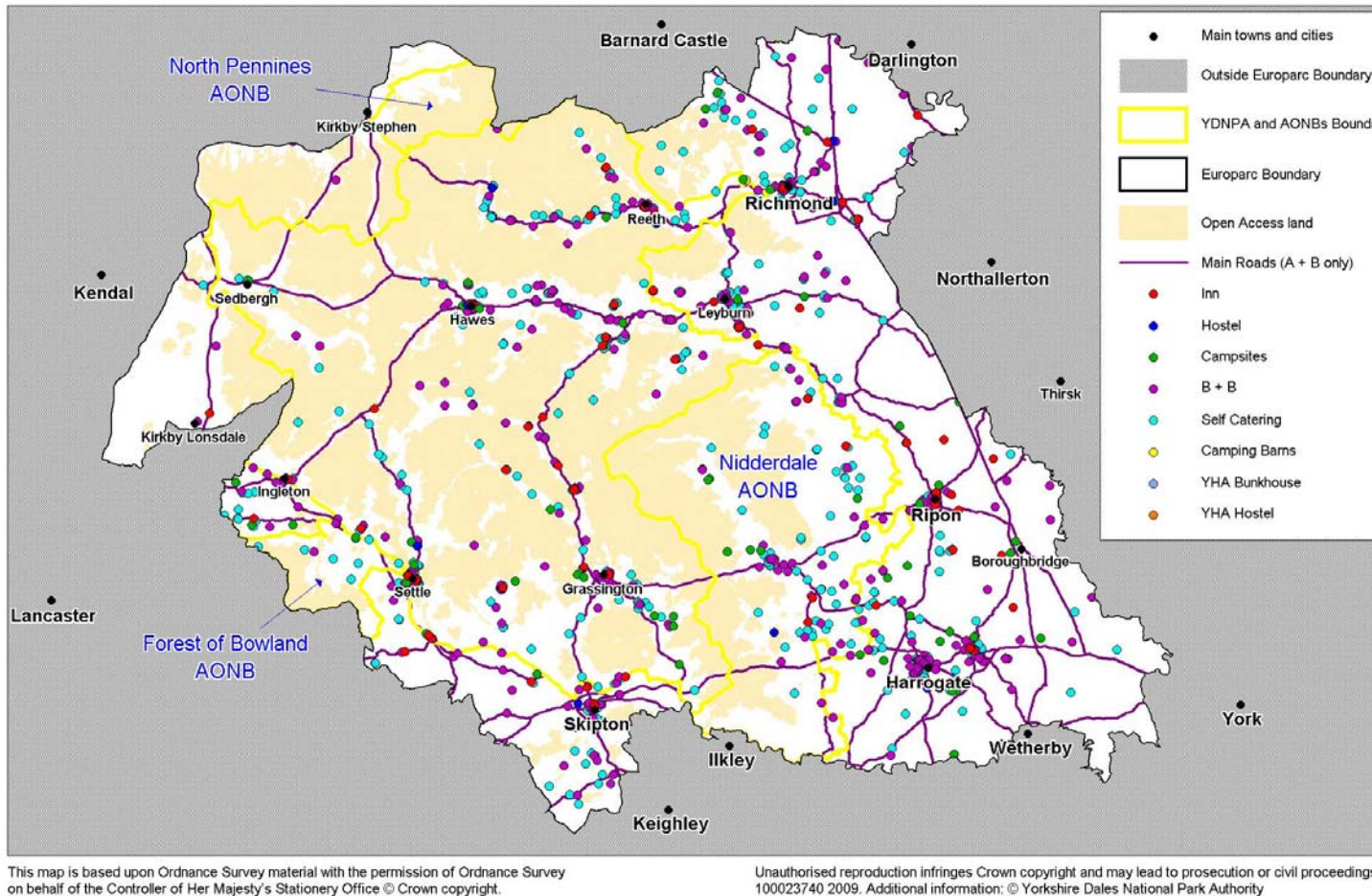
80. The area has been losing some budget-end accommodation from its market stock. In recent years a number of youth hostels have closed whilst the number of independent hostels has increased. There have also been a number of planning applications to replace camping and touring caravan pitches with permanent holiday caravans. Though a recent planning decision has been successful in resisting this change, which has been upheld by an Inspector at appeal. The narrowing of the Yorkshire Dales' range of visitor accommodation is now recognised as a material planning consideration because it has implications for the wider public enjoyment of the area. Research needs to be carried out to assess if there is a need for more budget accommodation and whether current provision is a barrier against the full range of visitors staying overnight in the area.

81. A full review of planning policy for visitor accommodation in the National Park will take place when the Local Development Framework Core strategy is prepared in 2 or 3 years time.

82. Most of the accommodation properties in the Yorkshire Dales marketing area are classed as self-catering with 711 records held on the regional Destination Management System's database. A further 565 properties are classed as serviced accommodation. Of these, 379 self catering (approximately 53%) properties have a quality grading issued by Visit Britain and 339 (approximately 60%) serviced properties have a quality grading issued by Visit Britain or the AA.

83. This equates to a total of 9849 bed spaces which have a quality grading (6625 for serviced and 3224 self catering). Therefore, although there are more self-catering properties than serviced, there is more than twice the number of serviced bed spaces available to book via Tourist Information Centres and local authority websites etc. than self-catering.

Figure 2 Quality graded (inspected) campsites, hostels, B&B and self catering accommodation



Source: Special Qualities, Special Experiences YDNPA (2009)

Food and drink – producers and outlets

84. The Yorkshire Dales area is renowned for its local produce, particularly its locally brewed beer, cheese, lamb and high quality beef. However, visitors are not always aware how the landscape of the Dales and local produce are inextricably linked. The defining characteristics of the field barns originated as a feature of upland dairy farming, for overwintering stock and storage of hay from the meadows; and this traditional land use underpins today's continued specialism in dairy products. In addition animals were bred that could not only withstand the relatively harsh environment, but also provide reasonable meat and milk yields. There are many recognisable local breeds: Rough Fell and Swaledale sheep and Shorthorn cattle, for example.

85. Much of the traditional local produce associated with the Yorkshire Dales came about through the constraints of the environment. Preserving fruit and vegetables in the forms of jams, relishes and chutneys extended shelf life. Cheese, to some extent, was produced to use up surplus milk. The Yorkshire Dales' most famous cheese is Wensleydale, with lesser known varieties such as Swaledale and Coverdale. Some of these traditional practices can be experienced by visitors today e.g. in Wensleydale. There the farms supply the Creamery and the milk on sale in the local area; there are businesses such as Raydale Preserves; and butchers supply local meats.

86. Recent years have seen the re-introduction of hardy cattle, which are more compatible with the management of the landscape, promote knowledge of traditional breeds and give the visitor the opportunity to experience food not generally available elsewhere. This has been made possible by the Limestone Country project which was supported by us, and funded through European Life funding.

87. Through local businesses promoting mainly local produce, visitors can 'eat the view', because they will be encouraging the retention of traditional and unique farming methods that maintain the landscape they come to experience. Increasingly, local produce is found on the menus of restaurants, hotels, pubs and B&Bs in the area. This means local farmers should also be getting better value for their produce, and food should be fresh.

88. A website set up by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) provides free marketing for those producers and outlets which meet local provenance criteria. This currently lists 43 farmers and growers in the area and a similar number of outlets committed to supporting local produce. NYCC are developing a new directory promoting local food.

Retailing in the Yorkshire Dales

89. Retail outlets tend to be centred on the larger villages such as Hawes, Pateley Bridge and Grassington and are aimed at the tourist market. However, the largest retail centres are just outside the immediate boundary in Skipton, Settle, Richmond, Leyburn and Harrogate. 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, near Sedbergh and King Street workshops in Pateley Bridge.

90. A website set up by North Yorkshire County Council provides free marketing to producers and outlets which meet local provenance criteria. This lists 43 farmers and growers and a similar number of outlets committed to supporting local produce. A scheme to accredit local food businesses is in place and has potential for further development. A new directory promoting local food is being prepared.

91. The National Park Authority retails a range of goods through its National Park Centres together with a small scale on-line shopping facility. The product range focuses on books and maps about the area together with branded clothing and souvenirs. Where possible, these are sourced or manufactured from suppliers in or close to the National Park.

Visitor attractions

92. There are over a hundred sites listed as visitor attractions on the regional Destination Management System. However, visitor attractions in the protected areas can be characterised as relatively small and fairly low key compared to attractions located outside these areas such as the National Trust owned and managed World Heritage site at Fountains Abbey or the Royal Horticultural Society Garden at Harlow Carr.

93. The vast majority of visitor attractions within the Yorkshire Dales do not publish their visitor numbers so this appraisal has been done by featuring locations most popularly mentioned within published guides to the area – both printed and featured on the internet.

94. Trend of visitor numbers to attractions in Yorkshire

95. 13 of the attractions in the Yorkshire Dales participate in the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS), showing a commitment to quality.

96. 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, Bolton, Middleham, Knaresborough, Ripley and Skipton, and stately homes and gardens such as Newby Hall and Ripley Castle (Winner of White Rose Awards Visitor Attraction of the Year 2009)

97. The railways have left a significant mark on the area with several attractions either bringing a disused line back into use for visitors, 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 '80s and has become a visitor destination in its own right with ? passengers annually travelling the route. The line passes over the Ribbleshead viaduct which in itself draws in large numbers of visitors.

98. The Dales Countryside Museum at Hawes (113115 visitors in 08/09) which utilises old railway buildings and railway carriages is managed by the YDNPA. It tells the story of the people and landscape of the Yorkshire Dales past and present, and stimulates visitors to think about its future with displays to interpret the development of the National Park from

prehistoric times to the present day. It is a unique facility, managing an artefact and archive collection that is specific to the Yorkshire Dales and enables the Authority to promote the understanding and enjoyment of the cultural heritage, wildlife and landscape.

99. There is a collection of museums celebrating the cultural heritage of the area e.g. the Swaledale Museum at Reeth, Nidderdale Museum at Pateley Bridge, Craven Museum at Skipton and the Upper Wharfedale Museum at Grassington, as well as other attractions based on the cultural heritage of the area such as Gayle Mill.

100. 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 (115,221 people visited nearby Aysgarth Falls NPC in 08/09). It's thought that 10% of visitors to Malham village make their way north to the National Nature reserve of Malham Tarn, England's highest freshwater lake. One of the main attractions at Ingleton is the privately owned Ingleton Waterfalls walk where visitors follow a steep riverside path which passes a series of waterfalls. Much of the Waterfalls Trail has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by Natural England. How Stean Gorge is also a SSSI and key visitor attraction within the Nidderdale AONB where high numbers of visitors use the aerial foot bridges or scramble their way through the gorge.

