

LE TOUR GEARS UP



Photo by Rick Robson cyclesportphotos.com

In just 60 days' time Yorkshire will see a spectacle unlike any other when it hosts the opening stages of the world's greatest cycling race.

Hundreds of thousands of people are expected to line the 2014 Tour de France Grand Départ route to see elite sportsmen - including British icons like Mark Cavendish - pedal past.

In return, the stunning backdrop of the Yorkshire Dales National Park will be showcased to a global TV audience of billions, both as a fantastic cycling and a wonderful visitor destination.

The Grand Départ in this iconic and technically challenging cycling landscape promises to be an unforgettable experience - as well as generating significant income for the area.

It's not just about one weekend but the long term sustainable tourism legacy the event will bring. The National Park Authority has been helping cafés, accommodation providers and tourist attractions to offer bike-friendly facilities by providing free bike stands and bike rings to install outside their premises, as well as free cycle repair kits.

National Park Authority Chairman Peter Charlesworth said: "The staging of the Grand Départ is a fantastic opportunity for us to highlight this amazing area to people all over the world - with the added bonus that it coincides with the 60th anniversary of the creation of the National Park.

"An estimated 400,000 people are expected to line the route within the National Park and for all the businesses and communities it's a chance to boost the local economy like never before. And we are pulling out all the stops to encourage the spectators to visit us again when the Tour de France has long gone.

"It's an absolutely huge thing to happen and it has to be planned to the finest detail - everything from litter collection to traffic - if we are to make sure it goes smoothly and has a minimum impact on the land and the

wildlife. That means we are working closely with parish, district and county councils, Natural England, the emergency services and all the other organisations and groups that have a stake in the National Park."

There are many ways to enjoy the event and communities are already planning activities along the route and in surrounding towns and villages.

Following the launch last year of our Tour de France parish council grant scheme, the National Park Authority has provided £17,000 towards related events.

"We are working with landowners, farmers and businesses who will be opening temporary campsites and car parks to accommodate visitors," Peter said.

"In addition, we normally do not allow overnight stays in our car parks but we will be relaxing the rule in the week leading up to the Grand Départ so that people in campervans will have somewhere to park."

The District Councils are looking for volunteers, through Parish Councils, to help clear litter on and after the day and will provide kits and training. The National Park Authority will also have teams out litter-picking in the more remote areas.

The message to visitors is to act responsibly and respect people's property and livelihoods. This is being incorporated into all spectator communications and the 12,000 volunteer Tour Makers will emphasise the point.

North Yorkshire County Council has overall responsibility for race operational matters and key resident information such as road closures, emergency access and home care services is being published and regularly updated on their website at www.northyorks.gov.uk/tour.



Read more about what to expect on the weekend itself on page 5 and visit our website at www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/letour for further information.



Pupils show why they love the National Park

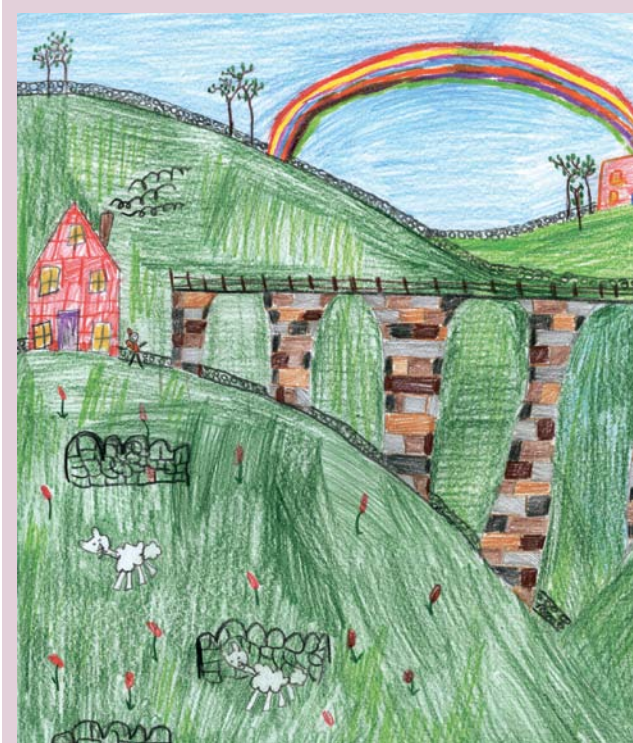
School children have been showing their artistic side in our Tour de France poster competition.

As well as marking the race, the 'I love the Yorkshire Dales' poster competition coincides with the 60th anniversary of the creation of the National Park.

And judging by the fun entries that have flooded in, Outreach Officer Catherine Kemp will have a hard task in picking a winner.

