Spring 2025 : Issue 170

Yorkshire DALES review

Changing Course

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Front Cover: Loup Scar near Burnsall.
Photo courtesy of Victoria Benn

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Contents

Recapturing the Postwar Vision

Britain's protected landscapes were born at a time when an impoverished country recovering from the Second World War faced unprecedented challenges. Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Chief Executive David Butterworth calls on the government to revive that spirit of optimism and invest in addressing the climate and biodiversity crises and increasing access to the countryside.

It seems fitting that this edition of the *Review* should take as its theme 'Changing Course'. I think many of us are still trying to come to terms with the path that the new government is developing, particularly in relation to its effect on the environment and protected landscapes like the Yorkshire Dales that we hold dear.

I must confess to a little surprise at some of the recent announcements by government, particularly that the 'growth mission trumps all other missions'. I had to give my head a little wobble at hearing that. Was the chancellor referring to sustainable growth, or any kind of growth by any kind of means? The recent announcement of a third runway at Heathrow suggests that it may well be that any type of economic development trumps every other issue – including the nature and climate emergencies. If this is the case, that is quite depressing enough in itself, but tied to the fact that the government's annual grant to all the country's protected landscapes, which make up 25% of England, is now being cut once again only adds to the gloom.

I recently attended an event at Malham Youth Hostel honouring the founding father of national parks – John Dower – and marking the 75th anniversary of the parliamentary act that created national parks and increased access to the countryside. The event also acknowledged the 70th anniversary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It was a truly inspiring occasion, marked by the attendance of members of the Dower family and a number of people who had been instrumental in the development of national parks in the UK. We were joined by a group of young children visiting the national park for the first time. In spite of it being a rather cold and typical Dales autumn day, the delight in the eyes and the chatter in the children's voices was a joy to behold.

Baroness Sue Hayman, the newly appointed Minister for Access, attended the event and fair play to her. She spoke in glowing terms of the importance of increasing access to the countryside from all sectors of society, and the role national parks should play in achieving this. However, carrying out the fiscal aspects of her role, she also raised the problems facing the country because of the difficult financial position post-election.

Lessons from the Past

As she spoke, I could not help but contrast the position we think we are facing in 2025 to that faced by John Dower and his colleagues post-1945. Dower's seminal paper was written in 1943, as bombs were still falling on British cities at the height of the war, and published in May 1945, as a very damaged and financially broken nation was setting out its future path. It was an extraordinary letter of **hope** for what the nation **could be** and how the countryside could play a huge part in **national renewal** following those dark days of the Second World War. Looking back, it is frankly amazing that such a paper could be written at such a time and its relevance to the present day is there for all to see.

As a nation, it appears we are struggling with our identity more than ever before – trying to work out what our role should be in the world, and what our values are as we move towards the middle of the 21st century. It falls to us all, including the new government, to face down and tackle the challenges of climate change, the gradual dismantling of nature in the UK and the lack of opportunity for so many in our society to experience these wonderful landscapes. Surely we are not claiming that the situation we are facing in 2025 is comparable to that in 1945? History now tells us that the 1945 government, in spite of the challenges it faced, still found the time and resources to set up the NHS, revolutionise industry, establish the modern welfare state AND establish national parks in the UK.

In meeting today's challenges, it might be instructive to go back to Dower's paper. He wrote: 'There can be few national purposes which, at so modest a cost, offer so large a prospect of health-giving happiness for the people.' Hear, hear.

David Butterworth, Chief Executive Officer,
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

John Dower. Photo courtesy of Campaign for National Parks

DalesBus Sees Continued Growth

More and more people are travelling on the weekend DalesBus services managed by our subsidiary, Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company (D&BCIC).

Further improvements to the network were made last year, helped by a grant from North Yorkshire Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan, which is funded by the UK government. The Cravenlink Sunday bus service 864 between Skipton and Malham now runs mainly hourly throughout the day, with a new through link from Keighley. Further north, the popular Northern DalesBus Sunday service 830 from Ribblehead Station was reintroduced, connecting with trains from Leeds, visiting Hawes and going over the Buttertubs Pass to Swaledale, with a new linking journey from Darlington to Ribblehead.

Over the summer passenger numbers on the DalesBus network increased by 15% compared with the previous year (excluding service 59, which was disrupted by road closures at Kex Gill on the A59).

Critical funding decisions are still awaited for summer 2025, but D&BCIC hopes to provide a full summer timetable from Easter weekend, covering the same routes as last year.

Full details of all bus and train services in the Yorkshire Dales area are available online at www.dalesbus.org and in leaflets from many local outlets. The maximum single fare for any bus journey is just £3 throughout 2025.

D&BCIC is currently seeking additional volunteers to help maintain, develop and promote the DalesBus services. If you would be interested in finding out more, please get in touch by emailing info@dalesandbowland.com or via the Friends of the Dales office.

Cravenlink 873, Barden Moor

Traffic-Free Course

As many of you will know, one of our founding members, Vice President Colin Speakman, was also co-creator of The Dales Way, the long-distance path that runs from Ilkley to Bowness-on-Windermere, 50 years ago. This has recently had an upgrade, with a new 0.25-mile riverside stretch between Buckden and Hubberholme taking the route off the highway.

This fully accessible path was built by the National Trust with support from Wharfedale Naturalists, the Dales Way Association and farmer Tom Akrigg, and a grant from the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's Farming in Protected Landscapes scheme. Colin opened the new section at a recent ribbon cutting event.

Hidden Costs of Insecticides

Scientists have found that the fur used by birds to build the inner linings of their nests contained ingredients used in pet flea treatments. Exposure of eggs and chicks to such harmful chemicals is linked to higher offspring mortality.

The researchers collected 103 blue and great tit nests that were lined with fur, finding that 100% of them contained fipronil, which cannot be applied to crops in the UK, and 89% contained imidacloprid, which was banned in the EU for agricultural use in 2018. Both are still widely used in pet flea treatments.

Many bird species line their nests with fur and their breeding seasons in spring and summer coincide with the time when cats and dogs are most likely to be treated with insecticides.

...And the good news is:

For the first time in five years the government has not granted an emergency authorisation for the use of Cruiser SB, which contains the neonicotinoid thiamethoxam, on sugar beet. This chemical is extremely toxic to pollinators such as bees.

Lighting Up

Fuelled by the rapid adoption of cheap and bright LEDs, light pollution has soared by nearly 10% every year for the past decade. This represents a doubling of sky brightness every eight years.

This causes serious adverse effects on invertebrates, including moths and aquatic insects.

Going Back to the Old Ways

Traditional horsepower has been used to extract timber from Cleatop Wood near Settle.

Dales cross pony Roandale Duchess and her owner, forestry contractor Tom Dutson, have helped the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority to tidy up the ancient and environmentally sensitive woodland while protecting the soil from damage. The work is part of a long-term conservation plan to remove non-native Japanese larch and pine trees, probably dating from the Second World War, replant with broad-leaved native species and encourage natural regeneration.

The ancient craft of snigging involves one or more horses pulling a length of timber behind them on a chain that fixes onto a harness.

'Duchess works hard in woods to get into sites where access is constrained or fiddly, and where the ground doesn't want too much impact,' says Tom. 'She has quite a light touch compared with some machinery, which would be the alternative approach.'

Cleatop Wood is south of Settle, close to the roundabout where the road from the town meets the A65. It was designated a local nature reserve in 2004 and is worth a visit in spring when there is an impressive display of bluebells. Along with Freeholders' Wood near Aysgarth Falls, it is one of the few larger sites among the 0.5% of the Yorkshire Dales owned by the national park authority.

Wrong Track?

The BBC says that the government has agreed a new funding arrangement with the controversial wood-burning Drax power station that it claims will cut subsidies in half. As reported in the spring 2023 issue of the *Review*, the Yorkshire plant has been able to receive billions of pounds of public money and an accounting quirk means that it is able to sell carbon credits that could eventually be used to fund environmental initiatives in the Dales. However, campaigners say that it is responsible for the felling of healthy trees in Canadian rainforests to produce wood pellets for burning as biomass.

Letter to the Editor

The Roads That Should not be Taken?

In the winter 2025 issue of the *Review* Mark Cocker raised the contentious issue of the place, if any, of motorised vehicles in protected landscapes. Local and national park authorities can prohibit, by means of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), non-essential motor vehicles from green lanes. Motorbikes and 4x4s inflict damage, noise and nuisance. Why, then, do the authorities not simply prohibit them? Three reasons.