101. Woodland is a scarce yet important component of the landscape and areas are generally small, representing remnants of former more extensive broadleaved woodland or later plantings. Visitors are drawn to places such as Freeholders Wood, the site at Grass Woods managed by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and the SSSI at Strid Woods, managed by the Duke of Devonshire's Estate.

102. Due to the geology of the 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. Three of the 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.

103. The area's long history of livestock farming has given rise to distinct sheep breeds and its tradition of cheese making. Farm attractions which have diversified into the visitor market such as Hesketh Farm Park, Hazel Brow Farm Park, Holme Open Farm and Thornton Park all attract large numbers of families to interact with farm animals, eat in the cafes and play in the family friendly play parks.

104. Masham is said to be the centre for Yorkshire Dales ale. Two of Yorkshire Dales breweries are located here - Black Sheep and Theakstons. Both breweries offer guided tours, with on-site shops. In recent years, the number of micro-breweries in the Yorkshire Dales has grown significantly, boosted by the introduction of Progressive Beer Duty in 2002, which gives tax relief to smaller breweries. Whilst the smaller breweries aren't geared up to catering for large numbers of visitors, they will often show visitors around on request.

105. Several of the key attractions are centred around locally produced crafts and local artists. Venues such as The King Street Workshops, Silver Street at Reeth and Farfield Mill at Sedbergh provide a front door for several Dales artists.

106. In addition to RHS Harlow Carr there are gardens at Parcevall Hall (the only RHS and English Heritage registered gardens open to the public in the Yorkshire Dales National Park), Constable Burton Hall, Thorpe Perrow Arboretum and Ripley Castle.

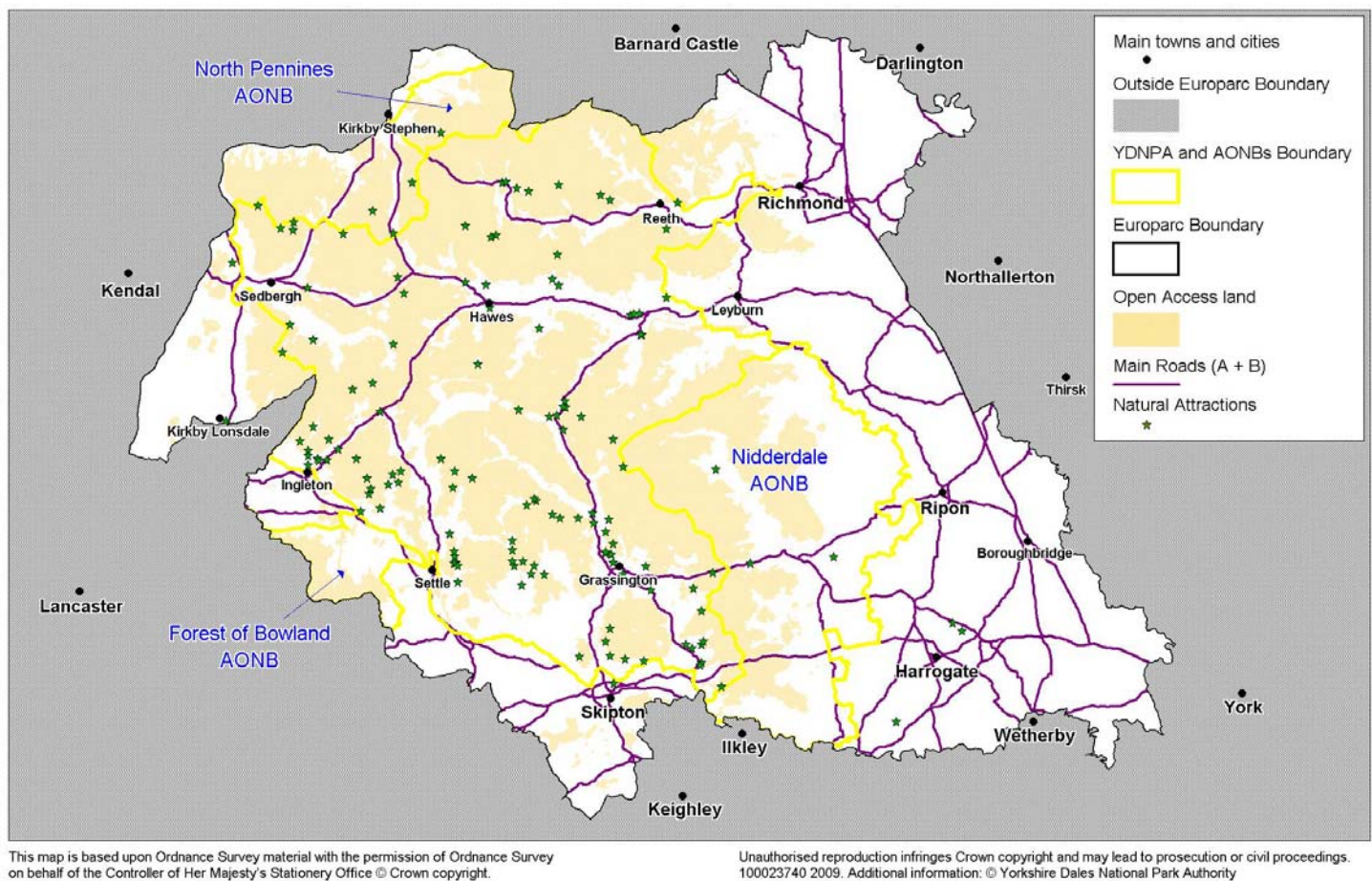
107. The major landowners in the Yorkshire Dales include Yorkshire Water, the National Trust and the Duke of Devonshire. All have several sites which provide visitors with access to their sites. For example the National Trust owned site at Brimham Rocks (attracting 140,000 visitors per year) and the reservoirs at Fewston and Swinsty provide easy access walking routes around the waters edge.

108. The Duke of Devonshire's Estate at Bolton Abbey is a significant draw to the area. The site comprises just under 30,000 acres and includes 80 miles 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. The National Park Authority has a long history of working with Estate personnel to tackle a number of visitor management issues.

109. Effects of 'Planning' and attractions with constraints on visitor numbers – Gayle Mill and Forbidden Corner – add to

110. Places of worship are a feature of the village landscape – larger Cathedrals of Ripon. Church leaflets. Out of oblivion – add to

Figure 3 Location of recognised natural attractions (lakes, cliffs, waterfalls, caves)



Source: Special Qualities, Special Experiences YDNPA (2009)

Walking and countryside access

111. The network of bridleways, green lanes and open access land give many 'miles without stiles'. This combined with the topography of the landscape allow people with limited mobility to experience the Yorkshire Dales relatively easily.

112. The National Park is criss-crossed by a variety of long-distance routes, such as the Pennine Way National Trail, the Dales Way and the Coast-to-Coast route, which can be walked as complete journeys over several days or in short sections. As well as the Three Peaks (Ingleborough, Wharfedale, and Pen-y-ghent) challenge walk of national significance.

113. The vast majority of visitors make use of the extensive network of rights of way during their visit (70 – 90 % depending on location).

114. There is a plethora of information providing guidance for walking routes – walking books, articles in magazines and newspapers, downloadable routes from websites etc and the National Park Authority provides an advisory service to anyone wishing to publish information regarding a route with regards to a route's legal status and its environmental sustainability.

115. Whilst the rights of way network gives great opportunities for users to work out their own multi-day routes, the National Park is criss-crossed by a variety of named long distance, multi-day routes of varying national and regional recognition and importance. Some of these multi-day routes are National Trails, such as the Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway. Others are of regional importance but have no 'official' status, for example the Dales Way and the Coast to Coast; they are nevertheless popular. Some are more commercially orientated, e.g. the Inn Way, whilst others can be described as more esoteric.

116. The number of users following the more popular trails for their full length, in any one year, vary from an estimated 3,000 people walking the Dales Way, 5,000 the Pennine Way and up to 7,000 walking the Coast to Coast route. The Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway include a number of recognised day loops e.g. the Settle Loop that are promoted through the 'try a trail' marketing campaign.

Other recreational activities

117. The area is important for the range and quality of natural and cultural resources it offers for outdoor recreation and its opportunities for accessing them. Its historic and extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and tracks, extensive areas of public access, rivers, crags and caves mean that it has some of the best walking, caving, climbing, paragliding and cross-country mountain biking to be found anywhere in the country.

118. The Dales has a network of meandering valley roads, bordered by dry stone walls or hedgerows and flower-rich verges. These have a particular charm and add to the strong sense of place. Higher up the valley sides unfenced roads cross heather moorland and

offer dramatic panoramas across the open landscape and the valleys below. This network of roads provides wonderful cycling for people with a reasonable level of fitness.

119. Most of the multi-day routes that have been developed are walking routes. The Pennine Bridleway National Trail, whilst also available for walking is a route developed specifically for horse riders and cyclists. When complete, it will extend from Middleton Top in Derbyshire, through the Yorkshire Dales, to Kirkby Stephen in Cumbria. In addition, there is currently a proposal to develop a coast to coast mountain bike route, predominantly for mountain bikers, but also available for walkers and horse riders. This will link the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Parks. A feasibility study has been carried out based on linking existing rights of way.

