

Yorkshire Dales Review

No.66 Spring 1999



Yorkshire Dales
Society



- *The 1949 Act - An Impressive Achievement*
- *Green Lanes of the Dales - The End or a New Beginning?*
- *Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan*
- *National Parks For All: The Next 50 Years*

£1.50



The 1949 Act - An Impressive Achievement

As Chris Bonington reminds us in this issue of the Yorkshire Dales Review, it's almost exactly 50 years since the passing of the 1949 National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act. It is difficult for us to imagine, in the prosperous 1990s, how fifty years ago, emerging from a cruel and ruinous war, facing severe shortages and deprivation, this nation could pass an Act of Parliament which has dominated the agenda for the protection and enjoyment of British countryside for the last half century.

First and foremost the Act established our family of eleven National Parks in England and Wales. Far from perfect they may be, but their achievement in terms of protection and enhancement of our finest landscapes is one the greatest legacies of the Act. It's interesting to reflect on the howls of protest which came from many quarters, including farmers, landowners and local authorities (the Yorkshire Dales National Park was bitterly resisted by the former North and West Riding County Councils), using arguments and language strikingly identical to that used today to oppose any extension of public access rights in the countryside.

Despite this orchestrated opposition of self-interest the then (Conservative) administration established our family of National Parks in the early 1950s, including the Yorkshire Dales National Park in 1954. For over 20 years our own National Park was little more than a line on a map, divided between two local authorities, starved of staff and funds, but things gradually improved during the 1970s and 1980s, leading (in 1996) to the new independent National Park Authority - an intention of the 1949 Act thwarted by the lobby groups.

Let's not forget the other major achievement of that Act. The creation of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Rights of Way legislation to establish Definitive Footpath Maps, perhaps the most important single recreational resource in the countryside. The development of Long Distance Footpaths such as the Pennine Way now known as National Trails. The setting up of the National Parks Commission, now the Countryside Commission, and the Nature Conservancy Council, now English Nature. Access to open countryside

measures with powers for local authorities to make formal Agreements (or even Orders); this is still on the statute book and is a highly effective (if needlessly neglected) way of resolving conflict where it does occur.

No means achievement for one small Act of Parliament. What the legislators could not predict were the massive changes in our society over those two short generations - the huge increase in personal mobility brought by the car, dramatically changing lifestyles and leisure patterns as Britain's wealth is earned primarily from services, not manufacturing, the impact of communication technology, and most recently the collapse in hillfarming economy.

Can legislation created in the days of the horse and cart and steam locomotive deal with life in the era of the mobile phone and Internet? Technology has changed, but people, and principles, if not the landscape, remain the same. Many arguments currently passionately put forward at National Park Authority meetings - against the plethora of new buildings allegedly for agricultural purpose, the desecration of our green lanes by motor vehicles, the decline of public transport - would have been heard at those first meetings nearly fifty years ago.

What is different now is that the National Parks have more resources. In the Yorkshire Dales Heather Hancock and her young team can bring the kind of enthusiasm, energy and expertise that make a difference, given the necessary support from her Authority members. The Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust is another new mechanism to bring resources to help make things happen in the Dales.

But let's record our gratitude to those 1949 campaigners, a small perhaps even elitist group, ramblers, naturalists, politicians, country lovers, writers, idealists who fought so passionately, in such difficult times when there were many other priorities, to get the National Parks Act onto the Statute book. The still (largely) unspoiled grandeur of our National Parks is their finest memorial.

Colin Speakman

Green Lanes of the Dales – The End or a New Beginning?

"... conservation should be given firm precedence over recreational demands where the two conflict."
Environment Act 1997.

From my home in Conistone, I can look over Wharfedale and see the drystone walls of Mastiles Lane running up and over Kilnsey Moor to Malham. In the last week of February it had snowed over the weekend, and when on the following Tuesday and Wednesday there were two beautiful sunny days, I decided to follow two of the old monastic routes over to Street Gate, Malham and back.

By nine I was at Arncliffe Cote in Littondale, walking up to the farmhouse which was probably the site of a monastic sheep farm. There was a brief "good morning" from the farmer, but as soon as I came to the start of the gated lane there was a hint of his frustration in the form of two notices. "Footpath only. No bikes or vehicles." and "All

dogs must be kept on a lead. Straying dogs will be shot." Although the caravan park alongside the farm is not the most beautiful of views, as soon as I had climbed up to Cote Moor, the view from the old lime kilns back over Cote Gill to Great Whernside was magnificent in the winter sun. The snow lying on the tops, under a clear blue sky gave a picture to remember. I continued to climb up the steep, narrow path through High Lineseed Head, past the shake holes and disused mine shafts, and having passed over the watershed at Lee Gate High Mark, the distinctive shape of Pendle Hill came into view ahead. With the small enclosure fields on my left, with their memories of earlier Norse sheep farmers, I walked down into the basin of Great Close where in the 18th century up to 20,000 cattle could be held in summer after being driven down from Scotland.