- Firstly, the preparation and imposition of TROs is a lengthy, expensive and cumbersome business even though the law gives ample justification for such prohibitions. For instance, one of the five legal reasons for imposing them is 'for conserving or enhancing the natural beauty of the area', and the others are all to do with environmental protection and the amenity of non-motorised people. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority has used these powers to put in place 10 orders on the most sensitive routes in the park.
- Secondly, any proposed TROs will be challenged by the bodies that represent motorcyclists and 4x4 users. YDNPA, for example, was forced to the expense of re-making the orders to comply with a technicality highlighted by the High Court judge.
- Thirdly, motorcyclists and 4x4 users are already acting illegally if they stray from the green lanes over which they have, or may have, rights, and drive across private land or on footpaths and bridleways. The remedy here is police action to enforce the law but resources are stretched.

Locally individuals and organisations such as Friends of the Dales can mobilise public opinion and lobby their local and national park authorities to carefully and systematically initiate programmes for the imposition of TROs. But ultimately parliament should make it illegal to take a non-essential motor vehicle away from the tarmac. Protected landscapes should be places where people can escape the noise and nuisance and explore the precious legacy of green lanes on foot, bicycles, horses and rugged electric mobility scooters.

Michael Bartholomew, Chairman,
the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Alliance

www.ydgla.co.uk

Photo courtesy of Mark Cocker

Hellifield Flashes

On the Edge

Controversial proposals for a major leisure development on wetlands close to the Yorkshire Dales National Park boundary could have a devastating impact on important winter feeding grounds supporting large numbers of wading birds. Executive Director Ann Shadrake finds hope in new legislation that will oblige planners to consider the special qualities of protected landscapes.

When Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote the poem *Inversnaid* in the early 1880s he was inspired as much by his direct experience of the fragile beauty of the natural world as his religious faith. His exquisite imagery chimes with the awe and joy I find in watching wildlife, even in the overlooked margins and unprotected scraps of nature right on my doorstep.

One of my 'go-to' places is Hellifield Flashes, a set of fields just to the north of Hellifield alongside the busy A65. Grazed by sheep and

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

Teal

Curlew

Shovelers

cattle and crossed by a public right of way weaving out from the village, these fields may look ordinary most of the year but are utterly transformed during winter.

Winter rain and run-off collects naturally in two depressions creating the ephemeral pools, or flashes, of Great Dunbar and Little Dunbar. These large, shallow, temporary ponds attract extraordinary numbers of ducks and wading birds – many red listed due to their vulnerability. They rest, sleep and wash in the natural pools as mixed flocks – shoveler, teal, wigeon, redshank, curlew, black-headed gull and black-tailed godwit. The waders plunge their long bills into the soggy grassland, hunting for hidden earthworms and insect pupae, whilst the ducks graze in slowly moving flocks on the succulent grass.

Extraordinary views of this natural wildlife spectacular are on offer to people who keep to the footpath and, importantly, keep their dogs close by. The birds are habituated to the few people occasionally walking past at that particular distance. Meander off the path or allow your dog to run free and hundreds of birds will panic as one, expending precious calories as they catapult into the sky.

My favourite 'ultra waders', black-tailed godwits, will have flown in their thousands from frozen Iceland to winter on our fields, lagoons and shorelines. They need quiet, undisturbed feeding time to lay down fat reserves to fuel the return trip to breed amongst the insect-filled bounty of the arctic summer. Decades of observations by local ornithological clubs and regular monthly surveys by British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) volunteers prove the critical value of Hellifield Flashes beyond doubt.

Valuable but Vulnerable

However, the site has no legal protection despite being intrinsically linked with the larger protected wetlands of nearby Long Preston Deeps Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This has left Hellifield Flashes open to decades of speculative and ill-judged planning applications and outdated designation as a tourism development site in the Local Plan.

In March 2019, a concerted effort by Friends of the Dales and local and national campaigners persuaded planners at Craven

Continues on page 8...

Canada geese over Hellifield Flashes.
All photos courtesy of Ann Shadrake

Weight of the Law

Campaign for National Parks is celebrating after intervening in a judicial review, which has seen the government accept that it acted illegally in approving the development of a significant car park extension in Dedham Vale without observing the new legal duty to 'conserve and enhance' national parks and landscapes. The case sets an important precedent and it is hoped that it will send a clear message to planning authorities of the consequences of failing to comply with the new legislation.

www.cnp.org.uk/news/victory-in-landmark-legal-case

District Council (CDC) to refuse a disastrous proposal to build 300 holiday chalets on the site. One key consideration, amongst many, was the destruction of its value as a largely undisturbed resting and feeding site for wintering waders and waterfowl.

Despite that refusal, the applicant waited barely a year before submitting an almost identical planning application for a smaller number (99) of lodges. Then in April 2023, responsibility for planning passed from CDC to the newly set up North Yorkshire Council. The whole sorry merry-go-round of due process through the planning system continues to stutter on.

So what is the situation as I write in February 2025? The latest proposal – a reduction to 73 lodges – is still entirely inappropriate* for the site for a host of reasons. This massive building project and the subsequent pressure from thousands of cars, people and dogs every year will entirely destroy the site's value as a precious winter wildlife haven. Even if sufficient biodiversity net gain were offered, there is increasing evidence that BNG just doesn't work in practice.

Of wider consideration is the critical location of Hellifield Flashes on the edge – or 'setting' – of the Yorkshire Dales. This should bring special consideration of the impact on the national park itself, but we see little evidence that this has been fully evaluated.

Wigeon feeding on Hellifield Flashes

Following a brilliant campaign by Campaign for National Parks (CNP), an amendment was successfully added to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023. This s245 clause brings a very clear obligation upon public bodies and planning authorities to consider the protection of national parks. As a result, NYC must now fully consider how the proposals at Hellifield Flashes will or will not further the statutory purposes of the national park. Broadly speaking these are conservation (purpose 1) and public enjoyment (purpose 2) of the special qualities of the national park. If there is conflict between them, greater weight must be given to the conservation purpose. This balancing in favour of conservation is called the Sandford Principle.

Perhaps this tiny yet critical shift in legislation might be the key to lock the door for good on the damaging proposals at Hellifield Flashes.

In my view we cannot ignore the value of the tiny scraps of nature-filled land within or close to our national parks. We must not sacrifice such places to the supposed saviour of development and economic growth. These overlooked remnants of wet and wild places are actually critical backstops against the twin existential threats facing our national parks – climate breakdown and biodiversity loss. We believe now is the right time for NYC to shift the future for Hellifield Flashes away from tourism development and towards nature and people. Maybe it's also time for us to stand up for the waders and ducks of Hellifield Flashes as much as the infamously derided 'bats and newts'.

Ann Shadrake, Executive Director

**To view our detailed objections, see our website or the NYC planning portal (application ref C2020/21553/OUT) or email ann.shadrake@friendsofthedales.org.uk for a copy*

Gallaber Pond in 2019

Snaizeholme

Back to the Future

In 2021 only 3.4% of the Yorkshire Dales was covered in woodland, compared with a national average of 9%. The bleak uplands surrounding Widdale near Hawes were typical of many landscapes within the national park: far from the madding crowd but also lacking in wildlife and the rich variety of habitats needed to maintain vibrant, sustainable ecosystems.

But it hadn't always been so. At the end of the last Ice Age 90% of the Yorkshire Dales would have been wooded but since then almost all the tree cover has been cleared to create farms and villages. So when the Woodland Trust succeeded in raising £3.5 million to buy 560 hectares of windswept, nature-depleted land at Snaizeholme, it set out on one of its most ambitious projects to date – switching course and turning the clock back centuries. The charity aims to create a haven for rare species like the red squirrel and black grouse, restore vulnerable habitats like peat bogs and limestone pavements and make the landscape more resilient to climate change.

Work began in 2023. Two years on, what has been achieved?

Continues on page 10...