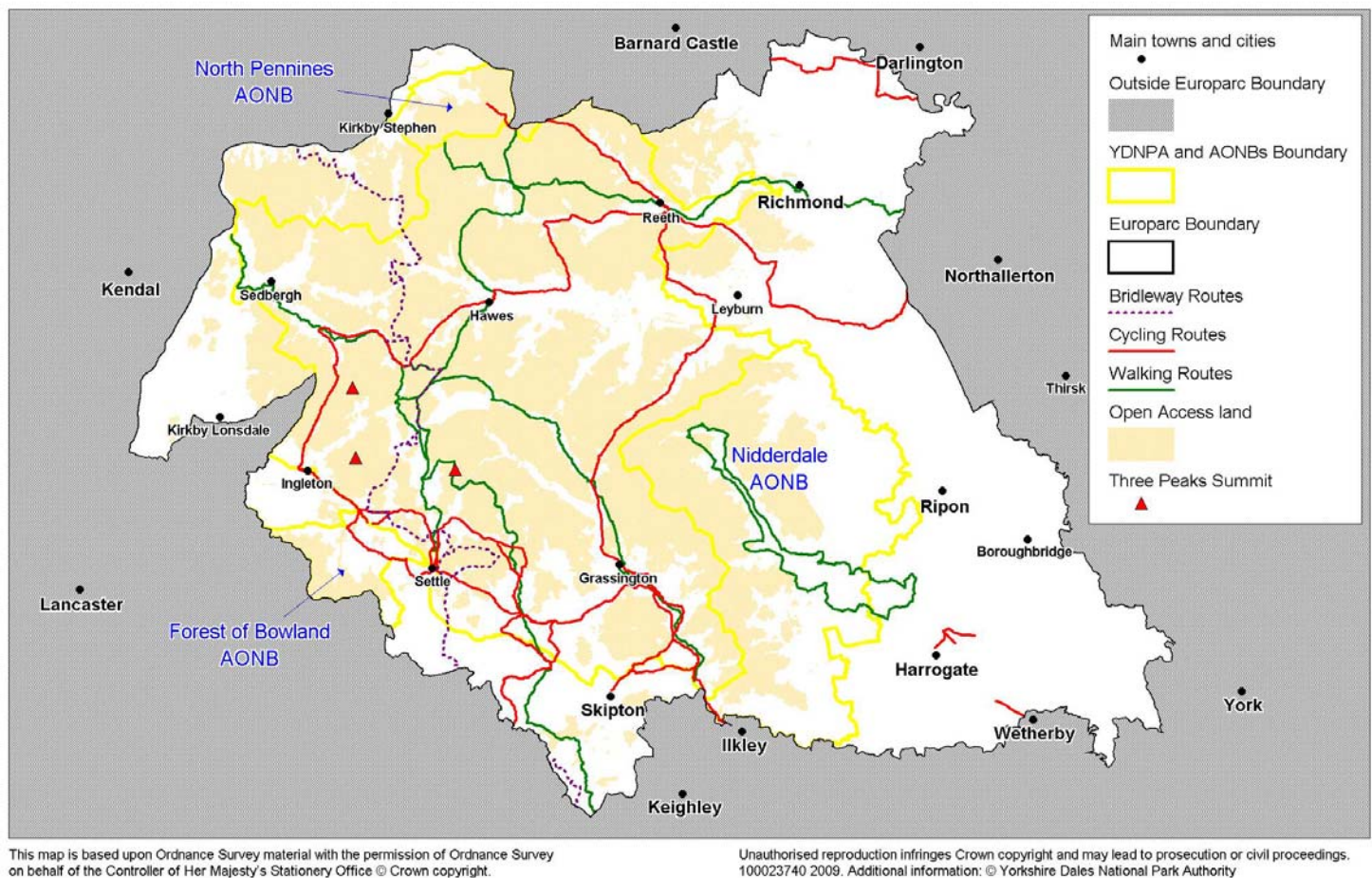
120. Opportunities for mountain biking, horse riding and carriage driving are extensive, using the network of beautiful bridleways, byways and other routes with public access. Many trails are part of the cultural heritage, following historic routes such as Roman roads, monastic highways, mining tracks and drovers' roads, as well as being great fun to ride.

- The Pennine Bridleway National Trail is currently being developed through the National Park for horse riders, cyclists and walkers. The first section in the Yorkshire Dales to open, the 10 mile Settle Loop, is already very popular.
- Recreational motor vehicle use of byways open to all traffic is a legitimate activity, but is controversial, and requires very special care to be taken by those undertaking the activity.

121. The rivers respond quickly to rainfall and there are spectacular waterfalls after heavy rain. Some rivers provide challenging white water opportunities. Whilst there is no recognised right of access for canoeists to a number of these sites, informal agreements are in place on some, and others have a history of tolerated use. The post-glacial lake of Semerwater, and reservoirs at Embsay and Grimwith offer opportunities for sailing and wind surfing.

122. A number of sites in the Dales are of national significance for paragliding and hang gliding. The numerous steep but smooth ridges that form the Dales are orientated to suit a variety of wind directions that make the area particularly attractive. All of the sites used have a formal agreement with the landowner.

Figure 4 Open access land and recognised walking, riding and cycling routes



Source: Special Qualities, Special Experiences YDNPA (2009)

Events

123. Many community and cultural events such as walking festivals, beer festivals and music festivals take place throughout the area and are organised through the commitment of local people. The Tourism Partnership tries to support community groups as part of the wider network of events going on around the area and promotes an area wide programme of events, on behalf of local communities.

124. The summer season sees almost every village hold its own village fête or agricultural show where local people have the opportunity to show their prize winning livestock, home grown vegetables and home baking.

125. The YDNPA works with other conservation organisations to create a diverse range of events which promote the area's special qualities. Series of events such as YDMT's Haytime Festival and RSPB's Aren't Birds Brilliant events, where members of the public are able to view peregrine falcons in their natural habitat at Malham Cove.

126. In addition the YDNPA and AONB have a comprehensive annual programme of events with approx 250 taking place in 2009. These vary from strenuous guided walks over open access land to family-friendly, stream-dipping at Malham, the aim is to cater for all tastes and abilities while promoting conservation messages. Events are led by volunteers, rangers, specialist staff and experts from other organisations. Both visitors and locals can choose from a wide range of activities, such as:

- Learning how to map-read on a basic 'Pathfinder' navigation courses.
- Climate change themed walks to show its effect on the environment along with the measures that the National Park Authority is taking to reduce its impact.
- Land management and habitat conservation, which has encouraged the return of the red squirrel to the National Park.
- Guided events discovering hidden pre-historic carvings within rock formations within Nidderdale AONB.

2.3 Accessibility and transport

127. With regard to choice of public transport, the Yorkshire Dales National Park is fortunate in that it has both train services, (Settle/Carlisle Railway), and bus services to and within the National Park area. The Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company has played a pivotal role in ensuring the provision of bus services to the Dales.

128. The impact of traffic on the area (whether it is motorbikes speeding along the roads or too many cars on a bank holiday weekend) means that encouraging sustainable transport is one of the major issues facing the Yorkshire Dales. It is recognised that both visitors and the local residents need access to local services or simply to get from one place to another, whether it is to get bread from the local shop, visit the doctor or go to the local pub.

129. A total of 23% of households in Great Britain did not have access to a car in 2006, compared with 25% 2005 and 30% in 1995/1997. Only 19% of people lived in households without a car as households without cars tend to be smaller than average. Over half (51%) of rural households have 2 or more cars. (National Statistics web site www.statistics.gov.uk).

130. Significantly, over the last 10 years the proportion of visitors travelling by private car around the area has appeared constant. The latest National Park visitor survey showed 90% of visitors travelling by car.

131. The YDNPA owns 10 car parks. These car parks have an approximate capacity of 1400 cars and 25 coaches. Car parks and associated facilities, such as toilets, remain expensive to provide and maintain. Revenue generated from car parks provides vital funding for NPA conservation and recreation work, and the facilities are provided for the benefit of all. This is explained on site at YDNPA car parks, beside the ticket machines.

132. The 2006 report "Tourism on Board" showed that people were using buses within the Yorkshire Dales for the following reasons:

- 83.1% of the respondents using the bus did not have access to a car whilst 16.9% did have access to a car
- 36.2% were using the bus as they were going for a walk/bike ride. 25.5% were using it as it was better for the environment. 11.7% said that it was easier than using the car, 10.6% said that there were better views and 7.4% said that it was more fun to use the bus.

133. With regard to choice of public transport the Yorkshire Dales is fortunate in that it has both train services, and bus services to and within the Yorkshire Dales area (Settle-Carlisle and other lines which come close to the National Park these include the Leeds Morecambe line, Wharfedale line and the Airedale Line). Within Nidderdale, the service which runs from Harrogate to Pateley Bridge is a regular service (Monday – Sunday). The Nidderdale Rambler runs on a Sunday, running into upper Nidderdale. Other regular services pass very close to key attractions within Nidderdale.

134. A significant contribution can be made in encouraging people to make intelligent decisions over travel choice, when travelling to and within the Yorkshire Dales, by the information and promotion of travel options. The Tourism Partnership is represented at the Local Travel Partnership and travel information is included in the Tourism Partnership's promotional material.

135. The statutory responsibility for transport within the National Park area rests with the county councils (North Yorkshire and Cumbria). They have responsibility for producing the Local Transport Plan (LTP), a plan that covers all forms of travel and includes strategies for promoting walking and cycling, green travel plans for journeys to work and school, with measures to reduce social exclusion and to address the needs of different groups in society.

XX – cross ref to TP strat re public transport?

2.4 Tourism administration, marketing and information delivery

136. The area is promoted through a partnership approach at a national, regional and sub-regional level. An example of national marketing is the 'Britain's Breathing Space's' campaign and brand, developed by the Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) and all UK National Parks Authorities. At a regional level the area is promoted through the regional tourism organisations' Welcome to Yorkshire and Cumbria Tourism websites and publications. At a sub-regional level it is promoted through the Tourism Partnership website and publications. The National Park logo is also a strong 'brand' and the rams head logo is currently being developed through a new initiative whereby businesses and events can use the newly trademarked National Park logo in their promotion, as a locator. Nidderdale will be reviewing its brand and how its logo is used by businesses in the coming months, taking into consideration the requirements of the Europarc European Charter of Sustainable Tourism award.

Delivery Mechanisms

137. Many of the functions of the YDNPA relate to the management of tourism and recreation in the area, to maintaining the rights of way network and supporting a sustainable tourism industry. There are only two staff posts specifically addressing tourism per se, the Sustainable Tourism Manager and the Sustainable Tourism Officer. The responsibilities of most of the senior management team (Conservation and Policy, Park Management, External Affairs, Finance and Resources) have a strong bearing on policy and action affecting tourism. Vital tourism-related functions are carried out by a range of managers and officers, including the Sustainable Tourism Manager, the National Park Centre Managers and Information Advisors, the Ranger Service, the Transport and Visitor Management Officer and the Interpretation Officer. The vast majority of officer roles have some element of tourism related, albeit to a lesser extent. These functions fall within different directorates in the Authority. There is therefore a great need for effective communication and coordination between them. The Special Qualities, Special Experiences strategy has been produced with the help of all these individuals and to ensure a consistent approach across the YDNPA.

138. Nidderdale staffing – **add to text**
AONB Manager – Paul Burgess FT
Assistant AONB Officer – Sarah PT
Information Officer – Leanne Fox PT
AONB Ranger x2 – 2days/4days
Farm Conservation Advisor (paid by FWAG) FT
Admin Assistant – FT post (job share)
Rights of Way Improvement Officer (paid by NYCC) FT
AONB Heritage Officer (PT)

139. At a regional level, Yorkshire Forward's (the regional development agency) remit includes strategic responsibility for tourism. Recently there have been many changes regarding the structures for the delivery of its tourism support function. However, in 2009 a new regional body was formed, Welcome to Yorkshire (previously Yorkshire Tourist Board), which supports strategic marketing, the acquisition of intelligence and promotion of major regional events.

140. Each of the local authorities in the Yorkshire Dales recognises the importance of tourism. All play critical roles in the provision of essential public infrastructure and other services and the administration of planning policy outside the designated area of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. Their level of more specific engagement in tourism, such as through information provision and marketing, varies, as does the focus and degree of coverage given to the Yorkshire Dales in this.

Current Marketing and Information Activities

141. In terms of media used for promotion and marketing, we are involved, directly, in several forms including:

- The 'Visitor' newspaper in NP and Visit Nidderdale AONB, in the AONB.
- Website
- Events
- Tourist Information Centres (TICs), National Park Centres (NPCs) and Park Information Points (PIPs).