"The purpose of the competition was to give 5 to 16-year-olds a chance to design an original and exciting poster to show visitors arriving for the Grand Départ what they think is really special about this stunning place", she said, "and they have done a great job".

"Prizes have been generously donated by Leyburn-based Leyburn Bikes and shortlisted posters will be displayed as part of the 60th anniversary celebrations at our spectator hubs in Grassington, Hawes and Aysgarth Falls over the Tour weekend."



Two of the fantastic entries in our school poster competition (above and top)

Share the National Park brand

Our five 'locator' logos - based on the famous Swaledale ram's head design - can help identify your business, event or product as being in or of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

More than 200 businesses so far have enthusiastically taken up the offer to use the locator logos in connection with their marketing material and associate their activity with this special place.

While there is no charge from the National Park

Authority to use the logos, the Intellectual Property Office sets a fee of £50 to register licensees permitted to use the trademark - this lasts in perpetuity.

To find out more and how to apply, please visit www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/logo.



One of the five locator logo designs

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A warm welcome to the spring edition of *Dales 2014*

Unless you have been on a far distant planet you can't help but notice that there is a small matter of a bicycle race coming through the National Park in July.

We think that the event is a marvellous opportunity to showcase the Dales and, equally importantly, bring some much needed revenue to the area. We also happen to think that is a wonderful present for the National Park's 60th birthday which occurs this year.

The theme of business development and economic growth is a strong one in this edition of *Dales*. Economic conditions remain difficult for many businesses so we're delighted we've been able to support some of the distinctive local businesses through the Sustainable Development Fund.

We recently carried out a Residents Survey which we will be reporting on in the autumn edition. The overall message that we are taking from it is 'doing well but could do better'.

We are sure that that will always be the case and it is certainly the case that men and women of good heart working together can ensure that the Dales remains a thriving vibrant place to live, providing a wonderful quality of life and some of the most magnificent landscape in the world.



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Museum makeover

It's full steam ahead at the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes.

Over the last few months, the Museum - which tells the story of the people and the landscape of the Dales - has been undergoing a major redevelopment to update the space and its displays.

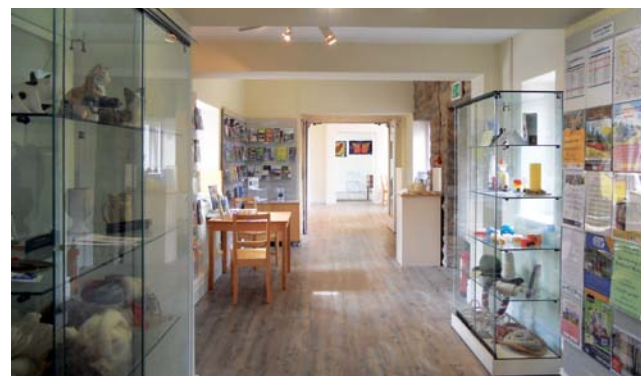
A bright new tourist information and retail area has been created to showcase the work of local artists and craftspeople. The space currently features a display of textiles by Caroline Dunn, inspired by Dales wildlife and landscape, and rag rugs made by Jane Cook, Elaine Foster and Jenny Clough.

Work by Gayle Mill Craft Group, oil paintings from Moira Metcalfe and print-making by Helen Roddie will follow and the artists will be carrying out live demonstrations, too.

The Museum - which is housed in an imaginative conversion of the town's Victorian railway station - has also become more eco-friendly with the arrival of a biomass boiler, fuelled by woodchips, which heats the whole building.

At the same time, the installation of a lift in the former goods shed is giving improved access to some of the fascinating permanent displays about Dales life in past times.

And the work is still on-going. Alongside a remodelling of



the exhibits, there will be brand new introductory displays focusing on elements of the landscape and the prehistory of the area and highlighting the different themes to be found inside.

To complement the redevelopment, a dedicated website - www.dalescountrysideuseum.org.uk - has been launched, where you can explore the collection and what's on, with lots of ideas for families - including the Museum's popular Hidden Secrets outdoor sculpture trail.

The Museum - owned and managed by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority - is open daily between 10am and 5pm and is free for children.

New this year is an annual pass - £8 for adults and £7 for concessions - allowing visitors to enjoy its attractions whenever they want.

For more information, contact the Dales Countryside Museum on 01969 666210 or dcm@yorkshiredales.org.uk.

Tour de France riders up against competition

The world-famous cyclists riding through the Yorkshire Dales National Park in July will be facing some stiff competition in the speed league tables as there will be some others vying for public attention - two peregrine falcons.

With recorded speeds of more than 200 miles an hour - about three times as fast as a cheetah - the birds have earned themselves the title of the fastest animals on the planet.