Since the melting snow there was too much water

Worst part of Mastiles Lane above Bordley. View to Malham side of Kilnsey Moor

Photo: Colin Ginger





View to Mastiles Lane on Kilnsey Moor, across Wharfedale from Conistone village

Photo: Colin Ginger

in Gordale Beck to get across to Street Gate, so instead I climbed the stile to Stony Bank and walked over to the site of the Roman military camp. Not much to see there now, and soon I was on an open part of Mastiles Lane heading eastwards to return to Conistone. Multiple tracks of 4-wheel drive vehicles and motorcycles filled all the area close to the field wall, including the Roman fort, but finally were focused into the twin-walled green lane. Mastiles Lane runs on clay soil through the Bordley area up to Mastiles Gate, and this whole length, identified on finger posts as "Bridleway", has been transformed into a rutted morass of water and mud, which was extremely difficult to walk on foot. Once over the watershed and back into Wharfedale, walking down the Lane through Kilnsey Moor on a solid, stoned surface was easy. In no time I was above Kilnsey, with its group of buildings on the same site of the old monastic grange, and the nearby trout farm using the same springs and ponds as the monks had used to keep their fish. At this point I left the modern road serving Coolscar Quarry and followed the old line of Mastiles Lane, now a field track, alongside the sheep-filled meadows below Kilnsey Crag, to cross Conistone Bridge as the Cistercian monks had done in the 12th century on their way to Fountains Abbey.

I was home in time for a late lunch, after a good morning's walk, with its centuries-old memories of Roman centurions, sheep and cattle drovers, packhorse men and monks all using these green lanes before me.

The contrast between the two halves of my walk, with the wonderful views seen from the good walking country on the track from Arncliffe Cote to Malham Moor, and the unpleasant walking conditions on Mastiles Lane above Lee Gate and Bordley, gives rise to grave concerns. It illustrates well the problems and controversies which have developed following the increase in off-road recreational vehicle use which has built up from the 1960s. Although both tracks are posted as bridleways for much of their length, the Arncliffe Cote tracks is used by a few motorcycles, whilst Mastiles Lane is heavily used by 4-wheel driver vehicles as well as motorcycles.

A "green lane" has no legal status, and may be a "Road Used as a Public Path" (RUPP), a "Byway Open to All Traffic" (BOAT) or simply an unclassified county road. In the 1990s, North Yorkshire County Council wished to declare all unclassified tracks in the Yorkshire Dales National Park as BOATs, presumed to allow vehicular

access, but this was opposed by individuals, the National Park Authority and the Ramblers Association, and their status remains in contention. Local residents, farmers and visitors and the Park Authority are all determined that there should be no further damage to the green lanes within the National Park, but are divided as to how it should be stopped.

Local feeling is that these tracks should be designated as "Bridleways" not "BOATs", thus excluding all motorised vehicles, and this view has some support from the Countryside Commission. The National Park Authority has argued that if the routes had BOAT status, then vehicular access could be limited, or even in some cases banned by use of Traffic Regulation Orders. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority also seems to wish to follow the lead of the Lake District National Park which has developed a "Hierarchy of Trails" in collaboration with recognised "off-road" organisations, by which access for motor vehicles is controlled, and in return the clubs carry out maintenance and repair of tracks under the supervision of Park staff. It has been accepted by Government and Park Authorities that some off-

road vehicle use must be allowed, and it is better to work with responsible clubs for self-regulation than to attempt to police an absolute ban in remote rural areas.

Whilst such arguments continue, it is essential to ensure that a route still in reasonable condition, like that from Arncliffe Cote to Malham with all its historic connections, should not be allowed to be downgraded to the same shameful condition as Mastiles Lane.

In the next issue of the YDS Review, we will report in more detail on the ideas and arguments being presented by different individuals and organisations to prevent further damage to the green lanes of the Yorkshire Dales, and make our own suggestions on the way forward.

Many members of the Yorkshire Dales Society will have their own experiences and ideas on the green lane controversy, and we welcome your written contributions to this debate.

Colin Ginger

Mastiles Lane above Lee Gate Farm and Bordley

Photo: Colin Ginger



Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan

“YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK: TODAY AND TOMORROW”

There is a plan afoot! Planning has been recognised as something we, the Park Authority need to work on. Business plans, corporate plans, management plans, area plans, biodiversity plans, project plans... a lot of plans. Yes, it all sounds rather confusing.