142. The YDNPA and AONB produce a number of print publications that help to orientate the visitor and provide information post arrival. The most important are the two newspapers, for the protected areas, titled 'The Visitor' and 'Visit Nidderdale AONB'. They have a very high print run and are widely distributed. Both combine articles and messages about conservation, with topical features and practical information on making the most of a visit.

In addition there are a number of important commercial publications about the area, including maps and guide books which the NPA offers editorial assistance with, an example of this work is the maps produced by Harvey Maps which were jointly developed with the intention of encouraging greater take up of map usage.

143. There are a plethora of websites which include information about the Yorkshire Dales, many operate on a commercial basis and the protected area authorities have little or no control of these sites, That said, this does not appear to be a problem. The websites which are operated directly by the protected area authorities and the Tourism Partnership include information about the organisations and link tourism promotion to the special qualities.

144. NPC's a Network of information Centres and described the flagship centres etc XX more from Paul re his centres – **add to text.**

145. Use of Social networking by both NPA and AONB Twitter, Face book, U tube, Geocaching, geocaching events, Blue tooth etc – bid to reach less traditional markets - **add to text**

2.5 Current visitors' performance and trends

Number of Visitors to the Yorkshire Dales National Park

146. The only available data on visitor numbers for the Yorkshire Dales National Park is from the APVS 1994 survey. This survey estimated 8.3 million visitor days to the National Park in 1994. More recent figures are for the Yorkshire Dales partnership area (larger than the National Park and AONB as it includes gateway areas such as Skipton) and are based on the 'STEAM' data model. The numbers of visitor days in 2006/7 are as follows:

Tourist Days (Millions)	2006	2007	% change
Serviced Accommodation	2.33	2.09	-10%
Non-Serviced Accommodation	5.58	5.04	-10%
Staying with friends and relatives (SFR)	1.52	1.52	0%
Day Visitors	11.26	11.30	0%
Total	20.69	19.96	- 4%

Tourist Numbers (Millions)	2006	2007	% change
Serviced Accommodation	1.34	1.14	-15%
Non-Serviced Accommodation	0.88	0.76	-13%
Staying with friends and relatives (SFR)	0.37	0.37	0%
Day Visitors	11.26	11.30	0%
Total	13.46	13.85	- 2%

147. Based on the Yorkshire Dales National Park visitor survey, visitors come from the following areas:

Region	All visitors %	Day visitors%	Overnight visitors %
Yorkshire and the Humber	44.3	61.8%	24.4%
North West	23.4	25.7%	20.8%
North East	6.4	5.2%	9.5%
East Midlands	5.6	3.1%	8.3%
South East	5	2.1%	7.7%
East Anglia	4.5	1.0%	7.1%
London	3.3	0.5%	7.1%
South West	3.3	0.5%	6.5%
West Midlands	2.5	0.0%	4.8%
Wales	1.1	0.0%	2.4%
Scotland	0.6	0.0%	1.2%
Northern Ireland	0	0.0%	0.0%

Profile of visitors to the Yorkshire Dales National Park

148. The YDNPA undertakes a survey of its visitors in the National Park, every 5 years. Unfortunately there is no equivalent survey for AONB but the profile shown below is believed to be similar across both designated areas. This profile is taken from the

executive summary of the Customer Satisfaction Survey 2008 with comparison with previous years survey in 2002:

- The majority of respondents (77%) belonged to the more mature age groups of 45 years and older. Only a minute proportion of (2%) belonged to the younger age groups of 16 to 24 years old. This strong bias toward older visitors may be explained in part by the fact the survey was conducted largely outside school holidays, which means that those with children at home were captured less.
- Similarly to 2002, 61% of participants in the survey were male, with around two fifths (38% in 2002, 39% in 2008) of respondents being female.
- Nearly all of those participating in the survey classed themselves as white, British, Irish or any other white background (97%).
- A total of 8% of all respondents classed themselves as disabled and 92% did not.

Characteristics of visit

- The majority of respondents were either on a day visit from home outside of the Yorkshire Dales National Park or were staying overnight in the Yorkshire Dales National Park (47.1% and 43.7% respectively). Only 6% were on a day visit from home within the YDNP and 3% were staying overnight outside of the YDNP boundaries.
- The mean average party size was 3.68. The mode (most frequent value) was 2 with 53% of those interviewed being in a party of this size.
- The majority of respondents did not have any children with them (85%). Of those that did, the mean average for the number of children taken was 1.95; again, this may be explained in part by the fact that the survey was conducted largely outside school holidays.
- Of the 47% of respondents who were staying overnight, the average length of stay was 4.18 nights.
- Almost all respondents had travelled by car to the YDNP (90%), and only 3% had used public buses or coaches, with 12% using other modes of travel.
- The YDNP attracts a high proportion of repeat visitors with 93% of all respondents having visited before and only 7% visiting the park for the very first time. Aysgarth Falls and Muker demonstrated the highest levels of first time visitors, with 21% of visitors to both sites visiting the Dales for the first time. Other sites showed little variation.
- The average number of visits amongst those that had visited in the last 12 months was 8.1 visits.
- The source of information used most by respondents to plan their visits was an ordnance survey map or other type of map (52%). Around a quarter of respondents stated they did not use any other sources of information to plan their visit (24%), with

around one in five stating they used a guide book (22%) and a similar number stating they used a leaflet (22%).

2.6 Business and Protected Areas

What are businesses looking for?

- Visitors come and spend
- We have a high quality product that they can promote
- Marketing opportunities and to be represented regionally and nationally
- Visitors are encouraged to look after what they come to see

149. We are aware of what businesses require to enable them to fulfil their roles in tourism. However are also aware that businesses could be involved with processes at a much greater level and at an earlier stage. So although the business sector is represented on the TP Exec board, there needs to improvement in the communications between board members and the businesses they represent. This will be addressed with the development of a business forum to engage businesses on key issues.

150. Studies following the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak have highlighted the high levels of interdependencies of businesses within the rural economy, the reliance on visitors and the economic impact of visitor spend. The 'ECOTEC' study commissioned in 2003 involved:

- a survey of over 500 local tourism related businesses (with a 21% response rate)
- telephone interviews with 17 businesses
- interviews with 12 key informants, including business associations, Yorkshire Tourist Board and YDNPA rangers
- a local economic audit
- a prioritisation workshop

151. Businesses are concentrated in the key settlements such as Skipton, Grassington, Settle and Ingleton, which is not surprising given the high number of tourists. The survey found that at the heart of tourism are activities related to the rights of way network – highlighting the importance of mechanisms to enhance and strengthen the relationship between the local economy and access routes.

- There is a proliferation of small scale accommodation businesses in the area – many of which are accommodation related (mostly catered) and with few bed spaces (6 or less).
- Businesses were quite well established but tended to employ only a few people often on a part time or seasonal basis.

152. The survey demonstrates the importance of UK holiday makers to local business (interestingly local residents are as important as day visitors for many businesses). Overseas visitors make up a valuable but small part of customers for businesses surveyed (7%), higher than in some similar areas such as the Lake District.

- The most common outdoor activities of people visiting the businesses surveyed were walking (46% short walks and 29% on longer distance walks) and cycling (5%). There are some interesting differences between areas including a bias towards short walks in Ribblesdale, longer walks in Upper Wharfedale, horse riders in Malhamdale and caving in Ribblesdale.
- Businesses are either highly or fairly dependent on outdoor activities. This is perhaps a little worrying in some respects – though does presents opportunities for joint working/promotion – which would be welcomed by local businesses.

153. The survey suggested there is scope to improve information on outdoor activities and opportunities.

- Businesses felt that whilst there was a good range of opportunities, eroded access routes and opportunities for people with disabilities should be addressed. Poor quality signposting, the condition of stiles and parking (number, cost and location issues) were perceived as key constraints to usage of the rights of way.
- A number of additional services were suggested including parking, public transport, public toilets and campsites and budget accommodation. There were also a number of improvements for the specific groups that the park should consider.
- It is clear that local businesses value walkers and cyclists/mountain bikers who are seen as higher spenders than some other activity groups. Businesses perceive that cavers and climbers were low spenders and that there was little demand for anglers/canoeists.

154. When developing tourism and access policies the YDNPA is aware that overnight visitors spend are likely to generate at least ten times as much tourism revenue as day visitors and arguably have less environmental impact (in transport terms for instance). Using average spend figures based on 2003 this and other surveys it was estimated that the rights of way network, in Craven helps generate nearly £75 million a year. The implication is that only a small proportion of revenue comes from visitors who do not take part in outdoor activities. This finding is believed to apply across the Yorkshire Dales.

2.7 Visitor perceptions

155. Quality and equality of experience is the key to the long-term sustainability of tourism. This includes the experience that visitors enjoy when they come to the National Park and wider area, the experience of those working in the industry and the interactions between communities and local tourism providers. In all these, good practice should be recognised and become the benchmark for everyone involved in tourism.

156. Overall the National Park has a good starting point: based on the customer satisfaction survey (2008), a large majority of current visitors are very satisfied (73%) or satisfied (21%) with their visit to the Yorkshire Dales National Park.? Do we know figures for rest of area? Yes, AONB – in Nidderdale tourism survey – **insert**

157. The visitor survey shows that there are high levels of satisfaction, and understanding of what the Yorkshire Dales has to offer.

Visitor Perception of Yorkshire Dales National Park

158. Key findings of visitor perceptions of the National Park based on the 2008 survey:

- When asked, the most frequently mentioned special quality of the Yorkshire Dales NP was its natural beauty/scenery and views (84%). Two fifths commented, without being prompted, on the open space/freedom and remoteness (39%). For about one third, walks and walking opportunities was considered to be a special quality (34%).
- When asked to rate facilities, respondents were asked to use a scale from 1 to 6 (with 1 being not at all satisfied and 6 being very satisfied). All facilities received positive mean average ratings above 4. Aspects that received the best ratings included guided walks (5.74 mean), NP centres (5.68 mean) and NP leaflets (5.60 mean). Unsurprisingly, car parks and toilets were the two facilities that were used by most respondents (81% and 75% respectively).
- Public transport information (4.35 mean) and provision (4.50 mean) were not only used by only a small fraction of the visitors but also received the lowest satisfaction ratings.
- Aspects most enjoyed by visitors to the YDNP included scenery and landscape (62%), good walking (41%) and peace and tranquillity (22%).
- Aspects that visitors were less satisfied with included bad weather (16%), costs of parking (5%), traffic congestion (5%) and too many people (4%).
- Positively, a large majority of respondents were either very satisfied (73%) or satisfied (21%) with the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The mean overall average satisfaction score was 5.67 out of 6.