Once again, a pair is nesting in Malham Cove and, over the coming months, they will hopefully be rearing young and teaching them how to survive.

As in previous years, RSPB and National Park Authority officers and volunteers will be staffing a special, free viewing point where visitors to the cove can watch the spectacular birds through high-powered telescopes.



The viewpoint will be open from Saturdays to Wednesday inclusive between 10.30am and 4.30pm (weather permitting) until 2 August.

National Park Authority Wildlife Conservation Officer Ian Court said: "The birds are a fantastic crowd-puller for the village of Malham and they certainly help boost the local economy.

"They have moved their nest site this year to the right-hand side of the cove. Despite the fact we can't see into the nest, we think there may already be some eggs because we have seen plenty of change-overs and food being brought in to the female."

As in previous years, visitors are being asked to stay away from the nest site and the British Mountaineering Council has once again agreed to impose temporary, voluntary rock climbing restrictions around it. An area at the top of the cliff has also been sealed off and visitors are asked to follow any on-site signage.

The Malham project is run in partnership with the Authority as part of the RSPB's Date with Nature programme of events, which makes rare and spectacular birds and animals accessible for everyone to see.

Volunteers at the viewpoint will be providing weekly updates on our special website at www.malhamperegrines.org.uk and the birds are featured on Twitter (@malhamperegrine) and on the RSPB's Facebook pages.

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A diamond in the landscape



This year, the Yorkshire Dales National Park celebrates its 60th birthday.

The National Park was created in 1954 in recognition of its extraordinary natural beauty, the diversity of its wildlife habitats, its rich cultural heritage and its fantastic opportunities for outdoor recreation.

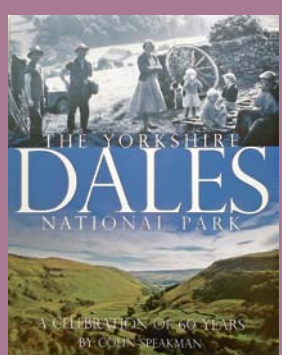
"We welcome the Park", wrote local campaigner Arthur Raistrick on hearing the news of its formal designation sixty years ago.

"It offers all that we want, country for the walkers, ranging from the wildest fell tops to the pleasant riverside walks of the lower dales. It is a paradise for the naturalist and geologist, and we who live in it and know it, believe that any right minded person, whatever his country taste, can find satisfaction within its bounds."

Today, National Parks are widely recognised as the most iconic areas of countryside in the UK.

As living, working landscapes, they continue to face many challenges, from the economy of upland farming, pressures from tourism and the need for affordable housing, to the impact of climate change.

National park authorities work alongside many others to make sure these special areas and their communities have the sustainable future intended by all those who fought for their conservation.



A new book by Colin Speakman - founder member of the Yorkshire Dales Society and creator of the Dales Way - explores the National Park's fascinating story.

It looks at how the National Park Authority and others have protected a unique environment over the last six decades from shaky beginnings to the many present-day achievements.

'The Yorkshire Dales National Park: A Celebration of 60 years' is available from National Park Centres and all good book shops at £16.99.



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

National park authorities have two purposes:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the parks by the public.

In carrying out these purposes, national park authorities also have a duty to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities.

To fulfill these purposes, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority offers services that provide help and advice on a wide range of issues, including environmental conservation and enhancement, planning, historic buildings and sites, tourist information and footpath and bridleway management.

If you would like more information please:

write to, or call in at, our offices...

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- Colvend, Hebden Road, Grassington, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 5LB

telephone...

0300 456 0030

email...

info@yorkshiredales.org.uk

or visit...

www.yorkshiredales.org.uk

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority strives to be widely recognised as a centre of expertise and excellence in conservation and recreation policy and practice, and in the quality of the landscape, and to deliver efficient and welcoming services. We aim to inspire local communities and businesses to ensure it is a thriving area, one that is treasured by those who live here and those who visit. We welcome your comments and suggestions about our work.

Historic buildings at risk surveyed

Every year the Authority surveys a fifth of the 1,803 listed buildings in the National Park with the help of our team of Dales Volunteers.

You will receive a letter about the 2014 survey if you are the owner of an affected property.

This annual condition study has the primary purpose of flagging up those important buildings that are in poor repair - in other words, that are 'at risk' - so we can work with owners to try and ensure that they maintain their property's special qualities and so that it does not deteriorate further. There are currently 65 listed buildings known to be 'at risk' in the National Park.

This year, our popular day school 'Caring for Your Historic Building' will be held on Saturday 27 September at West Burton Hall, again in collaboration with Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Aimed at homeowners, building managers and anyone who just wishes to learn more, illustrated talks by leading specialists will cover the characteristics of local historic buildings, how they have developed over the years, how they perform and how they are best cared for.