Snaizeholme Estate. Photo courtesy of Richard Atton

Woodland Creation

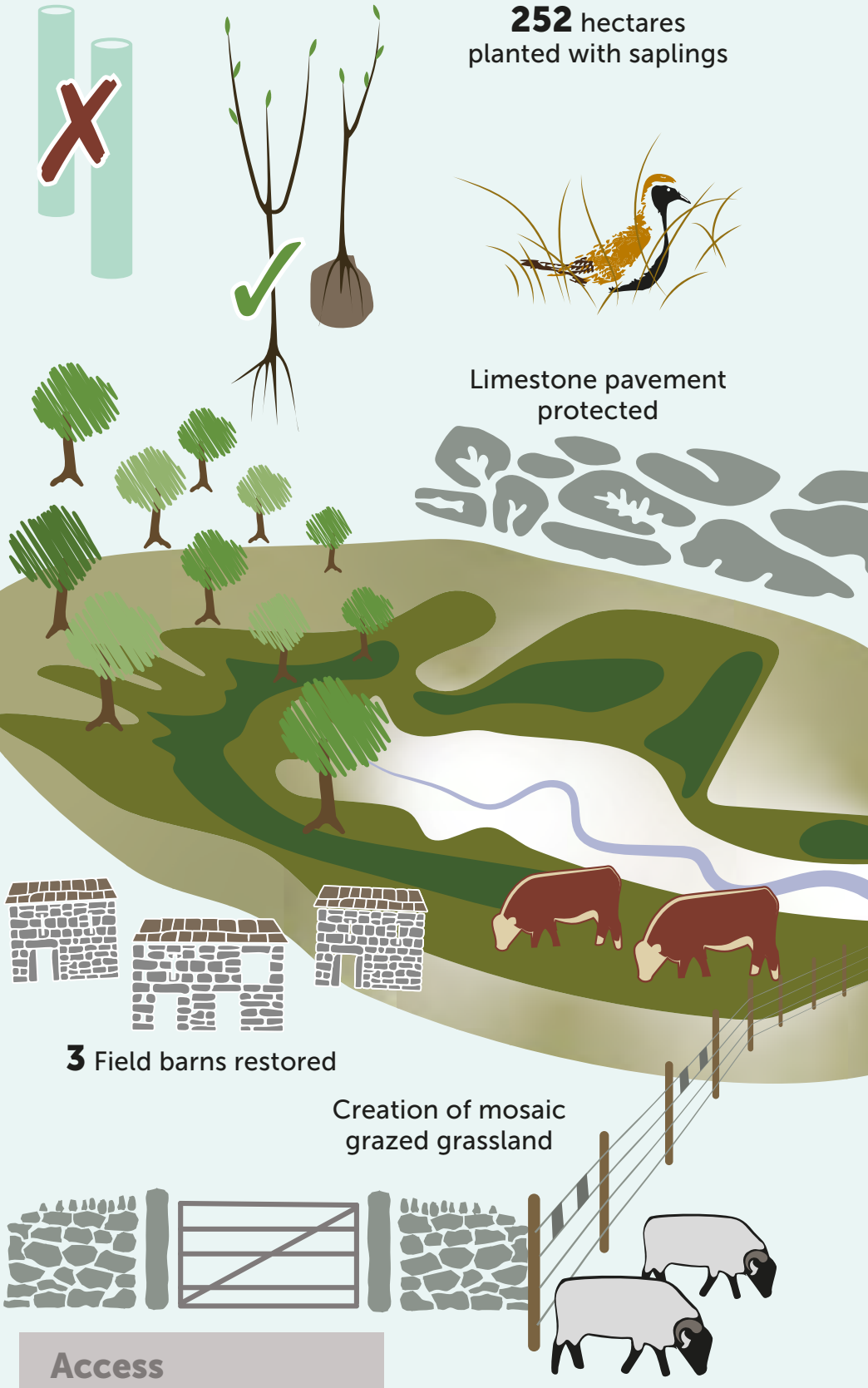
- 290 hectares of new woodland but there may be additional planting in future
- Plans to introduce rarer montane species into these areas next season. Cuttings and seeds could be taken for future propagation at Snaizeholme and possibly elsewhere in the Dales
- Following Woodland Trust policy, no single-use plastic tree guards are used. The charity is planting twice as many saplings and accepting losses but survival rates are good
- Ongoing grey squirrel management

Barn Restoration

- Work nearly complete on three field barns in the valley bottom to ensure they are structurally sound
- The buildings will be used for a range of different purposes, such as a 'field centre' for use by a range of organisations

Fencing

- Barriers protect tree planting compartments, help livestock management in the valley bottom and support the creation of a mosaic of grazed grassland to enhance the riverside meadow habitats
- Nearly all work completed with a break in winter 2023/24 due to difficult ground conditions
- Derelict walls retained as wildlife corridors



Access

- Final phase of work completed in 2024
- Tracks will continue to blend into the landscape and help more sensitive land management

Snaizeholme

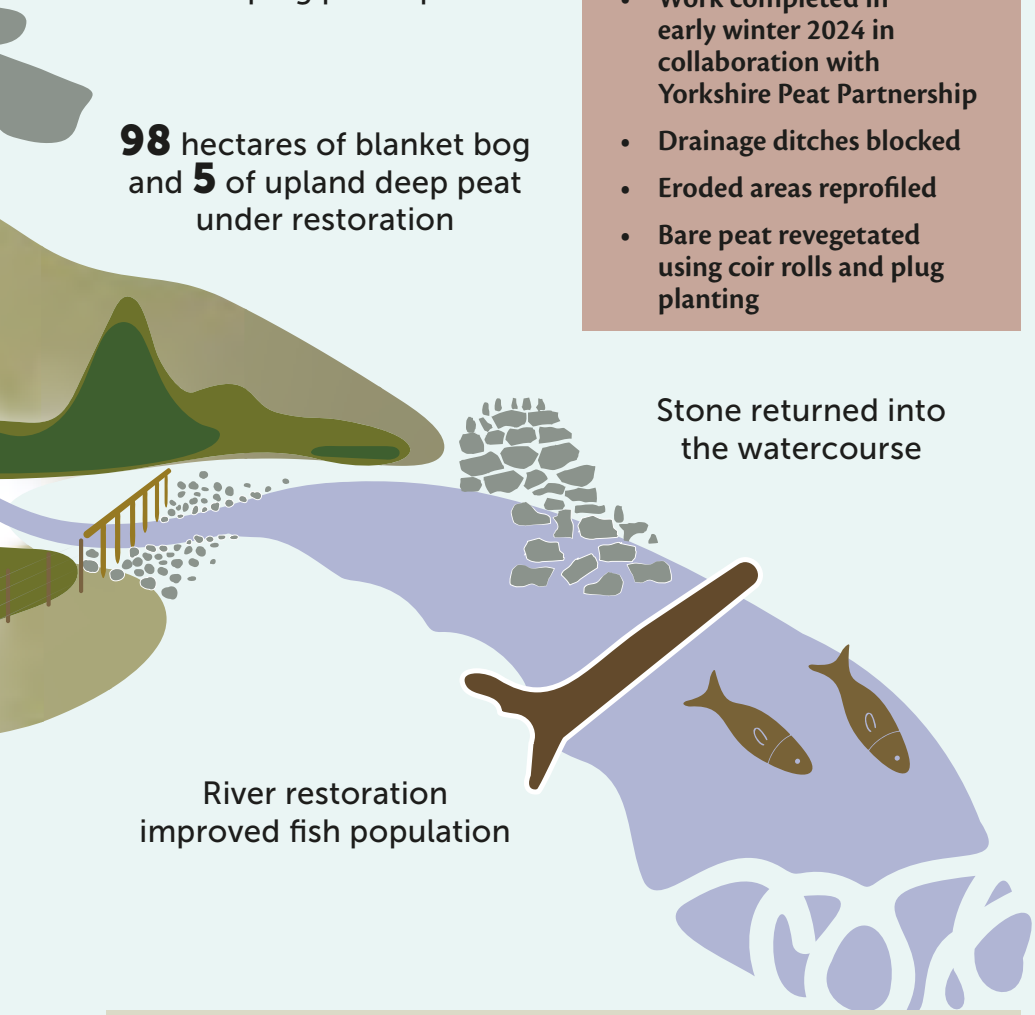
Feature by Alec Pue,
Site Manager, Woodland Trust

Graphics by
Creative Campaigner Charlotte Mudd

Coir logs installed

Sphagnum moss plug plants planted

98 hectares of blanket bog and **5** of upland deep peat under restoration



Stone returned into the watercourse

River restoration improved fish population

Farming

- Late seasonal sheep grazing continues on the shallow soil limestone plateaus to the south and west, which support a range of flora and bird species
- Only native modern Hereford cattle roaming the valley bottom
- By summer 2025 all necessary farming infrastructure will be in place, including fences, tracks and handling equipment
- Additional land could be available as trees become more established and able to encourage natural processes