Awareness of Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and its services

- 6 out of 10 visitors (60%) showed an unprompted awareness that the National Park Authority is the organisation in charge of looking after the natural environment of the Yorkshire Dales and promoting understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities.
- An even higher proportion of almost nine out of ten (86%) had heard of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority before the day of the interview.
- The services that most respondents perceived to be managed by the NPA included looking after the environment (67%), looking after the rights of way (53%) and tourism/promotion of the area (27%).

2.8 Market Context

159. The final part of the assessment is to consider the general market context within which tourism in the Yorkshire Dales has to operate. Rather than presenting a comprehensive analysis of the tourism market in the UK, a set of key pointers are given below which are felt to be particularly relevant in terms of the strategy for the Yorkshire Dales.

Niche Marketing activities

160. There are believed to be a number of un-tapped/undeveloped niche markets that would benefit the area, if there was a more coordinated approach to marketing. Research undertaken in Cumbria states holidays are becoming more frequent and they are increasingly dedicated to special interests and activities. To help tap into these markets the YDNPA, Craven District Council, North Yorkshire County Council and WY have developed niche marketing campaigns, such as the '[year of adventure](#)', in partnership with others. This campaign seeks to encourage long stays as well as extension of the season by suggesting 52 featured 'adventures', one for each week of the year. Adventures suggested cater for a range of abilities, and are located within the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Park.

Adventure tourism

161. The adventure tourism sector has become an important part of the UK tourism and leisure market. Adventure tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the travel industry globally (Mintel 2007). According to research recently carried out by Cumbria Tourism (Review of the Adventure Tourism Sector in Cumbria - 2009), by the end of 2008 activity holidays are expected to account for nearly one in eight holidays taken by Britons. Growing from just over one in ten holidays in 2003, activity holidays account for 17.6% of overseas market value. This means the growth of this sector has outpaced the overall holiday market in terms of both the domestic and overseas markets.

162. Tourism choices are influenced by growing interest in health, wellness and fitness. Activity holidays have most appeal to people aged 20-44 with a broad appeal across ABC1/C2. The traditional 'relaxing on a beach' holiday is showing a decline' (-9% from 2003-07) in favour of more active pursuits. The range of niche activities continues to grow as tastes diversify. In terms of developing this market, the Yorkshire Dales should capitalise on the fact that it has more readily accessible adventure for most than the 'high octane' image of the Lakes or Scotland.

New audiences

163. There is a general lack of recognition amongst mainstream tourism promoters of the economic value of attracting non-traditional groups such as Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups. This is thought to be due to these groups not being seen as potential high value tourists. However, it is recognised that any high level promotion to new audiences has to go hand in hand with awareness raising with the industry.

Evening economy

164. Another possible under-developed area identified in the regional tourism agenda, is the evening economy: for example, encouraging restaurants and shops to stay open later and provide more options for families to dine in the Dales during the evening, other than in pubs. (Planning permission would obviously have to be considered with any such changes: the main consideration would be avoiding loss of amenity for neighbours etc.). This would have the added advantage of encouraging people to stay over, thereby extending the length of stay and reducing the carbon footprint at the same time. It could also link in with other activities or events such as the 'dark skies' initiative. This initiative gives people the opportunity to experience the wonders of the night's sky, where it has not been obliterated by artificial light, as is often the case in urban areas.

Environmental issues

165. The impact of the environment on the tourist market is very significant, but the different dimensions of this need to be understood. The quality of landscape is a fundamental motivator and one of the single most important attributes of a visit to the Yorkshire Dales.

166. Nationally there is also a considerable amount of self-interest in environmental quality; almost two thirds of UK holiday takers are looking for a well managed environment that is clean and litter free, (quoted from the Tourism Company report for the Broads). There is a considerable general interest in nature and wildlife while on holiday. In a recent survey by VisitBritain, opportunity to see wildlife came sixth out of 32 factors that holidaymakers thought were important. Recent studies of rural tourism suggest that the chance of seeing wildlife greatly adds to people's enjoyment of walking on holiday. However, the market of people where wildlife adds to their experience is far greater than the more specialist wildlife holiday market – Mintel estimates that 6% of the population have taken a holiday where wildlife watching was the main motivation.

167. Turning to concern for the environment while on holiday, very few people are specifically motivated by limiting their environmental impact as a main reason for a holiday choice. The deep-green niche represents under 1% of travellers. However, people are affected by environmental issues when other factors such as location, quality and price are equal. There is some evidence that they may be prepared to pay a small premium for this – a survey by the English Tourism Council found that almost two thirds of those surveyed would be prepared to pay extra for accommodation committed to good environmental practice. The method of presentation and the messages that are put across are very important.

2.9 Summary – SWOT

strengths	weakness
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extensive rights of way network offering excellent freedom of access on foot and on horse back/cycling 2. large area of contiguous open access land 3. network of scenic roads 4. Outstanding and unique natural, historic and cultural environment 5. Strong perception of tranquillity 6. Cherished and respected 7. Well known – recognised visitor destination 8. Highly accessible to a large population 9. Easily accessible by train 10. Offering diversity of recreational opportunities 11. High quality visitor and natural attractions 12. Good record of recreation management 13. local produce and iconic tea room and Dales pub experience 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of understanding of the Yorkshire Dales sustainable tourism product 2. Few examples of marketing of businesses and recreation (a few examples around e.g. Settle Loop leaflet) 3. Limited availability of suitable forms of transport other than the private car for visitors 4. No 'off-road' family friendly cycle routes 5. Limited easy terrain for the less mobile 6. Lack of trees for screening development 7. Few activities for poor weather 8. Disparate nature of the accommodation stock / providers 9. Relative high numbers of unaccredited accommodation providers 10. Out-of-date economic data 11. Park messages get 'lost' amongst wider tourism promotion
opportunities	threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Europarc Charter award for sustainable tourism – development of green tourism 2. Economy in the Dales heavily dependent on recreation - opportunity to develop wider ranging benefits through joint promotion e.g. Settle Loop 3. Opportunities to reach out to hard to reach groups including those with a disability the economically disadvantaged, black and ethnic minority groups, youth groups and people from inner city areas, through recreation opportunities 4. Use of subtle management tools to maximise visitor enjoyment and minimise impacts 5. Changes in visitor habits as fuel costs rise, which may lead to a shift to other modes of transport 6. Network of minor roads that could be better utilised by cyclists and horse riders 7. A network of well signposted, attractive, circular walks from key visitor transport nodes and settlements. 8. improve internet marketing and website with promotion of European Charter brand 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Climate change 2. Loss of cheap accommodation (e.g. YH) 3. Lack of consensus on approach to tourism 4. Uncertainty over the future more generally 5. Erosion of tranquillity by vehicles, and physical damage to the natural and cultural heritage of the National Park through recreational motor vehicles 6. Strong economic drivers for development of formal / fee paying recreation facilities e.g. via ferrata 7. Increasing pace of life 8. changing habits – Dales may not be 'entertaining' enough for modern families 9. lack of range of accommodation 10. competition from competing destinations home and abroad, 11. competition from alternative leisure activities making the Parks less relevant to modern life 12. the fluctuating global economy

3. Strategic direction

168. This chapter sets out the strategic context for strategy for sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales. The Yorkshire Dales Tourism Strategy must be seen in the context of a National, Regional and Local Tourism strategic frameworks. It also has great synergy with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism and its process of development meets the Charter requirements.

3.1 National policy direction

169. Tourism refers to all activities of visitors including both 'tourists' (overnight visitors) and 'same-day visitors'. The World Tourism Organisation recognises that achieving sustainable tourism is an iterative process:

'achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary. Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of visitor satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them'. (WTO 2008)

170. The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, defines 'Sustainable tourism' as:

'any form of development, management or tourist 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.'
(Europarc 2000).

171. To be sustainable all tourism related activity must consider its impact on the area and safeguard the special qualities of the area. Impacts can be positive, for example supporting local businesses and helping to maintain the landscape and local traditional methods of farming through buying local produce, or negative impacts on the environment, for example waste and pollution. Encouraging tourism which has a low carbon footprint e.g. walking a long distance trail such as the Pennine Way, travelling around the area by train rather than private car, is consistent with 'sustainable tourism'. This is summarised in the English National Park Authorities' Association (ENPAA) [position statement on sustainable tourism](#).

172. National tourism policy (expressed by DCMS in Tomorrow's Tourism Today) puts particular emphasis on improving competitiveness in order to achieve growth, notably through improvement in marketing, quality, skills and data. However, it recognises the key importance of rural areas as tourism destinations and the imperative of conserving their cultural and natural heritage.

3.2 The European Charter

173. The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is a practical tool or methodology to ensure that tourism in Europe's protected areas is developed in a sustainable manner. To qualify for the charter the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Tourism partnership has shown that it works work together with all those involved with tourism in the area to develop a shared vision and strategy for tourism development. Partners now need to make a 5-year commitment to implement a set of agreed joint actions whilst continuing to strive for excellence in the management of tourism in the areas.

174. The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas emphasizes the need to balance the protection of the environment, with the needs of visitors and the local community; whilst promoting the enjoyment and conservation of the special qualities of the protected area.

175. The Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale AONB was awarded the [*European Charter for Sustainable Tourism*](#) in 2008. The key principles underlying this part of the strategy, taken directly from the European Charter, are:

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.

3.3 Regional Strategic Context

176. Whilst the Yorkshire Forward Visitor Economy Strategy (2008) sets out Yorkshire Forward's aspirations for tourism across the region and highlights the need to improve the quality of jobs and the performance of businesses by growing visitor spend as opposed to the total overall number of visitors.

The key messages from this strategy are that:

- over the next five years Yorkshire and Humber will grow the value of the visitor economy by 5% per annum.
- Tourism businesses in the region support this goal and strive for high level achievement in satisfying customer needs.

- The people of Yorkshire and Humber will take pride in sharing their great places and precious landscapes with visitors from all over the world and enjoy the benefits that tourism brings. (This cascades from the Regional Economic Strategy)

177. The strategic aim is to increase the value of tourism to the regional economy through quality and sustainable growth based on the assets and opportunities of the region and to use tourism to modernise the regional image of Yorkshire and the Humber. With the supporting themes:

Strategy:

- To provide strategic direction for growth of the visitor economy behind which the tourism sector can align and supporting this co-ordinated approach to planning delivery.
- To improve regional understanding of the visitor economy and develop a better evidence base.

Innovation:

- To develop the regions tourism offer of the future based on identified strengths and opportunities.

Place - Great Destinations:

- To ensure that the development of great places in our region maximises the potential for growth of the visitor economy.

Product - Quality:

- To raise the quality of the tourism offer in the region.

People – Customer Service:

- To bring tourism and skills tourism partners to instil an ambitious, enterprising learning culture in the tourism sector where customer service is a top priority.

Promotion – Image and Branding:

- To promote a positive image of the region in a contemporary way that inspires visitors to experience Yorkshire.