Sessions are interactive and participants will have the opportunity to have their specific questions discussed. You can take part in a fascinating guided walk through West Burton Conservation Area, or a practical slaking lime and mortar mixing demonstration, as well as find out about the innovative Limecrete - an eco-friendly alternative to cement.

The £15 fee includes refreshments and a buffet lunch. For more information, please take a look at our website www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/caringforyourhistoricbuilding2014 or contact us on aonbevents@harrogate.gov.uk or 01423 712950.



Last year the Authority helped to improve six structures that were 'at risk' or 'vulnerable', most notably Top Building at Gammersgill (pictured below) which is still in agricultural use. We funded bat surveys and building work including reinstating the missing first floor to prevent further movements of the walls.

Despite the successes, every year the survey identifies yet further buildings at risk. Our aim is to reduce this number to 55 by 2020.

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More cash on offer to help community projects

Community schemes, environmental projects and fresh business ideas are being invited to bid for a pot of cash.

Grants totalling £160,000 a year are available through the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) either to kick-start a project or to develop it.

Open to any individual, business, community group or voluntary-sector body, the fund provides a simple and accessible source of money for a range of schemes that will result in positive benefits for the National Park, its environment, its economy and its communities, while enhancing and conserving local culture, wildlife, landscape and land use.

Since its creation in 2002, the SDF has given out nearly £2.1 million to 230 projects. In 2013 alone, it awarded £155,600 to support 19 projects with a total value of £305,042.

The wide-ranging types of projects the SDF gave grants to last year included the establishment of farmers markets in partnership with local schools and a specially-designed, all-terrain wheelchair for use by disabled visitors at Malham Tarn.

Three great projects the SDF supported in 2014 are featured on these pages.

Until the beginning of April, the SDF was administered by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust on behalf of the National Park Authority, but applications can now be submitted directly to the Authority for the 2014/15 fund.

More information, including the key dates for submission, can be found at www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/sdf.

Enquirers are recommended to get in touch before submitting an application by emailing sdf@yorkshiredales.org.uk or by phoning Andrea Burden on 01969 652337.

DalesBound to boost tourism businesses



A new online showcase for tourism activity providers in the National Park, Nidderdale and surrounding areas was launched in January.

Part funded by SDF, DalesBound is believed to be the first business in the Yorkshire Dales to act as a central reservation point and online booking system for more than 100 activities ranging from caving trips and bird of prey experiences to chauffeur-driven tours on a motorised tricycle.

It was the idea of Reeth-based marketer, Hannah Wallington (pictured above), who saw a new opportunity to make tourism businesses more sustainable by making it easy for potential visitors (and residents) to find exciting things to do, whilst taking all

the hassle out of the booking process.

Hannah, who used to work for marketing agencies in Leeds and now helps her parents with their holiday home business, has created a website that is both attractive and simple to use.

People can create their own 'package holiday' by bundling together activities from various providers on an online form known as a 'park planner'. They send this to Hannah who then does all the hard work for them by liaising with the activity providers to make bookings and to collect payment from which she takes a small commission.

"The SDF grant made all the difference because it enabled me to create a really professional website which appeals to a range of users from individuals to families to groups," she said.

"The website has also encouraged not just activity providers but also attractions such as Bolton Castle to sign up with DalesBound. We are keen to keep the momentum going by signing up even more."

As the business continues to grow, Hannah intends to produce some marketing literature later this year, part funded by SDF.

If you would like to explore how DalesBound could showcase your activities or attractions, email hello@dalesbound.co.uk and Hannah will get in touch.

SDF grant £11,830

Project cost £22,808

Creamery turns up the heat with new recycling technology

Wensleydale Creamery's Visitor Centre at Hawes is getting into hot water - in a new, energy-saving way.

Thanks to an SDF grant, which has part funded the installation of the latest recycling technology, hot water for the restaurant, kitchens and toilets is now being provided much more cost effectively.

The ingenious explanation lies in the use of technology that recycles waste heat from the centre's air conditioning plant. It captures it in the form of refrigerant gas that then passes through a compressor before going through a heat exchanger. This then heats the cold water mains, providing energy-efficient hot water.

The figures are quite staggering. The centre is expected to save 60,000 kilowatt hours of energy consumption and to cut CO₂ emissions by 15 tonnes each year. The cost of heating will be reduced by £3,500 annually.

Doug Potts, who is engineering manager at the Creamery, said: "I was really surprised at the results when the system was put into operation. It began generating heat very soon just by convection even before the electricity had been turned on. The hot water coming out into the sinks was surprisingly warm."

The 'Heat Hog' heat exchanger installed by NU Heat Recovery of Beverley has no moving parts and is virtually maintenance free. The company has also installed this technology at a butcher's in Grassington and has had enquiries from other Yorkshire businesses including farm shops and poultry abattoirs.