Cynics might be concerned that any number of plans don't necessarily mean that the Yorkshire Dales will be "conserved and enhanced" or that the Authority will be able to promote "greater understanding". Yet I am sure you would agree that "failing to plan is planning to fail!"

Why does the Park need a Management Plan?

In fact, all the plans are a sign that the Park Authority is getting to grips with exactly how it can deliver the national park purposes. We need to work on planning because we need to be consistent and we need to pull together with partners to conserve, enhance, promote and enjoy the area that we are all so proud of.

The Management Plan will give all the organisations interested in the Park some common ground in which to discuss ideas and decide on a common way forward.

This need is recognised in law. All National Park Authorities are required by the Environment Act 1995 to produce a National Park Management Plan setting out our strategies for managing the National Park over a 5 year period. This is a plan for the PARK not the National Park Authority so it has to draw together the many different agencies and groups who have an interest in the future of a National Park. As such, consultation and public participation are key aspects of the Management Plan's development and this article, followed by the discussion I hope we can have at the YDS AGM, are parts of that important consultation process.

What will the Management Plan look like?

The good news is that the Management Plan will

be concise, accurate and interesting! On its own, it should be practical to put it through every letterbox in the Park in order to give all residents an easy to digest resumé of who is doing what for the future of the Yorkshire Dales. We should be able to include a copy with a future edition of the YDS magazine to make sure that all YDS members have the information at their fingertips too.

The Management Plan will be an umbrella document which provides the framework to link all those other plans and projects coherently, making sure we all, residents and interest groups alike, are working for the Yorkshire Dales, today and tomorrow.

What's in it?

The Management Plan has four distinct sections:

Firstly, a vision of the Park in words and pictures. This won't be simply about the landscape, but what will it be like to actually live in, work in or visit the Dales? We need as many people as possible to share their ideas for the future of the areas and we're looking at a variety of ways of doing that.

There are plenty of tools to help make vague ideas into a concrete image of the future. The Dales Countryside Museum has an interactive CD-ROM where you can make decisions about the landscape and then see a Dale transformed on the basis of your decisions. We'd like to make a Dales "video diary" capturing ideas from people who come to National Park Centres and if any YDS members have ideas on how that can actually be done (and how it can be funded) then I'd love to hear from you!

The second section will be based on a set of 7 "sectors" looking at the values which the Park Authority and partners believe should underpin action for the Park in the future. These seven sections are:

Landscape and Farming Practice

Farming has made the landscape that we see today and landscape farming cannot be separated. But what do we value in the landscape, and what farming practices are needed for conservation of the landscape?

Access and Recreation

We are all very aware of the potential conflicts that encouraging access and recreation in the Park can bring. Yet, the Yorkshire Dales is a National Park. How do we balance enabling people to enjoy the Park with conserving it?

Nature conservation

The Park Authority is co-ordinating the local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) with a large number of partners. The LBAP considers how the variety of different habitats and species in the park should be maintained, restored or even increased.

Built heritage - past and present

The Park is rich in listed buildings, but also in unlisted structures such as field barns. Conserving built heritage without turning the park into a museum is a key element of maintaining the vitality of the Park and its communities.

Culture and Community

There are many "soft" aspects to the heritage of the Park. What's distinctive about the Dales way of life,

what are the traditions that have shaped the way people live today? What actions are needed to preserve traditions, and to keep them vibrant and not simply vestigial remains of former times?

Employment and Economy

The Dales lives and works. It needs tourism, it needs farming, but how does it need to use new technology? How will working patterns need to shift if the rich heritage of the area is to be maintained?