Peatland Restoration

- Work completed in early winter 2024 in collaboration with Yorkshire Peat Partnership
- Drainage ditches blocked
- Eroded areas reprofiled
- Bare peat revegetated using coir rolls and plug planting

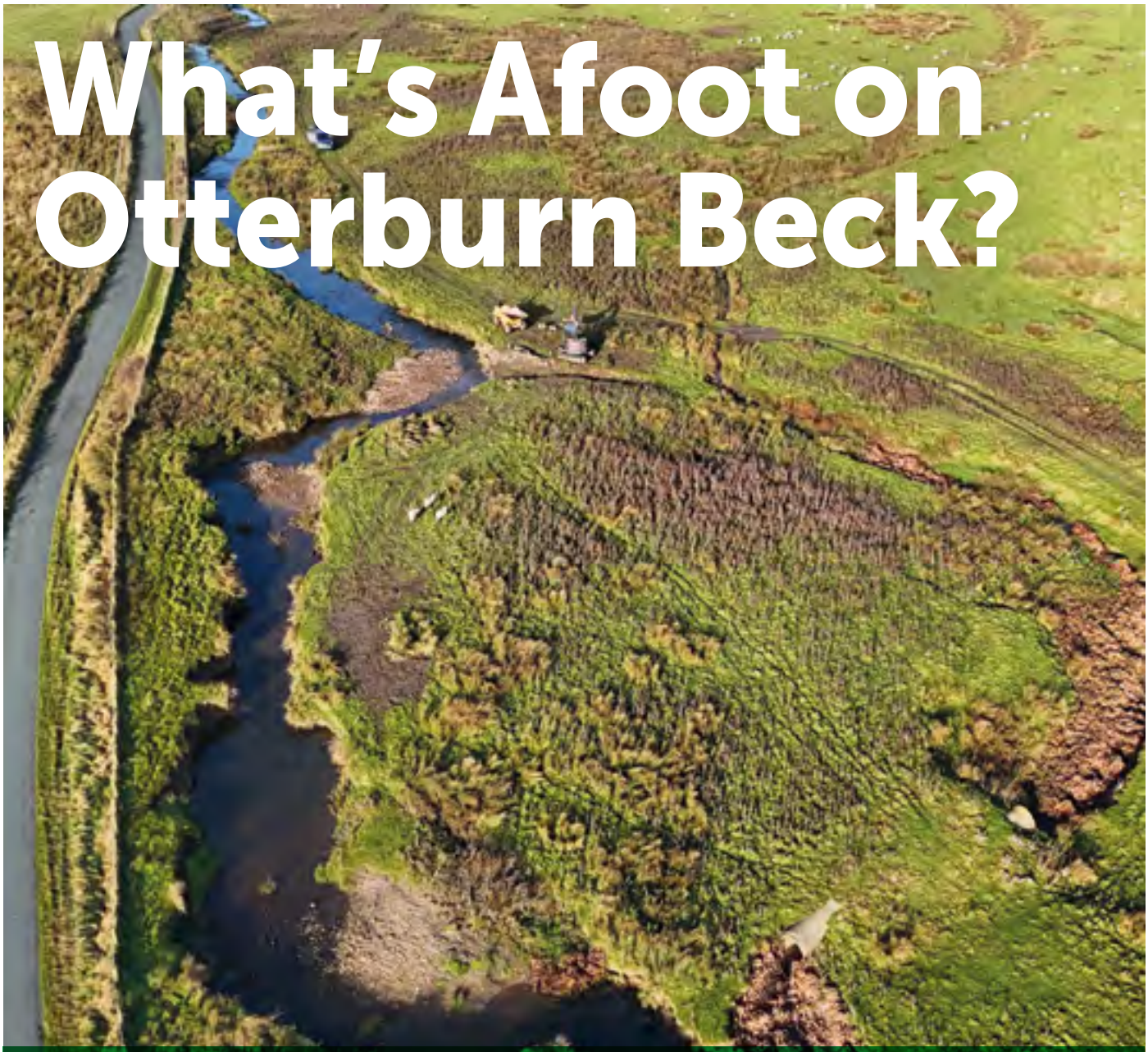
Rivers

- First stage of restoration work delivered in association with the Wild Trout Trust
- Whole trees including root balls (storm damage from neighbouring forestry) introduced into the watercourse. This would occur naturally and spreads the energy of the river, creating pools and riffles
- Old, derelict and redundant walling stone returned to the watercourse. This creates riffles, raises the riverbed level and makes it easier for the water to escape the banks
- Disconnected channel joined to the river again, reducing water pressure in a deeply cut section and creating links with the flood plain
- Fish seen in reaches where they were previously absent
- Second stage of restoration will include assessing ways of improving aquatic habitats and providing flood management. These will preferably rely on natural processes and have minimum maintenance requirements

Research

- Collaborating with Leeds and York universities to determine the impact of native woodland creation on water and natural flood management; soil function and processes; and biodiversity and sensitive habitats. Information already available at a very early date
- Woodland Trust is also carrying out a range of ecological surveys, including monitoring breeding birds and invertebrates, to track change over time

What's Afoot on Otterburn Beck?



Drone shot of Otterburn Beck pinned next to the road whereas it should be wandering to the right. Photos courtesy of Jonathan Grey

Helping our rivers to break free from their man-made constraints can reduce flood risk and increase biodiversity. Research and Conservation Officer Jonathan Grey looks at how the Wild Trout Trust is helping a Malhamdale stream find its own course.

Otterburn Beck seems such an innocent little babble of water where it joins the Aire at Bell Busk. However, anyone travelling the lane between the village and Otterburn after heavy rainfall or snowmelt will know that the wide floodplain and road is almost entirely inundated with water – see a drone flight following Storm Bert in November 2024 at www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjwgHLM5q4o.

A bird's-eye view, or that from ground level in low winter sun, will reveal the ghosts of Otterburn Beck past: paleochannels etched into the landscape where the channel has wandered back and forth in sinuous curves over thousands of years since the last ice age. Imprinted on top is man's contribution – the road, the railway, crossing points, even the Yorkshire Dales National Park boundary – mostly much straighter and all requiring similar of the beck, shackling it into a straighter, steeper, artificial course. And the consequences of those actions? Faster flows with more erosive power. Combined with more frequent and intense storm events and rapid meltwater, it is little wonder the beck is fighting to get back to where it should be within the valley.

As a contribution to the Upper Aire Project (www.upperaire.org.uk), Yorkshire Wildlife Trust explored options with the landowners for a part of the floodplain known as Bell Busk Common. Aspirations included renaturalising the channel and vegetation and in doing so providing benefits to biodiversity and helping to 'slow-the-flow' but still fitting into the farm business model. The Wild Trout Trust was brought in to consider how the channel could be 'encouraged' to return to that more natural state. A plan was put together, funding secured and work began.

Creating Natural Buffers

Extra fencing has been erected to protect a plot of roughly five hectares. Seams of gravel in the banks hinted at where paleochannels had criss-crossed the extant channel and these have been probed in places, using a small digger to reconnect to those 'ghosts'. The aim was not to divert the flow but to allow water to escape into the older routes earlier during storm events and thereby dissipate the flow energy from the main channel more quickly. In places, banks have been re-profiled, removing the vertical faces and unsightly concrete revetment and replacing them with gentler slopes, again to reduce the focus of energy.

Where the pinning of the channel immediately adjacent to the road had caused erosion issues, a grid of chestnut stakes was introduced and about 45 recycled Christmas trees collected by Wild About Lothersdale have been packed in to form a dense brash mattress. This is a form of soft or green engineering. The flow energy does not bounce elsewhere as it does from hard boulders or concrete revetments. Instead, it is dispersed as it percolates through the brash, and as flow slows, it drops any suspended silt and sand. Over time, the trees help to rebuild the bank by providing a resilient matrix that can be colonised by other plants, and the carbon from the trees is locked up for a considerable period in the soil. A Christmas tree need not just be for Christmas….