The company is eager to spread the message to the



200,000 visitors who go to the creamery every year through an educational information board part funded by the SDF grant.

It is hoped it will encourage schools and colleges to find out more about the technology and that the Creamery will become a hub for artisan food manufacturers, pubs and restaurants in the Dales to learn about how they too can save money and harmful emissions.

Read more about the Wensleydale Creamery - including how you can see the cheesemakers in action - by visiting www.wensleydale.co.uk.

SDF grant £7,500

Project cost £15,000

Upper Wharfedale's e

Upper Wharfedale is enjoying an economic renaissance with a rise in pupil numbers at Kettlewell School - lifting an earlier threat of closure - as more people move into the area.

Part of the explanation is that it is easier to run businesses from home as high speed broadband has extended its reach to 70 households in the dale.

Until recently, though, the signal was unreliable because the repeater masts that carried it were solar or wind powered.

"Steep-sided valleys and winter days of low or very little sun were not a good combination so the signal was lost on some days," said Chris Beazley, a campaigner who helped set up a community group, the Upper Wharfedale Fast Broadband Project.

The answer was to put the repeater masts on mains electricity. In 2013 this was carried out to masts at



Chris Clark (left) and Chris Beazley in front of the Upper Wharfedale hillside where one of the broadband masts (right) is located.

Le Grand Départ: what to expect on the day



Stage 1 of Le Tour on Saturday 5 July will leave Leeds for a breath-taking, 190-kilometre ride through the National Park to Harrogate travelling along Wharfedale, Bishopdale, Wensleydale and Swaledale.

The following day the cyclists will skirt through the southern edge of the National Park as they ride past Bolton Abbey on their way from York to Sheffield.

The race caravan - a procession of around 150 elaborate floats and vehicles - will be the first thing to come past approximately 2 hours ahead of the peloton (the main group of riders), entering the National Park just north of Skipton around 11am. They will be handing out souvenirs to those lining the route, making it a great family occasion.

The cyclists will arrive at around 1pm and while with us will take in three spectacular 'King of the Mountain' climbs - Cote du Cray at around 1.30pm, Cote du Buttertubs (2.20pm) and Cote du Grinton (3pm) - plus the sprint at Newbiggin at around 1.45pm. Approximate timings for all the key places along the route can be found at letour.yorkshire.com/timings.

Spectators should aim to be in position well in advance of the race starting. For full and up-to-date guides and the answers to frequently asked questions visit letour.yorkshire.com.

Chief Executive David Butterworth said: "The Tour de France is a wonderful, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It's the world's largest annual sports event, it's entirely free for spectators and it's coming through our dales, towns and villages.

"We hope that as many people as possible - local residents as well as visitors - really enjoy the Tour de France weekend and it is our intention to do all we can to make that the case."

The National Park Authority is creating spectator hubs at Grassington, Aysgarth Falls and Hawes featuring big screens to view the race, toilets, disabled access and a place to picnic and soak up what is sure to be an amazing atmosphere.

We have produced free smartphone mini-apps about the three hubs and Reeth containing information like places to eat and drink, short walks and activities for youngsters. Download them from www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/tdfapps.

As well as 40 pages packed full of features and information, this year's edition of our free newspaper *The Visitor* features a bumper eight-page cycling supplement welcoming the Tour and highlighting the fantastic cycling opportunities in the National Park. Pick up a copy - or ask about getting copies for your customers - at National Park Centres.

Last year we launched our revamped cycling website - www.cyclethedales.org.uk - which contains a huge range of routes and classic hill climbs, along with downloadable maps and descriptions, and information about the Grand Départ - plus a four-minute-long video with tongue-in-cheek voiceover by world-renowned cycling commentator Phil Liggett.

The official Grand Départ trophy will be coming to the National Park from May 19 to 23. Full details of where to see it are available on our website at www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/letour.



Our Cycle the Dales website will help you plan a fantastic tour of the dales on two wheels, while our mini-apps, specially created for the Tour, have great suggestions on what to see, do and eat around our spectator hubs.

On top of the huge range of maps, books and gift items normally on sale in National Park Centres, visitors will be able to buy Welcome to Yorkshire Grand Départ merchandise as well as some exclusive National Park Authority items, including a Yorkshire Dales National Park cycling jersey.

And in the grand tradition of Le Tour's quirkier community fringe activities, we are creating a piece of giant artwork on Elbolton Hill in Wharfedale - the National Park logo's Swaledale ram's head made from fleece.



National Park sweeps the board in readers' poll

The beautiful Yorkshire Dales have been placed in the top three attractions in the county.

