



Executive Director

Friends of the Dales

Location: Gargrave, North Yorkshire, with regular travel across the Yorkshire Dales

Salary: £50,000 full-time equivalent, pro rata for part-time

Hours: Permanent, part-time (4 days per week) or full-time (37 hours per week)

Closing date: **Monday 18 May 2026** at 5pm

Friends of the Dales is seeking an outstanding **Executive Director** to lead our next chapter. We are an independent, dynamic and resilient charity working to protect and enhance the special landscapes, biodiversity and cultural heritage of the Yorkshire Dales, while supporting the wellbeing of local communities and encouraging people from all backgrounds to value, enjoy and protect this remarkable place.

This is an exciting opportunity for a values-driven leader to build on our strong reputation, recent strategic review and ambitious campaigning work. We are looking for someone who can combine strategic vision with hands-on leadership, bringing energy, credibility and expertise to a charity with a proud history and a growing future.

About Friends of the Dales

Friends of the Dales is an independent membership and campaigning charity dedicated to the Yorkshire Dales. We campaign on issues including nature recovery, wildlife, farming, access, housing, transport, climate resilience, landscape management and sustainable rural communities.

Founded in 1981, we are known for our critical and supportive local voice and our collaborative approach to campaigning and influencing policy. We work with partner organisations, local communities, trustees, volunteers and supporters to protect and improve the Dales for future generations.

We also work with the network of National Park Societies and Campaign for National Parks, and we have a strong commitment to widening diversity and inclusion across our charity and the communities we serve.

The Role

The Executive Director will provide strategic leadership, operational management and external representation for the charity. Reporting to the Chair of Trustees, you will be responsible for delivering the Board's strategic direction and business plan, growing the

supporter base, strengthening financial resilience and ensuring our campaigning remains impactful and aligned with our mission and values.

This is a varied and influential role requiring a confident, collaborative and hands-on leader who can balance strategic oversight with day-to-day delivery. You will work closely with trustees, staff, volunteers, members, supporters and external partners to help shape the future of the charity.

What We're Looking For

We are seeking a candidate with:

- Senior leadership experience or aligned and transferable experience and skills in a charity, membership organisation or similar environment.
- Direct experience or transferable experience of campaigning, influencing, advocacy or policy work.
- Strong organisational leadership and operational management skills.
- Knowledge and experience of fundraising, membership growth, partnership working and charity operations.
- The ability to inspire staff, trustees, volunteers, members and supporters.
- A values-driven approach and a strong understanding of, or connection to, the Yorkshire Dales and the issues affecting it.

Experience in a similar setting may be transferable, and we welcome candidates who can demonstrate the skills, insight and leadership needed to succeed in the role.

Working Arrangements

This is a permanent role, offered as either:

- Part-time: 4 days per week, or.
- Full-time: 37 hours per week.

The salary is £50,000 per annum FTE, with part-time hours paid pro rata.

The role is based at Canal Wharf, Eshton Road, Gargrave, BD23 3PN, with some flexibility around working hours and location by agreement. Regular travel across the Yorkshire Dales and occasional evening and weekend working will be required. Ideally, the successful candidate will live in, or within approximately 30 miles of, the perimeter of the Yorkshire Dales.

We offer:

- 22 days annual leave, rising to 27 days after five years' service, plus English bank holidays, pro rata for part-time hours.
- Additional paid leave over the Christmas and New Year office closure.
- An enhanced employer pension contribution of 5% via NEST.

Applicants must already have the right to work in the UK, as we are unable to offer sponsorship.

How to Apply

To apply please read the [full candidate briefing](#) and submit to Jonathan Riley, Chair of Trustees, at Jonathan.Riley@friendsofthedales.org.uk :

- A current CV, including any gaps in employment.
- A supporting statement of no more than 2,000 words, explaining why you wish to apply and how you meet the criteria in the person specification.
- Details of two referees, including one from your current or most recent senior leadership role, with confirmation that you are happy for us to contact them if shortlisted.
- Any dates when you may be unavailable or difficult to contact.
- Any adjustments or accommodations you may require at the interview or presentation stage.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a one-day selection event in the Yorkshire Dales, including a short presentation and panel interview. Full details of the presentation topic and interview questions will be shared in advance.

Recruitment Timetable

- Monday 18 May 2026, 5pm: Closing date.
- Week commencing 25 May 2026: Review of applications and shortlisting.
- Week commencing 15 June 2026: Shortlisted candidates invited to the Yorkshire Dales selection day.
- Week commencing 29 June 2026: Candidates informed of outcome.

Equal Opportunities

Friends of the Dales is committed to building a workforce that reflects the community it serves. We welcome applications from all backgrounds and all sections of the community, and we will respect the privacy of any initial approach or expression of interest, whether formal or informal.

Informal Discussion

For an informal and confidential conversation about the role, please contact Jonathan Riley, Chair of Trustees, at Jonathan.Riley@friendsofthedales.org.uk after reviewing the appointment brief.