178. *Bold Vision, Bright Future: the Regional Marketing Strategy* (date?) sets out specific strategic goals; details target markets and campaign themes; appropriate channels to market; and how to effectively brand the regional tourism brand. This document also provides context and guidance to the Area Tourism Plans developed at sub-regional level (Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Tourism Strategy). While the Strategy sets out regional priorities, it also recognises that there are sub-regional variations, and that sub-regional partnerships will need to focus on appropriate action within the overall strategic context.

- Marketing spend must be targeted where it will achieve the best return on investment
- Development of a set of compelling and consistent destination brands with emotional appeal is essential; Yorkshire is the lead brand to be further strengthened, but a number of sub-regional brands that have positive recognition should also be developed further

- There will be high profile domestic leisure campaigns to strengthen awareness of both Yorkshire and other destination brands, and to develop themes attractive to target markets
- Day visit campaigns will be implemented at a sub-regional level
- A Customer Relationship Management and data strategy will be implemented at a regional level
- Customer fulfilment channels must be user-friendly and streamlined to allow the customer to make a booking in as few steps as possible from initial interest.
- Special interest and travel trade promotion will be undertaken at regional and sub-regional level as appropriate

179. *The Cultural Prospectus for York and North Yorkshire* (date?) sets out a programme to drive forward the development of culture in York and North Yorkshire. The aim of the document is to develop and bring forward inspirational ideas that have the potential to be transformational and deliver high impacts. The Prospectus is intended to communicate this thinking to all sectors of the sub-region that are interested and/or involved in cultural activity. It also intends to influence those bodies responsible for strategy and funding at a regional level.

- **Outdoor Adventure** - developing cultural and environmental assets for sustainable outdoor recreation, improving the quality of provision and partnership working and addressing the obstacles to participation such as fragmented marketing, poor transport coordination and outdated facilities.
- **Festivals and Events** - to increase visitor spend over 5 years by £10.5m per annum, support inward investment by improving the quality of life and transform the cultural brand of North Yorkshire.
- **Heritage Landscapes** - to change the face of the cultural offer using heritage, by building on existing excellent heritage assets, developing new attractions of international standing, building cultural quarters to develop contemporary cultural and broaden market appeal.

3.4 Local Strategic Context

Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Tourism Partnership

180. Following the structural changes within tourism delivery at a sub-regional level, a new tourism strategy for Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate is to be developed, to show how the regional objectives outlined above, will be delivered at a local level. Specifically this strategy identifies opportunities to broaden the appeal of the local visitor economy and support businesses that wish to improve their product and grow their business in a sustainable way that builds capacity and skills within the sector and supports the wider social and economic lives of the residents in, and visitors to, the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate. Strategy is still to be approved by the Board.

181. The Strategy's vision is for tourism in the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate is that of:

- a culture of continuous improvement in the quality of the tourism product that aims to achieve the highest levels of visitor satisfaction in the region.
- a broad and inclusive market appeal resulting in a more vibrant, economically sustainable and dynamic tourism sector.
- a genuinely sustainable tourism industry that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
- a visitor economy that supports high quality jobs, encourages inward investment and nurtures a diverse and exciting cultural life for everyone visiting or living in the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate.

182. The Strategy's aims are to:

1. Increase the value of the visitor economy in the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate by a minimum of 5% per annum.
2. Improve the quality of employment in the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate by increasing the number of full time and year round employment opportunities.
3. Increase the proportion of first time visitors to the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate from 21% to 35% by 2012.
4. Increase the average spend per head of staying and day visitors by more than 5%.
5. Increase the proportion of total expenditure by staying visitors in the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate from 33% to 40% by 2012.

183. To meet these aims the strategy adopts the following key principles in its operation:

- Add value to delivery of services through economies of scale in operation, a reduction in duplicated activity and by minimising overheads
- Add value to the activities of other tourism related organisations and operators in the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate area
- Work with brands that will provide the framework for all promotional activity across the area
- Target segments that will balance maximum economic benefit with minimal environmental and community impact
- Ensure the best information provision for visitors both before visiting and during their visit
- Maximise the ease of booking for the potential visitor.

184. The strategy is of a high level strategic nature, and whilst recognising the importance of sustainable tourism, and the European Charter Award, it does not give specific actions that show how the carter principles will be delivered. Therefore this strategy, specific to the Charter designated areas, has been produced.

Designated Area Context

185. The aims and objectives for tourism and recreation in the National Park are outlined in its National Park Management Plan (2007) *Yorkshire Dales: Today and Tomorrow*. Whilst the policies explaining how these objectives are to be delivered are explained in the

thematic strategy – *Special Qualities, Special Experiences*. This document recognises that to ensure sustainable tourism this that visitors need to:

- Have greater awareness of what makes the area special and unique, and value it for these reasons
- Consider the areas of the National Park they are visiting, the activities they are undertaking and the impact they are having on the National Park
- Travel by means that reduce the carbon footprint of the area, and once here, stay longer, ideally overnight
- Come at different times of year; by boosting visits outside the current peak seasons businesses are able to increase their income throughout the year
- Think about the environmental performance of the businesses and services they use as part of their visit, including the availability of local produce to reduce 'food miles' and help maintain traditional farming methods.

186. Work with local businesses to ensure:

- A high-quality, welcoming and accessible experience for all visitors to the National Park, regardless of background, disability, ethnicity, sexuality and socio-economic group.
- Marketing is consistent with the good management of the special qualities that underpin the National Park's appeal.
- Effective networks exist to bring together the public and private sectors through a partnership approach. The interests of industry providers, visitors and communities, both in the National Park and in surrounding areas, come together to develop a mutual understanding of each other's needs and priorities.
- Tourism products and services are developed to help understanding of the area through activities and events that draw on the special qualities of the National Park; focusing on its distinctiveness, and ensuring high standards.
- A good range of accommodation, signed up to accreditation schemes such as the walker/cyclist welcome.
- Accommodation occupancy rates and visitor numbers remain consistent at peak times, with increases seen in the 'off-peak' occupancy rates.
- Good, up-to-date research so any gaps in provision of visitor facilities are identified at an early stage e.g. there may be a limited number of family based facilities and/or a lack of certain types of accommodation. The review of planning policy, through the Local Development Framework, could provide some flexibility to help fill gaps identified and safeguard existing facilities.
- Any tourism and visitor management decisions are based on sound evidence.

Nidderdale AONB

187. Nidderdale AONB also has a Management Plan (2009 -2014), this has a number of objectives relating to tourism:

- Create business and visitor awareness of the benefits of a sustainable approach and encourage their participation by providing advice and practical support.
- Reduce the impact from tourism on the environment by encouraging tourist businesses to become greener, by producing and distributing information for visitors, organising interpretative events and by encouraging use of public transport.
- Increase tourism's contribution to the upkeep of the environment by organising a visitor pay-back scheme in the AONB.
- Maximise the economic benefits of tourism to the local economy by increasing the quality of the tourism offer through improvements to accommodation, infrastructure and attractions.
- Enhance the profile of the AONB as a destination for sustainable tourism by developing a sub-regional brand within the Yorkshire Dales.
- Raise standards of service and stewardship so that visitors "return and recommend".

3.5 Development of a Vision

188. 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 both 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.

3.6 Strategic Objectives

189. Taken together the aims and objectives above provide the starting point for the strategic objectives for this document. They can only be achieved by working in partnership with tourism businesses, and other organisations, to ensure everyone understands what makes the environment of the Yorkshire Dales special, and how tourism makes a positive contribution to the economy and well-being of those who live and work here. To this end the strategic underlying aims for this strategy, which encompasses all of the regional, and local objectives are:

Distinctiveness and branding

1. To ensure the Yorkshire Dales is recognised as a UK destination with a quality brand based on the special qualities of the area, including opportunities for outdoor activities.

(Charter principles 1, 4, 5, and 6)

Quality and Investment

2. To develop a culture of continuous improvement in the quality of the tourism product that aims to achieve the highest levels of visitor satisfaction in the country.

(Charter principles 4, 8, and 9)

Marketing

3. to ensure a broad and inclusive market appeal resulting in a more vibrant, economically sustainable and dynamic tourism sector.

(Charter principles 4, 5, 6 and 9)

Environment and Management

4. To encourage businesses and tourism enterprises to conserve and enhance the environment and engage in effective visitor management in sensitive locations.

(Charter principles 1, 3, 7 and 8)

Economy

5. To sustain a visitor economy that supports high quality jobs, encourages inward investment and nurtures a diverse and exciting cultural life for everyone visiting or living in the Yorkshire Dales.

(Charter principles 1, 8, and 9)

Information and Orientation

6. To ensure that all visitors are fully aware of the wide range of places to visit and things to do in the Yorkshire Dales and encourage discovery of what the area has to offer.

(Charter principles 4, 5, 6 and 7)

3.7 Target markets

The selection of target markets for the Dales reflects current trends in the marketplace and the strategic approach outlined above.

Five factors have a particular influence on this market selection:

- Fit with the product strengths: Visitors who relate to the nature of the appeal of the Dales and attributes in which it has a comparative advantage.
- Opportunities for future growth: Visitors who are likely to return to the Dales in future.
- Seasonality of the market: Visitors who are able and likely to come out of season.
- The need for social inclusion: Openness towards all visitors, encouraging and facilitating less frequent visitors to the countryside and people with disabilities.
- Level of spending: Visitors who may spend more money locally per head per day.

TP target markets have been identified by the TP as? –still to be determined

4. Priorities for Action

190. This chapter sets out the priorities for action for the Yorkshire Dales in line with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas and the protected areas' current areas for action.

191. The effectiveness of the Action Plan will be carefully monitored. Reliable and informative performance information is essential to facilitate proper management of the Action Plan by the NPA/AONB and the other lead agencies, and to provide key stakeholders and the wider community with the means to evaluate progress.

192. Quantitative targets for actions will form the yardstick by which the effectiveness of the organisations with responsibility for project delivery can be judged. Targets will be set and monitored on an annual basis.

193. Both protected areas have committed to supporting the implementation of this action plan.

Note:

Some actions are NPA actions or AONB actions and some are joint actions – either to be achieved by working together or achieving the same action individually.