A poll in the April edition of *Dalesman* magazine listing the 75 great icons in Yorkshire puts the Dales at number three, beaten only by York Minster at number two and the Yorkshire pudding at number one.

And other places and attractions in the National Park come thick and fast in the listings.

At number eight is Wensleydale cheese, Malham Cove sits at number 11, Bolton Abbey is at 13 and 23rd position is taken by Aysgarth Falls. Ribbleshead viaduct comes in at 27, with the Settle-Carlisle line taking 38th position and the Three Peaks of Pen-y-ghent, Ingleborough and Wharfedale following up at 44. One place behind them are the Pennines generally and finally Swaledale sheep is at 54.

National Park Authority Chairman Peter Charlesworth said: "Everyone who lives and works in the National Park and who comes to visit thinks it's pretty special - and it seems we are not alone."

The feature on the poll - carried out to celebrate the magazine's 75th anniversary - included a quote from Sir Patrick Stewart who said: "Nowhere is more iconic for me than the Three Peaks in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. I knew this landscape as a child when, at weekends, I would cycle there from my home in the industrial West Riding."

Further details can be found on the *Dalesman* website at www.dalesman.co.uk/icons.

Electrifying renaissance

Starbottle, Buckden Raikes and Pewet Moss thanks to a grant from the New Homes Bonus Fund.

And this year an SDF grant helped to provide electricity to masts at Arncliffe, Halton Gill and Greenfield, making the system much more resilient.

The importance of the cable laying to the local community was recognised by BBC Look North which filmed it and it is now featured on YouTube.



To make it even more reliable, the SDF grant is also paying for a battery that will provide two days' back-up to the broadband source at Kettlewell School and 10 repeater masts. This compares with their previous three hour back-up.

Chris Beazley said: "The SDF grant is great news as a reliable, fast broadband signal is vital to Upper Wharfedale's economy and to its children who rely on internet access for their homework."

And Chris Clark, another member of the group, added that fast broadband had recently enabled a teacher based at Kettlewell to run an innovative lesson with some of the children linked by webcam to others at Chris's Nethergill Farm in Oughtershaw.

Find out more about Upper Wharfedale's Fast Broadband Project at www.fastuwdale.net.

SDF grant £14,712

Project cost £21,882

PLANNING MATTERS

Local Plan moves forward

By Peter Stockton, Head of Sustainable Development

Last October, we asked for your opinions about a set of policy options to tackle some of the most important local planning issues in the National Park.

The comments we received from forums, workshops and written responses have informed the drafting of more detailed proposals. This summer we will be consulting on a full draft Yorkshire Dales National Park Local Plan for 2015 to 2030, which will set out our policies for delivering sustainable development through planning decisions.

The new Plan aims to protect and improve community services and facilities. It is also intended to encourage development that will support new jobs to try to help increase the proportion of young adults and people of working age living in the National Park.

It proposes to allocate new brownfield sites for business growth. It also supports live/work development, which will allow highly sustainable development on brownfield sites in towns and villages.

A single policy covering agricultural and rural estate development is proposed with the aim of supporting farming and encouraging a wide range of rural diversification activities.

Tourism plays a huge part in the life of the National Park. The Local Plan contains new policies to help widen the range of visitor accommodation to encourage more visitors to stay overnight. It says that a more considered approach should be given to the development of new facilities like indoor play facilities that are not necessarily related to the National Park's special qualities.

The National Park contains about 6,000 barns - two thirds of them located out among fields in the open countryside. The Local Plan contains new policies and a 'barns toolkit' that will support more residential, tourism and other uses of appropriate roadside barns.

The draft Local Plan will be published on the Authority website and the public consultation will take place in June and July. So please tell us then what you think of the proposals.



The new Local Plan will encourage development that will support a growing tourism economy.

Government planning law decision welcomed

A Government decision to exclude national parks from planning changes that would allow the uncontrolled conversion of barns into houses has been welcomed by the National Park Authority.

Chairman Peter Charlesworth said he was "delighted" at the announcement in March by Planning Minister Nick Boles that Government changes to planning rules would not apply in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, which contains an estimated 6,000 barns.

In January Mr Charlesworth warned that a relaxation of permitted development rights would cause "irreversible harm" to the stunning countryside because the National Park Authority - as the local planning authority - and local communities would no longer have any say about which buildings could sensibly be converted.

Following the announcement, he said: "We are delighted that the Government has listened to the concerns of England's national parks and others and has modified its proposals accordingly, allowing national parks to retain local planning control."

"We're now going to be getting on with implementing the spirit of the National Planning Policy Framework - to promote sustainable development in the Yorkshire Dales National Park."

"This will, no doubt, include the conversion of some barns to houses, but only where they're in suitable locations and where they can be retained for local people rather than second homes."