For now, sheep grazing is excluded to allow the works scars to heal and the vegetation to diversify and roughen up, both of which contribute to biodiversity and natural flood management goals. While we were installing the Christmas trees in January, a barn owl flew from Bell Busk, directly over the sheep-grazed fields to the longer grasses along the beck and dropped onto a vole. Unfortunately, it was immediately subjected to kleptoparasitism as a kestrel mobbed it and stole its prey, but it certainly knew where the better hunting was to be found. We've also noted a great white egret (amongst the more common littles), dozens of snipe, redpoll and charms of goldfinch on the seedheads and, yes, even otter spoor on Otterburn Beck within the project site.

We are expecting it to change, to evolve. We want it to be dynamic (within reason). The beck may uncover some rubbish that has been dumped there in the past but that can be tackled. We will continue with some formal monitoring using a drone to see where the channel moves, and by assessing the trout population as an indicator of river health to give us some measures of success. And if this is something that particularly interests you, or you are a landowner where you think similar work might be beneficial, please do get in touch at jgrey@wildtrout.org

Professor Jonathan Grey, Professor of Aquatic Ecology,
Lancaster Environment Centre

Find out more about conservation work on Otterburn Beck overleaf.

Get Involved

The Upper Aire Project has been connecting habitats across farms in the catchment for over 12 years, working with individual landowners to build this landscape-scale initiative. Works are at no cost and could be eligible for Sustainable Farming Incentive payments – contact Suzie Knight at suzie.knight@ywt.org.uk or 07879 645030

Banking defences on Otterburn Beck

Pulling in the Same Direction

A Farmer's Perspective

Otterburn village

Otterburn farmer Ashley Caton tells how joining forces with a conservation charity has enabled him to set a new course that benefits both his business and the environment.

In recent years we have undertaken several projects on our beef and sheep farm in conjunction with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, such as riparian fencing, tree and hedge planting and shelter belt creation and restoration.

Otterburn Beck, a tributary of the River Aire, flows through the lower area of a 15-hectare grassland field known as the 'Common', which we use for grazing sheep and cattle. It is also a fantastic home for ground-nesting birds such as curlew and waders such as oystercatcher and heron, which are often seen waiting patiently by the water's edge.

The field has been in a low-input scheme for some time and, as part of our desire to support the nature already there, about five years ago we fenced off a small and relatively underused area on either side of the river and planted it with a selection of trees and bushes. This has blossomed into a fantastic area for wildlife.

The idea of doing some further work on this piece of land came about through discussions with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, with which we have built a good and trusting relationship over the years. From a practical farming point of view, this field is very problematic in periods of extreme rainfall as Otterburn Beck naturally floods onto it and sheep can easily become trapped on the wrong side of the river by rising floodwaters. The solution we developed was to fence off the lower part of the field containing the river, so that livestock are excluded and therefore safe when it is in flood.

Now we do not have to worry every time there is heavy rain, and it has also meant that the livestock are no longer trampling the riverbank and thereby introducing sediment into the water, which has been a particular issue along Otterburn Beck. Yorkshire Wildlife Trust was keen on the project as it is one area where the flow of water joining the River Aire can be slowed, by allowing the river to flood and water to be temporarily stored on this natural floodplain. It has very cleverly created discrete scrapes along the watercourse, which allow more floodwater to be held in periods of peak flow.

Working together has enabled us to come up with a solution that works for our farming system and the environment. Yorkshire Wildlife Trust provided the expertise in terms of river knowledge and the materials and labour for the fencing and we have been open to using a piece of land in a different way - a classic win-win.

Ashley Caton, farmer


Sheep grazing alongside Otterburn Beck. Photos courtesy of Michael Spencer

The Dales: Open to Whom?

Elliott Lorimer, Director of Park Services, Yorkshire Dales National Park, and Abby Day open the Changing Places toilet in Grassington. Photo courtesy of Andrew Fagg

Visiting a national park can be fraught with difficulty, particularly if you're a woman, disabled, or from a working class or ethnic minority background. Professor Emeritus of Race, Faith and Culture at Goldsmith's, University of London Abby Day asks how we can make the countryside accessible to everyone.

The Yorkshire Dales should be open to all. Of course. But who is 'all'? Here I will briefly explore access inequalities related to disability, gender, ethnicity and social class.

Most physical or mental impairments have complex and varied effects, often invisible to the casual onlooker. Some people may, like me, have neurological conditions such as multiple sclerosis that interfere with sensory perception, which is why I tend to trip and fall easily, and become fatigued after about 45 minutes of walking.

Although 90 per cent of people with impairments do not require wheelchairs, they may have other physical and mental challenges, such as diabetes or neurodiverse conditions, which restrict their opportunities to enjoy the Dales. And it's a society-wide issue that is increasing with an aging population: nearly 80% of people aged 85 or over are disabled.

It is also a worldwide issue, often affecting the most vulnerable people. About 16 per cent of the global population is disabled, unevenly distributed by gender and social class. Females and those from economically and socially disadvantaged socio-economic groups are more severely affected and are significantly underrepresented in the Dales and other national parks.

Research conducted by Mohammed Hamza[1] and colleagues at Leeds Trinity University directly addresses this latter issue, noting that although people from ethnic minorities make up 18 per cent of the UK population, they represent only one per cent of those who visit rural green spaces. They found that people from ethnic minorities tend to view these spaces as 'white' and middle class, and therefore feel unwelcome, unsafe and unprotected. This may be due to the historical pattern of land ownership and to the sometimes surprised looks they are given, especially Muslim women wearing Islamic head coverings. The lack of access may also stem from lack of time, given that gender roles, irrespective of class and ethnicity, assign more domestic labour to women than men: who's more concerned with laundry cycles than riding cycles on a Saturday morning?

What can be done? The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and its local partner organisations seek to widen access through several means, such as creating and supporting a local access forum to advise and make recommendations on improving accessibility, including opening 'Changing Places' toilet facilities[2] in Hawes and Grassington, making Tramper all-terrain vehicles available at Aysgarth Falls and providing 'Miles Without Stiles' route maps. The National Trust provides a Tramper at Malham Tarn and the Ingleborough Estate provides one at Ingleborough Nature Trail and Cave.

Services like DalesBus, supported by Friends of the Dales, are essential components of a transport strategy to widen access for those of us who cannot walk long distances or may not have a car. Friends of the Dales have also held 'social strolls' over less arduous ground and hosted women-only walks to provide time to chat and socialise. Its Countryside Access policy includes campaigning for removing obstacles to access, such as stiles, and for increasing walkers' confidence through improved waymarking.

Ideally, I conclude, more research and engagement with underrepresented groups is necessary to continually inform policy, campaigns and education. We need to be heard and to be seen.

Abby Day, member Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Local Access Forum

[1] Hamza, M, Stride, A, Quarmby, T. (2024) *Exploring the Experience of Natural Green Space Among South Asian Muslim People in the UK*

[2] A Changing Places toilet is a step up from a standard disabled toilet. It contains extra equipment and space to allow carers to help people with profound learning disabilities, as well as people with physical disabilities.

Building on Tradition

Development of 16 affordable houses at Long Preston. Photo courtesy of YDNPA

The debate about whether to prioritise the construction of more new homes for working-age families or the preservation of the rich heritage of the Yorkshire Dales polarises opinion. Architect Selby Stocks argues that we can do both.

The Yorkshire Dales is a world-famous landscape with stone barns and picturesque hamlets dotted throughout the rolling hills and pastures of this historic national park. How, then, to protect its uniqueness whilst ensuring that communities continue to thrive and that residents, both new and old, can enjoy a high quality of life? Despite all the positives that are associated with living in a national beauty spot, there are also problems that need considered action.

The current population of 22,798 has begun to shrink and forecasts suggest a decline of 9% by 2042 without intervention. This is exacerbated by an increasingly ageing population. Whilst that's certainly not unique to the Yorkshire Dales, census data suggests it is significantly more pronounced than the national average, a trend which is expected to continue.

The most common national driver for this trend is limited employment options and this certainly applies here, although it's worth noting that unemployment remains low compared to national averages.

The cost of housing and, by association, living has been identified as one of the key reasons for the shift in the local demography. A recent consultation by the national park authority identified that helping younger people to live and work in the Yorkshire Dales was considered the second most important issue by residents. The average house price in the national park varies between £318,000 and £332,000 which is approximately 25% more than the UK average of £267,700.