Distinctiveness and branding

- 1. To ensure the Yorkshire Dales is recognised as a UK destination with a quality brand based on the special qualities of the area, including opportunities for outdoor activities.**

Increase understanding of and promote the work of the two protected areas within the Yorkshire Dales

- Maintain a presence at major events locally and nationally which can promote the Authority and the National Park.
- Explore with other public sector partners opportunities for shared communication activities

Increase understanding of and promotion of the two protected areas within the wider Yorkshire Dales – including the special qualities and opportunities they present

- Encourage partner organisations and community organisations to use the Yorkshire Dales National Park style for outdoor interpretation panels and signs across the National Park
- Increase promotion of key messages and what's special about the 'park experience' within TP publications and ensure these messages do not get 'lost' within TP publications
- Provide clear and consistent messages about what people can do to help conserve the special qualities of the protected areas
- Highlight the "Park experience" as a separate tourism product ensuring the protected areas logos are communicated in tourism promotion
- Improve links to NPA/AONB websites from partner organisations
- Develop an image library of images which promote the special qualities of the protected areas.
- Continue to promote the Yorkshire Dales National Park, through UK ANPA and the Britain's Breathing Space's brand, as a place for physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing.
- Encourage visitors to have a greater awareness of what makes the area special and unique, and value it for these reasons

Ensure that more people are aware of AONB purposes and boundaries, and enhance people's understanding of the designation and the importance of conservation by communicating information about AONB special qualities.

- Support Friends of Nidderdale AONB and achieve a membership increase of 10% annually.
- Maintain opportunities for volunteering in the AONB and increase numbers by 10% annually to assist local authorities with achieving 'Good Performance' status for National Indicator 6 and Local Indicator 63.
- Maintain volunteering opportunities for people with special needs to assist local authorities with achieving 'Good Performance' status for National Indicator 6 and Local Indicator 56.
- Install AONB boundary signs on the highway network.
- Organise an annual events programme and increase participant numbers by 5% annually.
- Produce at least one edition of the AONB residents' newsletter annually and distribute to all AONB households.
- Produce and distribute at least 25 000 copies of the AONB summer newsletter for visitors annually.
- Maintain the AONB's websites and increase numbers visiting the sites by 5% annually.
- Organise at least 1 dales-wide festival focusing on special qualities of the protected landscapes with the Yorkshire Dales Leader Action Group.

Develop, through the Tourism Partnership, a range of high quality, innovative heritage, cultural and sustainable tourism initiatives that make imaginative use of the area's image and assets (EE3) by 2011

- Dependent on outcome of LEADER funding, work with North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority, Nidderdale AONB and Tourism Partnership to develop Sense of Place training seminars and toolkit for use by tourism businesses

Work with businesses to:

- Ensure tourism products and services are developed to help understanding of the area through activities and events that draw on the special qualities of the National Park; focusing on its distinctiveness, and ensuring high standards.
- Promote local produce and products that will help deliver sustainable tourism and achieve a high quality visitor experience.
- Influence people's opinion about the area, and help them understand what the area has to offer:

Raise awareness of connections between conservation projects and potential tourism development.

- Deliver the 'Date with Nature' peregrine viewing scheme at Malham Cove in partnership with the RSPB and develop more partnership ambush events of this nature
- Support the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust's 'Hay Time' project:

Create identity amongst a wide range of interest groups and partners with a shared strategy.

- Set up a management board/Steering group/forum/network beyond the TP comprising of YDNPA/AONB/NT/Conservation Interests/Green Businesses and Academic Interests.

Work as a key regional influencer, working to ensure that sustainable tourism is high on the agenda of those with this remit.

- Ensure protected areas continue to have a high profile and are well represented at sub regional level.
- Support the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate Tourism Partnership

Promote the European Charter award within NP/AONB & TP publications and events, including the recently developed NP/AONB logo

- Use the recently developed joint NP/AONB logo (see appendix 1) to promote and profile special tourism via marketing materials and other corporate information in order to get across a common, simple message to as wide an audience as possible in line with the two Authority's communications policies.
- Investigate the potential to produce one joint promotional 'freebie' NP/AONB item to be distributed at major events, as appropriate to promote the European Charter award

By 2011 undertake five promotional campaigns aimed at specific recreational activities to raise awareness of the Authority's recreation charter and codes of conduct (AR5)

- Contribute to the development of the Coast to Coast mountain bike route
- Work with partners in developing and launching the Way of the Roses (Morecambe, Yorkshire Dales, York to Bridlington) cycle route
- Develop and produce leaflets for a series of 5 way marked short introductory walking routes from settlements
- Contribute to the refreshed Year of Adventure website
- Maintain the new 'getting active' section on the NPA's website

- Subject to the outcome of a current LEADER bid progress the Outdoor provider's network and capitalise on any potential areas of joint working between the Outdoor provider's network and the forum.

Quality and Investment

2. To develop a culture of continuous improvement in the quality of the tourism product that aims to achieve the highest levels of visitor satisfaction in the country.

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.

- Increase the number of businesses that are accredited through a green tourism scheme from 0% to 25% by 2011 Work with Tourism Partnership to implement recognised green scheme e.g. GTBS with a minimum 20 businesses
- Lead by example and take all NPCs through the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS)
- Work with all Park Information Points to increase awareness of green accreditation and assist 3 to complete pre-certification assessments.
- Capitalise on the green business development work of Welcome to Yorkshire and VisitEngland

Work with local businesses and organisations to ensure

- A high-quality, welcoming and accessible experience for all visitors to the National Park, regardless of background, disability, ethnicity, sexuality and socio-economic group.
- A good range of accommodation, signed up to accreditation schemes such as the walker/cyclist welcome, and green tourism business scheme.
- Ensure the provision of a quality product and service that reflects the image and reputation of the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate as a quality destination and that exceeds the expectations of the visitor.
- Use the planning process to manage improvements to existing facilities and make possible new visitor facilities, (including car parking), particularly where this is part of any new visitor and/or tourism developments.

Maintain and improve the rights of way network

Ensure all NPA visitor facilities, transport ‘interchanges’ and car parks are of a high quality and design in keeping with the character of the location.

- Maintain Authority car parks and toilets so that at least 80% of users rate them satisfactory or above
- Carry out a customer satisfaction survey of car parks and toilets
- Make improvements to all of the Authority’s public toilets, to achieve an upgrade in quality as measured by the ‘Loo of the Year’ awards

Provide accessible, high-quality National Park Centre and museum services that positively influence people’s enjoyment and understanding of the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park so that the average satisfaction rating for the four National Park Centres improves each year

- Use annual NPC survey and performance indicator results to identify key improvements to service delivery
- Arrange and deliver the relevant training or awareness session for Information Advisors.

Continue to provide high quality interpretation services

- Continue to provide professional advice and referral to interpretation projects being run by officers within the Authority.

Provide high quality, efficient and effective services to the public in a way that responds to the needs of users and ensures that they are widely accessible to those who live, visit, or work in the National Park, including attainment of the Customer Service Excellence standard by 2011

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 LDF.

Commission STEAM research, modelled on data from the National Park area, to inform and fill the gaps in economic trend data knowledge from 2007 onwards.

- Agree a separate NPA contract
- Encourage NP businesses to participate in data gathering process
- Use data to make comparisons with other NP areas
- Publish results via YDNPA website and other channels, where appropriate

Marketing

3. to ensure a broad and inclusive market appeal resulting in a more vibrant, economically sustainable and dynamic tourism sector.

Create and implement a marketing strategy to raise awareness of the national park and special qualities

- create a seasonal marketing plan
- implement plan, budget permitting
- ensure point of sale material is produced using the new brand style

Commission surveys about markets, products, activities etc. highlighting what the potential for the Dales could be and which would be necessary to develop such aspects successfully.

Work in partnership with others to promote a single events programme for all providers, which will seek to support Dales communities and be promoted in a timely and coordinated way.

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

- Continue to provide production of YDNPA and AONB visitor publications and distribute appropriately.
- Through promotional material (web and publications) provide 'key messages' to increase users' awareness of their impact and to influence their behaviour towards the Yorkshire Dales National Park.
- Work with businesses to help them support and become 'ambassadors' for our 'key messages';
- Ensure our key messages are featured in marketing material, and that images of the area reflect the special qualities of the National Park;
- Continue to promote the Yorkshire Dales National Park, through UK ANPA and the Britain's Breathing Space's brand, as a place for physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing.
- Achieve national media coverage of stories based on a priority work area

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

- Promote activities in those areas where the type of activity, and further development and associated increase in visitor numbers, can be managed, thus safeguarding the environment, and not placing an undue burden on land management interests. (This will be based on the characteristics of the different areas of the Park as identified in the special qualities and landscape character assessment).
- Develop an all-year-round tourism product that safeguards and/or enhances the character and environmental assets of the area;
- Promote the leaving of vehicles in the car park over night so multi-day trips can be undertaken using alternative modes of travel.
- Encourage more 'staying' rather than 'day' visits through sustainable tourism initiatives;
- Continue to integrate public transport promotion and information into sustainable tourism and outreach activities.
- Work as a key regional influencer, working to ensure that sustainable tourism is high on the agenda of those with this remit

- Through partnership working and promote environmental good practice and ensure tourism is managed in a sustainable way that safeguards and enhances the high environmental quality of the area whilst benefiting the economy and local communities

Through the Tourism Partnership, strengthen and develop the image of the National Park to incorporate sustainability, inclusion and conservation values, alongside outdoor recreation, excitement and enjoyment

- Use publications, events and other opportunities to encourage businesses, residents and visitors to buy and source local food and products that support national park purposes (EE9)
- Promote travel to and within the Yorkshire Dales National Park that reduces energy consumption and pollution, and people's impact on the environment.
- Ensure promotional material for the area presents a range of viable travel options for travel to and within the area, other than by car.

Bearing in mind the potential, current trends and possible markets develop new tourism packages which integrate the experience of natural and cultural heritage and tourism businesses.

- Involve green businesses in networks and development of packages. (via Leader outdoor providers and RDPE green Partners and Sense of Place)

Enhance the economic opportunities within the Yorkshire Dales outdoor-activity industry, to

- Develop opportunities for niche marketing, e.g. by taking an active part in the 'ad cap' (Cumbria Tourism) and 'outdoor adventure - transformational theme' (North Yorkshire geographical programme);
- Work with businesses to ensure a variety of opportunities for outdoor activity and instruction are available;
- Use existing partnerships, such as GoDales Project to help develop a vibrant outdoor-activity industry that meets the needs of residents and visitors.

Raise awareness of the National Park and the range of services available, among BME target groups, using the means most appropriate to specific groups, including face-to-face, direct contact.

Develop or support opportunities for participation, especially for key groups such as young people, based on the recreational activities and special qualities of the area, to create healthier lifestyles and to improve community well-being:

- Develop an annual programme of National Park Authority events, walks and activities based on the special qualities of the National Park to promote understanding and deliver wider benefits such as health and spiritual well-being.
- Work with health professions and support the delivery of local, regional and national physical activity plans and initiatives e.g. Be Active, Be Healthy Physical Activity Care Pathway, Healthy Towns, Change4life, Fit for Future, Walking the Way to Health, where resources allow.
- Develop specific projects to target the principal groups identified in the Diversity Review, through a unified focus on families, as groups representing needs across the user spectrum.