"We know local people support that approach and our new Local Plan - which maps out the Authority's policies for planning issues from 2015 to 2030 - contains proposals to bring more derelict farm buildings back into use."

"A draft of the Local Plan is due to go out to consultation in June [see article left]. If the policies are approved, we will then be able to continue with our commitment to conserve the special qualities of the barns and walls landscape, making better use of one of the National Park's best assets."

Jon Avison, Chairman Designate of the Yorkshire Dales Society, said: "We are over the moon that the collaborative work of the Society and the National Park Authority has helped to persuade the minister to change his mind on this very important policy. It would have had a potentially devastating impact on the landscape and the character of the Yorkshire Dales."



National Parks have been excluded from proposals that would allow uncontrolled conversion of barns to houses in open countryside.

Local control on change of use for barns retained

Late last year the Government decided to scrap local planning controls so that permission was no longer required for anyone wanting to change the use of agricultural buildings to a variety of commercial uses instead.

Authority Members were concerned at these changes on two counts: first, the potential negative impact on one of the most outstandingly beautiful areas of the country - an area that contains approximately 6,000 barns, many in open countryside; and second, removing the rights of local communities, through the planning process, to have a say on what should happen in their area.

Consequently, Members voted on 25 March to introduce a

Direction under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 that will effectively retain local control of the planning process. This means there will still be a need for planning permission to be obtained for a change of use.

Members were very conscious that their decision would mean a different treatment for farm buildings inside the National Park from those outside. They felt strongly that the Dales was a very special area deserving a different approach.

But this does not mean a bar on commercial development.

To put this in context, the Authority supports many types

of commercial re-use of barns. In fact, since 2006, 88 per cent of all such planning applications have been approved. In addition, the Authority's new Local Plan - read more above - will contain new policies to encourage more flexibility in re-using barns.

We also have to recognise, however, that the 6,000 barns are an intrinsic and valuable part of the landscape on which a multi-million pound tourism industry depends. That economic value needs protecting alongside encouraging new economic development.

The Article 4 Direction will mean that the Authority still has some local control over which of the barns in the National Park are changed into commercial premises. As importantly, it also means local communities will still have a say on proposals that would affect them.

Find out more about the work of the Authority at www.yorkshiredales.org.uk

High Nature Value Farming in the Yorkshire Dales

By **Helen Keep, Senior Farm Conservation Officer**

Farming is an extremely important element to the economic, cultural and community well-being of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

It provides jobs, environmental management, income streams for other businesses and a community base that is vital for this rural area. However, this way of life is under threat from poor incomes, lack of opportunity for new or young farmers, an ageing workforce and market forces encouraging the intensification of farmland.

The concept of High Nature Value (HNV) farming developed from a growing recognition that not all agriculture harms nature and that the conservation of biodiversity depends on the continuation of low-intensity farming systems across large areas.

Within the National Park, the majority of farm holdings are of HNV - low-intensity farming systems that are particularly valuable for wildlife and the natural environment.

Despite agri-environment scheme incentives, there is evidence that the biodiversity value of our HNV farming area is declining. If this decline is to be halted, there needs to be a new approach to supporting HNV farming in these upland areas.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, in conjunction with the three other protected areas within the Northern Upland Chain, has undertaken a series of studies within four pilot areas. The aim is to raise awareness to policymakers, the public and the wider rural community about the challenges facing farmers in upland areas, the value they bring to society as a whole, the natural resource that they manage and the potential to deliver a more resilient ecosystem in tangent with a resilient farm business.

One study involved Buckden parish, which is home to an array of nationally and internationally important habitats and wildlife and a strong farming community.

The results provide a clear indication that the area is of High Nature Value but traditional farming in such a constrained environment means the returns from livestock production are very modest and the dependency on environmental schemes is high. In fact, 45% of income is generated from subsidy support payments, without which the farms would be making a loss or forced into intensifying the land.

The study has recommended a number of actions to safeguard HNV farming areas including:

- Support for an increase in payments to farms within the Uplands
- Continuation of agri-environment scheme support and other rural development grants to help manage these important areas
- Collaboration between groups of farmers to manage habitats and species at a landscape scale
- The development of a retirement package for ageing farmers, support for longer-term tenancies and a new entrants programme to revitalise the industry.

If you would like further information on the Buckden pilot area report, please contact Helen Keep on 01756 751611. From May, a final summary report will be available covering the four HNV pilot areas.



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50 years of volunteering

2014 also marks 50 years of formal volunteering in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

The National Park Authority could not do half the work it does without its fantastic Dales Volunteers, who get involved in everything from path repairs and archaeological surveys to leading guided walks and drystone walling.