"we don't need to look that far back in time for a good precedent"

Alongside cost, a secondary reason is the availability of housing. The number of second, holiday and empty homes accounted for 22% of the housing stock in the former national park area in 2011. In some settlements the figure reaches over 30%, which has an impact upon seasonal vitality.

A traditional row of terraced cottages in Kirkby Lonsdale

Analysis within the current Yorkshire Dales National Park Local Plan has agreed that the target for new houses within the park should be 50 dwellings per annum. That's not, in my view, enormous, given the current density of housing within the park. To put this in context, there are 9.6 hectares of land for every resident compared to the average of 0.25 hectares for England. Yet, despite this modest ask, the recent 'call for sites' draft allocations undertaken by the planning authority, which is aimed at allocating land for development, has fallen short of the proposed target. This is simply not good enough.

Over the last six years, an average of 39 houses per annum have been built across the national park but only 12% of these have met the definition of affordable homes. Whilst there is a unilaterally supported desire to protect the landscape and built character of the Yorkshire Dales, there is also a need to support the growth and vitality of its resident population.

Combining the Best of Old and New

Currently there are many locations within the park that are not classified as 'settlements', which means that even redundant existing buildings are off limits to convert into dwellings in policy terms. Yet these are places with names and a good number of houses, postcodes and communities. Any resident who lives there would name their 'village' but, according to policy, they don't have the status of a settlement. As such, any proposals to convert barns or infill between two houses are contrary to policy. Surely these are the sort of locations that could sustainably support growth without damaging the character of the national park?

If there is a need for smaller, more affordable dwellings, we don't need to look that far back in time for a good precedent. There is a strong tradition for short rows of terraced cottages within many villages in the park. These tend to comprise a front room or parlour and a rear scullery or kitchen with two bedrooms above. They have an attractive proportion and rhythm to the fenestration and chimneys that gives them a distinctive charm. As newly built dwellings with a focus on low carbon design, such forms of development could contribute positively to their locations both in visual terms and by enabling younger, working-age people to live in the area.

If we can achieve careful and selective development, building need not be the enemy of the enduring appeal of the national park. This is particularly the case when proposals are crafted following the local vernacular and are sympathetic to their surroundings.

Selby Stocks, Associate Director - Architecture, Rural Solutions Limited

King Arthur in the Dales?

Was Cornwall's most famous son really a Dalesman? Friends of the Lake District Emeritus President Sir Martin Holdgate explores the history, myths and legends connecting King Arthur to the northern reaches of the Yorkshire Dales national park.

Pendragon, medieval castle in Mallerstang, near Wild Boar Fell. Photo courtesy of Martin Holdgate

King Uther Pendragon. Illustrated by Howard Pyle from the 1903 edition of *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights*

Wensleydale folk travelling northward to Kirkby Stephen usually go 'to t'Cock and oop', turning at the Moorcock Inn to follow the infant River Ure, cross a low watershed saddle, and drop into the valley of the infant Eden. Ahead, two great, crag-faced fells – Wild Boar Fell and High Seat – face one another across the Mallerstang dale 'like the paired, empty seats of giants' to quote Edward Frankland's novel *The Bear of Britain*. That book opens with two legendary heroes, Uther Pendragon, High King of Britain, and his son Artos the Bear, arriving at Uther's riverside stronghold under the looming Nab of Wild Boar – where Frankland describes Uther's burial in the Bronze Age mound that remains a wonderful viewpoint.

Arthurian legends still hang over Mallerstang dale. One claims that Uther attempted to divert the Eden to flow around his stronghold – and failed. Hence a now-familiar couplet:

Let Uther Pendragon do what he can; Eden will run where Eden ran.

Other tales of the heroic greeted later visitors. In 1773 Thomas Pennant rode here passing 'a very ancient square tower called Lammerside Hall, formerly by the sad name of the Dolorous Tower. Something was told me of a Sir Tarquin and a Sir Caledos, so that probably the place had been the subject of dire contention.'.

We have no idea of what contention. Today historians argue about whether a 'King Arthur' really led Britain against its Saxon invaders in around AD400-600. The earliest reference to him in literature tells of how a fallen hero fed the carrion birds with slaughtered Saxons at a battle near Catterick 'though he was no Arthur'. Some think he may have been a Roman soldier called Lucius Artorius Castus, who led his troops in Britain and became a heroic idol.

Lost in the Mists of Time

More certainly, after the Romans withdrew the upper Eden Valley became part of a kingdom called Rheged. Its king Urien and his son Owain fought vigorously against the invaders in the 580s and 590s and Owain, called 'lord of Llwyfenydd' (possibly the valley of the river Lyvennet), killed the Saxon leader, nicknamed Fflamddwyn 'the flame-bearer', burner of villages. One of the Welsh tales in *The Mabinogion* also describes him as leader of a troop of ravens and playing against Arthur in a kind of chess. Perhaps Owain's war band was known as 'The Ravens'? Could Crosby Ravensworth (a Westmorland Dales village in the Lyvennet valley) have been its home? Is Owain the original of the 'Ewen Caesario' said to be buried in the 'Giant's Grave' in Penrith churchyard (though this dates from the Viking era)?

Long after such times, the tower first known as the 'Castel de Malverstang' was built by the Normans to command the Roman road between Brough and Bainbridge. Its builder could well have been the second of two Hugh de Morvilles to hold the Barony of Westmorland in the 12th century. He became notorious in 1170 as one of the murderers of Archbishop Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral. Surprisingly, he kept his lordship of Westmorland at the time, but lost it in 1175 for joining a rebellion against Henry II. And there is a story about him. It is said that one day, looking from near Mallerstang Castle towards Wild Boar Fell, to his horror he saw the profile of the murdered Archbishop along the western skyline. You can still see it there, and the murderer's name remains on the map in Hugh Seat (or on Speed's map of Westmorland, 'Hughseat Morvill Hill'), the source of the river Eden.

By 1309 Mallerstang Castle was named 'the castle of Pendragon'. It was probably given this romantic name by Idonea de Leyburn, one of the heiresses of Robert de Vipont, who was killed in battle in 1264. Arthurian legend and romance were all the rage in the 13th century following Geoffrey of Monmouth's *The History of the Kings of Britain* and Idonea would have delighted in Geoffrey's tales and rejoiced that her home had featured in the great national epic. She called Pendragon her 'chief and beloved habitation' and died there in 1334. But in 1341 the castle was laid waste by the Scots 'who did then burn down the timber of it and demolish it' and remained ruinous when inherited in 1643 by another remarkable woman, Lady Anne Clifford, Countess Dowager of Dorset, Pembroke and Montgomery.

She set repairs in train in 1660 and paid her first visit, for three days, a year later. In October 1663 she came from Barden Tower and Kilnsey 'over the Stake into Wensleydale…and over Hellgill Bridge into Westmorland' to stay at Pendragon over Christmas and for most of January 1664. This pattern of movement from castle to castle was very much Lady Anne's style and she came many times to Pendragon: her room was the small chamber in the south-west corner, with a private privy in the south-west tower. No doubt she pondered over the long history of the tower and site, as we can still do in what is one of the most impressive and historic of the Westmorland Dales.

Sir Martin Holdgate, Friends of the Lake District Emeritus President

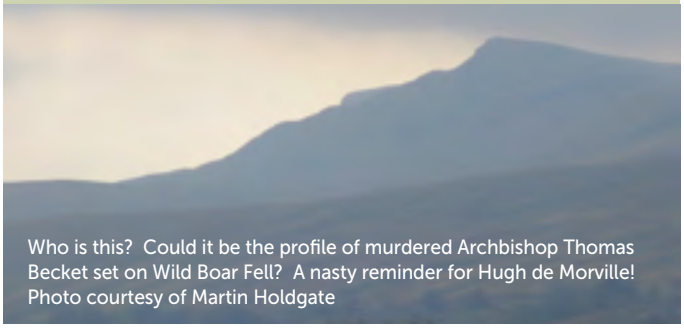
See for Yourself

Pendragon Castle is on private land but public access is allowed.

Approach on the B6259 south from Kirkby Stephen or north from Garsdale Head. Limited free parking directly opposite the ruins or farther down the road.

Grid ref **782025** what3words /// **deduct.fortnightly.duplicity**

Take care – the ruins are in a dangerous condition despite some recent restoration. Dogs must be kept on a short lead.