Dependent on outcome of Regional Economic Improvement Plan funding, act as lead organisation in Tourism Partnership to implement actions in Green Partner scheme project

Economy

4. To sustain a visitor economy that supports high quality jobs, encourages inward investment and nurtures a diverse and exciting cultural life for everyone visiting or living in the Yorkshire Dales.

Support local service provision – by spending in the local economy, businesses can help to maintain local services and suppliers. This leads to a ‘multiplier’ effect in terms of visitor spend which benefits the whole area. (SESQ)

- Investigate ways of capitalising on DCM exhibitions (e.g. needlecraft) to sell commissions
- Make arrangements to showcase and sell local products from a minimum of three suppliers either via NPC or online
- re-design the NPA e-shop to match the new design of the website
- promote the NPA e-shop to achieve an average monthly visitor figure of 800
- investigate a range of alternative ‘pay back’ gifts using Oxfam’s unwrapped range as inspiration

Encourage visitors to come at different times of year; by boosting visits outside the current peak seasons businesses are able to increase their income throughout the year

- Accommodation occupancy rates and visitor numbers remain consistent at peak times, with increases seen in the ‘off-peak’ occupancy rates

Support creation of new enterprises that complement and enhance landscape and that capitalise on the AONB’s environmental assets.

- Provide Sustainable Development Fund grants to support new enterprise and attract RDPE funding through /Business Link YF’s Rural Enterprise Investment Programme in accordance with objectives in the Sub Regional Investment Plan.
- Provide businesses with advice and practical help on applications to the Yorkshire Dales Leader programme Yorkshire Forward to 2011 in accordance with objectives in the Yorkshire Dales Local Development Strategy.

Provide visitors to the NP & AONB with information about activities, events, attractions and services provided by local tourism businesses.

- Produce information pack for NP & AONB accommodation providers and update annually as required

Ensure that the tourism industry has the opportunity to play a leading role in setting and delivering the tourism agenda.

Reduce the carbon footprint of the businesses by monitoring the impact it has on the environment, both in terms of direct energy consumption e.g. fuel bills, and indirectly e.g. sourcing local products and using local produce wherever possible. (SESQ)

Support Yorwoods to develop economic opportunities based on the sustainable use of woodlands within the National Park

Information and Orientation

- 5. To ensure that all visitors are fully aware of the wide range of places to visit and things to do in the Yorkshire Dales and encourage discovery of what the area has to offer.**

Raise awareness of the National Park amongst visitors and the general public so that by 2013 at least 10% of people in England and Wales can name it as being a National Park (UE8)

- Produce two newsletters for outdoor businesses
- Publish and distribute two issues of the 'Dales' newspaper including e-format versions
- Publish and distribute 'The Visitor' 2011 newspaper including an e-format version
- Consider combining YDNPA and Nidderdale AONB visitor newspapers

Provide information and organise activities and events that help people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the AONB.

- Maintain the AONB's Young Ranger Group and increase participation rate by at least 25% by 2010.
- Create satellite Young Ranger activity programmes in at least 5 young people's organisations by 2011.
- Work with TP to support providers of outdoor pursuits to create and maintain opportunities for caving, canoeing, mountain biking and other activity sports in the AONB where this does not harm the environment or compromise tranquillity.

Maintain the network and hierarchy of major visitor centres, partnership centres and smaller information points

- Undertake a joint protected area project to promote the Europarc European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas award within NPCs, TICs and PIPs in both areas

Raise awareness of the AONB across socio-economically and ethnically diverse communities in urban areas of West Yorkshire.

- Maintain the Source to City project and obtain funding for a community-based project in 2010

Make information about the National Park easily accessible and relevant to a diverse range of groups and individuals, focusing on the urban areas of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Teesside that surround it:

- increase the percentage of residents in Keighley and Bradford who are aware of the National Park from 25% in 2005 to 30% by 2011
- increase the number of visitors from black and minority ethnic communities from 1% in 2005 to 2% in 2011 (UE3)
- each year develop and implement one new programme of formal or informal education or training to encourage schools and groups to get involved in conserving the special qualities of the National Park (UE5)
- develop an annual programme of at least 120 Authority events, walks and activities based on the special qualities of the National Park to promote understanding and deliver wider benefits such as health and spiritual well-being (UE9)
- Develop three projects which deliver outreach targets through tourism business and community based organisations.

Ensure that local people and visitors have access to and adequate information about 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.

- Maintain the AONB leisure bus network at a minimum 2008 level and achieve a 15% increase in usage on 2008 figures.

Undertake a process of consultation with community groups about the provision of 'welcome' facilities in National Park car parks - some of the outcomes of this consultation could take the form of artworks, interpretation panels, Bluetooth hotspots or mp3 hire for example.

Encourage the development of community interpretation projects where ownership lies with groups and individuals in the communities themselves.

Continue to provide a guidance service for all internal interpretation proposals and an optional service for interpretation planned by external organisations.

Enable people to enjoy heritage thorough education, by removing barriers to access and by encouraging participation in events to celebrate the NP's & AONB's heritage.

- Organise an annual programme of heritage events and activities
- Carry out a series of events to raise awareness of the historic environment within the AONB's annual programme of heritage events and activities
- **Host a historic environment day school and a building conservation day school within the National Park**

Improve opportunities for cycling in the AONB.

- Implement 2006 - 2011 Local Transport Plan target for improved cycle access to Pateley Bridge Service Centre.
- Create 3 new mountain bike (MTB) routes in the AONB by 2010 and promote via Yorkshire Dales MTB website.
- Produce report on a cross-Pennine cycle route and develop implementation and marketing plan by 2010.

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

- Deliver the Authority's annual events programme including information and activities for people with a range of disabilities
- Identify and promote circular and linear routes, including 'miles without stiles' and 'access for all' routes between settlements and attractions that also provide access to facilities and services where possible.
- Promote circular and linear cycling and walking routes as a sustainable and healthy way to enjoy the National Park.
- Evaluate the need for a set of walk cards for a priority group; produce and distribute if appropriate

Through the 'Go Dales' project, provide up to 1,900 spaces on outdoor activity taster days involving at least 380 individuals by 2011 (AR8)

- undertake 46 activity days for individuals to take part in through the 'Go Dales' project
- support seven recreational advisory groups as a mechanism for sharing information and liaison for outdoor activities across the National Park
- support three meetings of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum

Provide information on recreational activities:

- Review and refresh the provision of information on recreational opportunities on YDNPA website and micro sites
- Produce a generic leaflet on walking opportunities in the National Park
- Produce information on 8 open access walks

Continue to seek opportunities to enhance access and information to and within Open Access land.

- Run a programme of events to introduce people to walking on open access land.
- Map gates and stiles on to open access land, and make this information available to the public.

Provide opportunity for 5,000 volunteer days,

Provide opportunity for 650 volunteer days for people from under represented groups

Use new technologies and approaches to maximise effectiveness of promoting understanding and enjoyment through information and interpretation by further developing the NPA website and promoting the use of new technologies

- ensure 100% of www.yorkshiredales.org.uk has been exported to the new design (excluding e-shop)
- Evaluate the website, and implement minor changes. If necessary, prepare plan for 2011-12 with allocated funding for any major changes
- launch and promote the website to achieve 270,000 annual visitors
- Place Bluetooth technology in two national park centres, promote the new service and evaluate
- Investigate, and depending on the outcome, put map-based information, information about walks onto our website www.yorkshiredales.org.uk that can be downloaded onto mapping software.
- Maintain RSS feeds available from the National Park Authority's website and the www.traveldales.org.uk websites to enable National Park information to feed directly in to other websites.
- Development the 'Virtual Visit' webpages (www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/virtual_visits) to include information supplied by external partners such as the National Trust.

Ensure that the rights of way network, particularly around village centres, is suitable for all standards of walkers and provides a variety of circular routes and is signed in accordance with statutory responsibility and NPA policy.

- Sign and colour code mountain bike and walking circular and linear routes on popular low level trails.
- Seek improvements in directional signing to encourage traffic to use the higher order roads in an up-dated Advisory Road Hierarchy, when travelling to, or within, the area.
- Remove unnecessary and misleading signs from all areas, and persuade others to also remove unnecessary signs.
- Use subtle visitor management techniques to direct people to their chosen destination.
- Way marking, from settlements and other development in the main Dales, will be used to the extent necessary to orientate visitors, and give them confidence, in their surroundings.
- In rural lowland areas and tributary dales, ensure way marking is basic but clear to avoid 'over-management' and will be unobtrusive within the surroundings.
- In open upland areas, way markers will only be used out of legal necessity or where required as an aid to navigation, with the aim of ensuring that any signs of human activity are minimal

5. Next steps

At the start of the European Charter process it was decided that this Strategy would utilise the existing Tourism Partnership Strategy and dovetail new actions and objectives into this at its renewal date, which was March 2010. However in the time between the verification process and the report to the evaluation committee there have been fundamental changes to the way the tourism partnership operates. So much so that the new Tourism Partnership Strategy which was to have been updated by now, is still in the process of being written.

We have endeavoured to liaise with partners and have established that whilst there are changes to the way the partnership operates, the individual partners are supportive of the European Charter principles and have agreed that the two protected areas of Nidderdale AONB and the Yorkshire dales National Park should still lead this process on behalf of the tourism partnership.

Clearly the original plan to have a combined tourism strategy for the area will not now work in the way we anticipated. So, as an interim arrangement we have produced this strategy document which seeks to address the issues identified during the application and verification visit. This document is supported with the National Park Authority's newly revised Integrated Traffic and Visitor management plan (Special Qualities Special Experiences, 2009).

Another key area which we have sought to address through this process is that of the identity of the area in terms of recognition as a European Charter destination, which was also a concern within the verification process. To this end we have worked with a design company to develop a brand which will be capable of being used alongside the logos of Nidderdale AONB and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. It is intended that this raises the profile and recognition of the European Charter and is also something which can be used to promote the special qualities of the protected areas. This was developed with European Charter Part 2 in mind, with a version of this badge which will be offered to businesses in the area as an identifier that they are a European Charter business. You will see these logos on the cover of this strategy document and we still plan to provide an update for the Europarc newsletter to share our experience and ideas behind this work.

The final key recommendation was that a tourism forum be established. Once more this would have been a sub group of the Tourism Partnership Executive Board, with conservation and business interests represented. However as the final structures for the new arrangements have not yet been decided we will continue to make contact with our businesses and conservation interests such as the National trust, RSPB and Wildlife Trust via the sustainable tourism workshops which we will continue to provide to raise awareness of the European Charter and wider green issues amongst businesses and stakeholders.

Linked to this area of work we are working with partners to develop a 'Sense of Place' for the area, this will be subject of LEADER funding application and will offer an opportunity for wider promotion of the special qualities of the protected areas.

We are still hopeful that the issue of a strategy for the areas will soon be resolved, but in the meantime work will continue to refine this strategy for the two protected areas.