Originally known as Voluntary Wardens in 1964, their name was changed in 2001 to emphasise that they didn't just work for the National Park's warden - later, ranger - service, but carried out duties across the board, bringing their expertise, enthusiasm and dedication to a huge range of tasks to support the work of paid staff.

In this special year, we would like to say thank you for the efforts of all those amazing people who've helped care for and cherish the National Park over the decades.



To find out more about our volunteers and their work, please visit www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/volunteering.



Dales Volunteers and a team from the John Muir Trust clear overgrowing turf from flagstones on a Muker footpath



Summer meadow near Muker (Tom Collier)

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Playing its part in the National Park

As part of its long term commitment to working for people and the environment in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, Lafarge Tarmac is delighted to support the Dales Residents' Newspaper.

We also donate quarried materials to local projects, sponsor local events and contribute financially towards improving local amenities.

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Young Rangers make life easier for visitors

Over the last year members of a group of young volunteers in the Yorkshire Dales National Park have contributed over 800 hours of their time to plant over 1,500 trees, repair 300 metres of footpath, clear bracken from Cleatop Woods and even help design a guided walk for the public.

Recently, eleven members of our Young Rangers team - aged between 11 and 16 - got together to resurface 120 metres of a footpath leading to Malham Cove, emptying tonnes of aggregate and spreading it along the section.

And their hard work earned them a big pat on the back from National Park Rangers Cat Kilner and Colin Chick.

The work was needed to repair the damage caused by a combination of hundreds of thousands of walkers going to and from the famous beauty spot and the rain and snow over the last couple of years.

Colin said the path - which was built to make it easier for wheelchair users and families to reach Malham Cove - had become uneven and a deep channel had been worn away down one side, making it difficult to use.

"They all worked really hard and did a fantastic job," he said.

"The footpath looks brilliant - as good as new."

One of the team said: "I really enjoyed repairing the path - I didn't want to stop but we ran out of stone so I had to."

When the job was done they had a quick snack break then it was down to the Cove for a paddle in the stream and a welcome rest.

The Young Rangers group was formed by the National Park Authority to encourage young people who have an interest in the outdoors by teaching them new skills.

Catherine Kemp, the Authority's Outreach Officer, said: "We think the group is fantastic - they all work really hard in all weathers and they enjoy themselves at the same time.



"It's a great way for its members to learn new skills and for the Authority to encourage a new generation to develop an awareness and love of this beautiful but fragile landscape."

The group is open to anyone aged 11 to 16 who lives in the Settle area and it meets every second Saturday of the month to do practical conservation tasks.

If you would like more information, please contact Outreach Officer Catherine Kemp on 01756 751623 or by emailing catherine.kemp@yorkshiredales.org.uk



Thumbs up for a job well done: our Young Rangers have been turning their hand to drystone walling (above), tree-planting (top) and footpath repairs (right).



National Park is a great place to visit

It's a fantastic place to come to - that's the verdict of a survey of visitors to the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Scenery, remoteness and walks are the main attractions, closely followed by the peace and tranquillity of the area - and the majority of people said they would definitely be back.

The comments come from the results of face-to-face surveys commissioned by the National Park Authority last year.

Ninety per cent of respondents said they had visited before, 70 per cent of them in the last 12 months compared to 64 per cent in the last similar survey in 2008. And the number of first-time visitors had risen from seven per cent in 2008 to 10 per cent.

The results show more people were staying in the area for an average of five nights - 58 per cent compared to 47 per cent in 2008 - while 42 per cent were visiting the area for the day, compared to 53 per cent in 2008



Casting an expert eye over the sheep at Kilnsey Show

Just over a third lived in the Yorkshire and Humberside region, 17 per cent came from the North West and seven per cent of the visitors were from other countries - mainly New Zealand, Australia and Germany - compared with two per cent in 2008.

Yet again, satisfaction levels

also increased, with 77 per cent of visitors claiming to be very satisfied with their visit - up four per cent on 2008. And 82 per cent said they were very likely to visit the area again in the next five years.

Although the figures are positive, we will continue to work with tourism businesses in the Dales to look for ways to encourage visitors to stay longer in the area.

The results also show that the sources of information used to plan a visit have changed over the last five years, although there is still a way to go before electronic sources replace paper-based ones.

The 2013 surveys show that maps were still the most frequently-used source of information used by respondents (26 per cent), followed by guide books (14 per cent) and leaflets (13 per cent). But these results for paper-based information are less than the figures in 2008, which were 52 per cent, 22 per cent, and 22 per cent respectively.

The surveys involved 515 people and took place at a range of busy visitor locations in the National Park, including Malham, Aysgarth, Ribbleshead and Grassington.

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Find out more about the work of the Authority at www.yorkshiredales.org.uk