Who is this? Could it be the profile of murdered Archbishop Thomas Becket set on Wild Boar Fell? A nasty reminder for Hugh de Morville! Photo courtesy of Martin Holdgate

An Eye for a Primrose

Trustee Dr Jane Smart looks at how a major landscape restoration project and regenerative farming practices are helping our floral emblem to thrive in parts of the Yorkshire Dales despite being threatened elsewhere in the UK.

Bird's-eye primrose above Kettlewell. Photo courtesy of Ann Shadrake

In the spring of 2020, the long ridges of the Jura mountains stretching from France to Germany through Switzerland were home. (I was working for the International Union for Conservation of Nature at the time.) When the Swiss government decreed that we had to stay in our commune (or parish), it didn't feel too much of a hardship – this was a chance to get out and explore the undiscovered nooks and crannies of our hinterland: a wildflower haven of rolling limestone pastures and meadows, craggy cliffs and gorges suffering relatively little from intensive agriculture.

And so began (between online meetings at all times of the day and night) a spring of wild plant exploration – getting acquainted and re-acquainted with new and old botanical friends. One memorable morning was marked by stumbling across a bank of thousands of bird's-eye primrose (*Primula farinosa* is its botanical name) on the sloping edge of one of the summer grazing pastures that were covered with deep snow in the winter. Lime-rich water seeped through grassy turf – spring green speckled in bright powder-pink.

Bird's-eye primrose is very fussy and particular – requiring calcareous water trickling through damp and peaty places: when you see it, you know that you are in an exceptional place. Reginald Farrar, the 19th-century alpine plantsman and rock gardener who grew up in the shadow of Ingleborough and visited the mountains of the world, described this little primula as one of his lifelong favourites. And Geoffrey Grigson, the 20th-century poet and naturalist, once had the audacity to suggest that the bird's-eye primrose should replace the white rose as the West Riding's county flower.

It is the common names of wild plants that give the most revealing insight into the part they play in people's lives. The striking custard-yellow centre of the flower is astonishingly like a bird's eye. Indeed, it has been known simply as bird's eye in Yorkshire and bird een (the plural of eye) in Cumbria.

Bucking the Trend

A few months after moving back to the UK and settling in the Yorkshire Dales, it felt like a special kind of reunion to find the bird's-eye in Malham Tarn fen. You can get right amongst them – and many other botanical treasures from the National Trust's fabulous nature trail. Another place for a first-class close encounter is the spectacular Wild Ingleborough landscape restoration project.

It was undoubtedly the logo of Friends of the Dales that drew my eye to the organisation. As a token or emblem of the Dales it is perfect, its idiosyncratic ways perhaps reflecting the subtly textured variation of the region as a whole. As a species that is nationally scarce in the UK – and declining further – the bird's-eye also stands for what needs to be done and can be done.

Up at Street Gate on Malham Moor, a pasture known as Great Close Mire is managed to what has been described as 'sublime perfection' by farmers Neil Heseltine and Leigh Weston. In its wet limestone hollows bird's-eye primrose is a botanical sensation. But here's the thing. Apparently in the early 2000s this pasture resembled a golf course. With a change of grazing regime, and the help of a herd of heritage Riggit Galloway cattle, the transformation began. Year on year the wildflowers are coming back and the area is now jam-packed with botanical excitement: early purple and frog orchids, limestone bedstraw, autumn gentians, cotton grass species, milkworts and of course bird's-eye primrose among many more.

Great Close Mire epitomises what should be the new approach to recovering nature – areas that hold a matrix of wild species that could, with a more regenerative approach, bloom forth. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority has a sound nature recovery plan and a new draft management plan that aspires to put nature on a path to recovery. For Friends of the Dales, having crystallised our mission into this exquisite little pink gem, ensuring the survival of our own logo is critical.

Dr Jane Smart OBE, trustee

Jane and Sandy sitting amongst Bird's-eye primroses.
Photo courtesy of James Powell

Two Tribes?

Anna Jones is a rural affairs journalist, author, broadcaster and television producer

Inheritance tax on farms, gun licensing, solar panels on arable land – rarely has the gulf between agricultural communities and the so-called metropolitan elite seemed so polarised and so politicised. Our Chair Jonathan Riley finds hope that we could set aside our differences and work together for the good of the food system and the environment in a timely new book by Anna Jones.

Divide: The Relationship Crisis Between Town and Country is compelling, well researched and deeply personal, challenging stereotypes, encouraging dialogue between rural and urban populations and opening the door to a more connected and cooperative future between town and country.

Bridging this gap is integral to solving the challenges of climate breakdown, the decline of nature and how we feed ourselves. *Divide* is a thought-provoking exploration of the stark contrasts and hidden commonalities between rural and urban communities. Drawing on her lived experience of growing up on a small farm in Shropshire and later moving to the city of Bristol, Anna Jones shares how her perceptions changed, informed also through engaging with people who seldom consider where their food is coming from. The book challenged my own knowledge and views, providing new perspectives I've benefited from learning.

Rural poverty is often hidden, as I know from my own family experience of working-class life subservient to the landed classes, tied to the land and the meagre income. Logistical and cultural barriers prevent communities from embracing multiculturalism, with their insular nature, deep-rooted insecurities tied to lack of social mobility and the demands of farming life often resulting in resistance to change.

One of the most powerful aspects of *Divide* is its examination of the historical trauma felt by many people relating right back to forced displacement from the land. People of colour often feel more comfortable in urban environments, where opportunities and a sense of belonging are more accessible, and many descendants of immigrant farmers become citizens of the cities despite their rural origins.

Tight-knit rural communities' strong sense of identity can sometimes act as a barrier to change. Whilst offering support and resilience, they can also be resistant to new people and ideas. True sustainability requires openness to growth, collaboration and the recognition that thriving rural areas depend on attracting new residents and services. A country child cannot help growing up in an all-white community but the rural working class is a disadvantaged minority too. Diversification in all ways is key through attracting the best minds, investment and people.

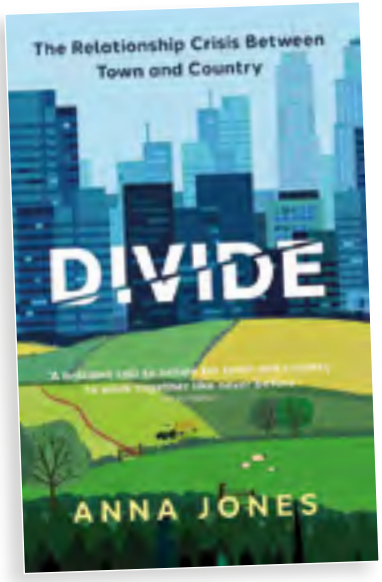
Respecting Difference

Similarly with the polarising debate around food – meat-eating versus veganism – we should seek to identify areas of common ground because meaningful progress can be achieved only if extreme views are tempered with mutual understanding. There are contradictions in our attitudes towards animal welfare, as shown by the vastly different ways we treat farmed animals, pets and even humans. Farms are factories – although mainly not like those often portrayed by animal rights activists – and the agricultural industry could be much more transparent, welcoming people to see what it does and stopping protecting bad apples.

Urban dwellers often see the countryside as a leisure space, not appreciating its essential role in food production. Jones critiques the lack of understanding about its true environmental and economic impacts and advocates for a balanced, sustainable approach that integrates plant-based and livestock including full measurement of the whole system including energy and carbon. There is much commonality so long as the respective sides of the argument can accept that the extreme preference is neither realistic nor sustainable.

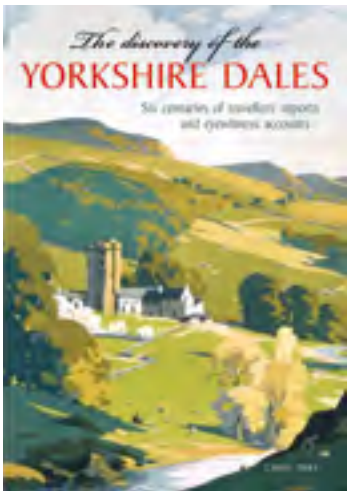
Divide is a powerful call to action: 'Unless we learn to accept and respect our social, cultural and political differences as town and country people, we are never going to solve the chronic problems in our food system and environment.'

Jonathan Riley, Chair



Divide: The Relationship Crisis Between Town & Country

Author: **Anna Jones**
Publisher: **Octopus Publishing Group**
Price: **£10.99**
ISBN: **9780857839732**



THE DISCOVERY OF THE YORKSHIRE DALES

SIX CENTURIES OF TRAVELLERS' REPORTS AND EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS

The Discovery of the Yorkshire Dales:
Six Centuries of Travellers' Reports and Eyewitness Accounts

Author: Chris Park
Publisher: Carnegie Publishing Ltd
Price: £20
ISBN: 9781910837290

In this carefully researched account of the beginnings of 'tourism' in the Yorkshire Dales the author sets out to establish when travellers first began to visit the Dales, what drove them, what records they left of their visits and how the growth in tourism developed with the rapidly changing social, economic and political conditions of the times.

There seems little data from prehistory, or the Romans, Anglo Saxons and Normans, and non-essential travel really jump starts in the Tudor period. The cultural changes happening in England at that time included the emergence of travellers who wanted to explore their country first-hand and write about it. These early explorers were concerned especially with how the land was used and the challenges of getting from A to B (bearing in mind there were almost no maps at this time) with little attention given to the scenic splendours encountered along the way. John Leland and William Camden were the pre-eminent topographers of the age. It was to be nearly another 100 years before the likes of Celia Fiennes published their observations of agriculture and industry, but again with scant attention to the scenery.

From the late 1700s the 'Grand Tour' had been a rite of passage for well-funded young men to experience the arts and cultures of Europe – for the first time travelling for pleasure rather than necessity. Politics and wars diminished these opportunities resulting in more domestic exploration from the mid-1850s, helped by the improving infrastructure of turnpikes and then railways. Travellers to the Lakes began to include the curiosities of the Dales in their itineraries and describe the attraction of the Dales and the grandeur of the mountains they passed through.

The Picturesque movement and the Romantics occasioned more and more guidebooks, including aspects such as geology or natural history, but walking for pleasure became a popular activity only towards the end of the 18th and early 19th centuries. Increased leisure time and greater affluence enabled ever greater numbers of tourists to visit the Dales, not just to see for themselves the natural beauty but also to challenge themselves to greater exertions as well as learning something of the cultural heritage of past industries and farming practices.

The growth of outdoor activities, with increasing leisure time and opportunity, culminated in the Right to Roam movement in the early 1930s, which led eventually to the creation of national parks.

A suggestion for the next edition of this excellent book would be to learn more about the ways in which early travellers got around. Were they confined to public roads or could they walk/ride through open countryside? Turnpikes and railways came later but how easy was it to travel through the privately owned countryside prior to the establishment of 'public rights of way' and was this an impediment to the discovery of the Dales?

This volume with its detailed accounts of so many adventures by the early explorers will fascinate and educate all those with curiosity about the evolution of tourism in the Yorkshire Dales

Ken Humphris, volunteer

Seeing the Big Picture

On Wednesday 12th February, Friends of the Dales held a Dark Skies event at Gargrave Village Hall. One of our volunteers, Katie Daynes, reports back...

Billed as an introduction to the wonders of the night sky, this highly informative event was expertly presented by Paul Neaves from Keighley Astronomical Society.

We took a whistle-stop tour of the universe – at least the part visible to us – learning about hot blue stars and cooler red stars and massive star explosions that lead to new solar systems being born. It's mind-blowing to think that some stars are so far away that the light we're seeing is from the time of the dinosaurs.

I've often gazed at the stars in awe, without having a clue what I'm really looking at. Not any more. Paul showed us how to use the Big Dipper stars to locate the pole star, Polaris. He explained how the other stars seemingly rotate around it, then he introduced the circumpolar constellations – the ones you can see all year round. Just as it was feeling like too much to remember, we were handed scissors and sheets of card to cut out our own planispheres – rotating star maps that replicate the movement of the stars above us. Now we should always be able to decipher what's what. Here's hoping.

A layer of thick cloud smothered any chance of seeing actual stars that night, so instead we did the next best thing – watched a DVD virtual tour of what we would have seen.

Fortunately for us, the Yorkshire Dales is one of the world's designated Dark Skies Reserves, which means that when the clouds disperse an opportunity to stargaze is never far away.


Completed planispheres

On a clear night, with the naked eye, it's possible to see:

- 2,000 stars (if you haven't got a homemade planisphere, try a free app called Stellarium)
- the Milky Way
- various planets (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn are all visible at certain times)
- the moon in its different phases
- shooting stars
- occasionally the northern lights

Keighley Astronomical Society holds monthly meetings with a range of guest speakers and we're all welcome to attend..

Katie Daynes, volunteer

www.keighleyastronomicalsociety.co.uk/

Paul Neaves, left, with Dominic Curran from Keighley Astronomical Society. Photos courtesy of Victoria Benn

Catch up via E-News

Sign up to our free monthly e-news and be one of the first to receive our news, new event listings and information about hands-on volunteering opportunities arranged by Friends of the Dales and other environmental charities.
Sign up at: www.friendsofthedales.org.uk

You can also follow us on Facebook, Instagram, X and LinkedIn.

Events Page – With a Difference

Our spring events are being finalised, so for early notification of these please sign up for our enews (or check our website/social media platforms) or contact Victoria Benn, Membership & Events Officer, on victoria.benn@friendsof thedales.org.uk. In the meantime we thought we'd remind you about all the talks – more than 30 – we've hosted over the last three years, which are available to download and watch (for free) via our YouTube channel www.youtube.com/@friendsofthedales

Subscribe to the channel to be the first to hear about any additions, and in the meantime see if any of the following appeal:

Within the Cracks – the Hidden World of Limestone Pavements

Limestone pavement behind Pen-y-ghent

Carly Stevens, Professor of Plant Ecology and Soil Biogeochemistry at the University of Lancaster, draws on six years of research to explain what could and should grow in these complex and often biodiverse ecosystems, which typify much of the Yorkshire Dales. Professor Stevens also talks about the impact of climate breakdown, farming practices and other threats affecting these precious habitats.

A Nature-based Approach to Flood Management

This was our last talk and it has proved very popular. Tune in to find out more about the innovative Ousewem project, which is delivering nature-based solutions and natural flood management to reduce flood risk in vulnerable North Yorkshire communities spanning the Swale, Ure, Nidd and Ouse catchments.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park – 70 Years On

This talk offers a comprehensive insight into the national park movement and the establishment of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Mark Corner, our former Chair and current Member Champion for the Natural Environment for the national park authority, reviews the achievements of the last seven decades along with the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead – especially in relation to nature recovery and community sustainability.

Breeding Waders of the Yorkshire Dales

Lapwing. Photo courtesy of Ann Shadrake

Ian Court, Wildlife Conservation Officer for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, outlines the status of the area's upland breeding wader species and why it is so important for them. He also considers current threats and the habitat requirements of the birds, along with an outline of the work currently being undertaken to protect them.

Raptor Persecution

RSPB recording a pole trap on Widdale Fell. Photo courtesy of G Shorrock, RSPB

Investigations Officer for the RSPB Howard Jones works with the police to stop crime against threatened wild bird species, from undercover surveillance to catch offenders right through to the courtroom. He brings to life the cases and day-to-day work of fighting wildlife crime with a focus on North Yorkshire – the worst place in the UK for bird of prey persecution.

For these and more visit www.youtube.com/@friendsofthedales

Friends of the DALES
YORKSHIRE DALES SOCIETY

Yorkshire DALES review

Support us, support the Dales

Friends of the Dales is the leading voice campaigning for a sustainable future for the Dales.

Our charity needs your support to help us protect this amazing, inspiring but fragile place - for years to come.

JOIN US

- More members means more clout when we campaign. Members receive this quarterly magazine and first news of our events programme.

DONATE

- Our charity's running costs are funded entirely by your voluntary subscriptions, donations and legacy gifts.

VOLUNTEER

- Help with our walks and other events
- Shape our charity's future: become a trustee
- Put out our leaflets on your home patch

LEGACY

- Please consider making a gift in your will to Friends of the Dales.

BE 'DALES-FRIENDLY'

- Try out our sociable walks and events (most are free)
- Support Dales businesses and communities
- Look for sustainable ways to visit, like DalesBus

www.friendsofthedales.org.uk

Please visit our website and follow us on social media. Full contact details and membership rates are on page 2

SHARE THE LOVE...

When you've read and enjoyed this magazine please pass it on with our regards.

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