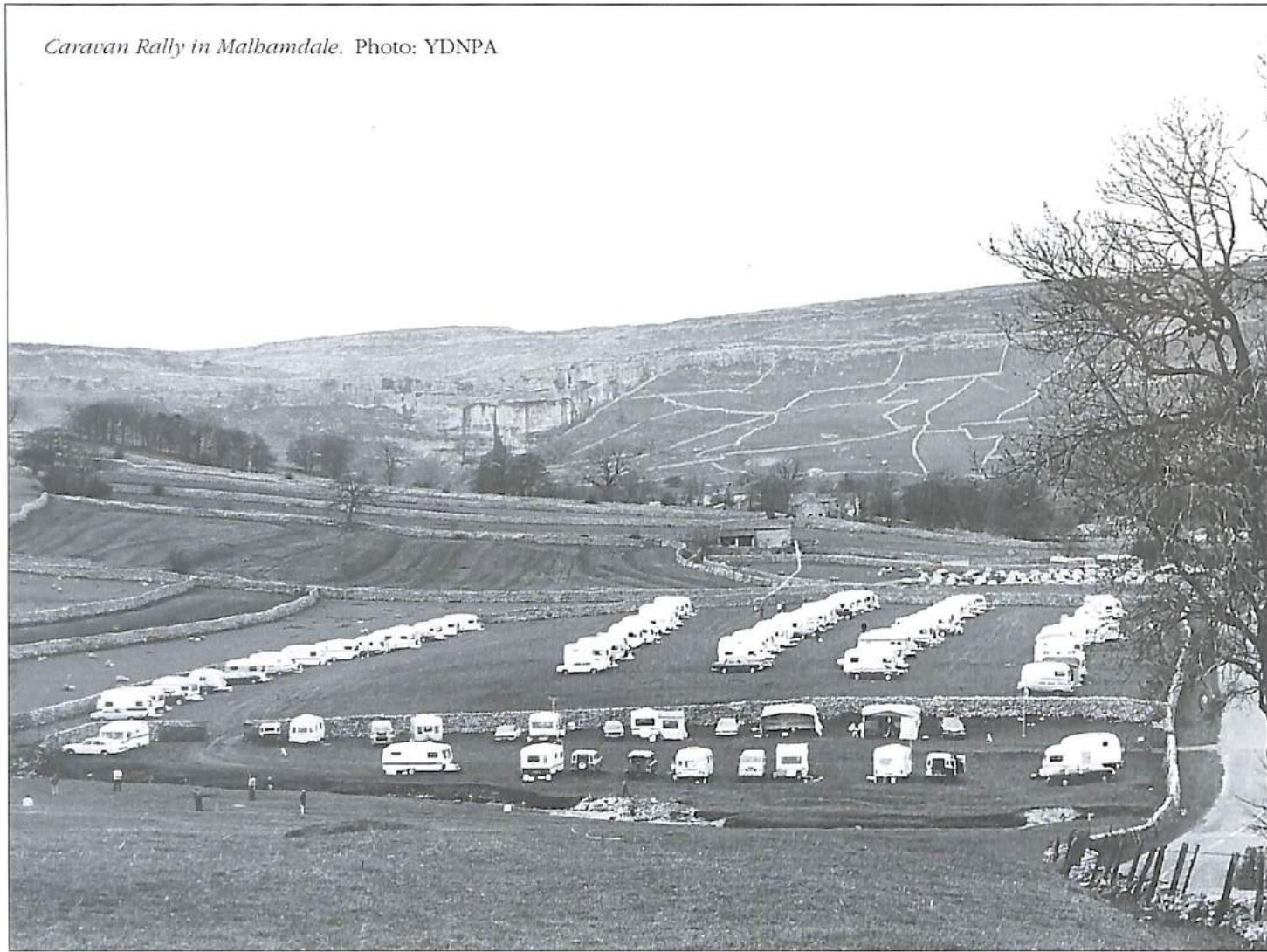
Education and Information

An essential part of working for conservation is to involve as many people as possible in supporting the cause. People need information if they are ever going to be enthusiastic about the Park. Education does not have to be formal, it does not have to be school based, but there should be a variety of ways in which people can find out about the special nature of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and what they can do to help it.

The third part of the Management plan is a Directory of contacts to help you get in touch with

South House Pavement, Ribblesdale YWT Reserve. Photo: YDNPA





who is doing what. And the final section is for reviewing the plan, inviting feedback as we go along so that it's a living document and something that reflects the reality of the Park today!

How's it being prepared?

As I write, small groups of officers in the Authority are drafting their early thoughts for the seven different sectors. Those early drafts should be complete by Easter. After that comes the difficult bit, real consultation. I'm using the word "real" because we really do want to gather as many views as possible, and the Management Plan must reflect those views, not simply collect them and ignore them!

Rather than set up special meetings that no-one comes to, we will be knocking on the door of any organisation that will let us in, asking to present our management plan ideas and get their ideas in return. It's going to be a busy schedule from April to October, attending gatherings that are happening anyway and making sure that the Management Plan is integrated into all the other things happening in

the Dales and not something completely separate. I'm looking forward to attending the YDS AGM to do exactly that, but if you are involved in a group that you think we need to be talking to as well, then please get in touch and we'll add it to the timetable.

As Autumn draws on, we will be trying to pull together all the comments and making sure that the different sectors are consistent and coherent. This is the platform for many decisions in the Park in the future so we need to make sure the foundations are sound. After that, you can look forward to official publication, circulation, and LAUNCH of the Management Plan in February 2000 - something for the Park Authority, YDS and all our partners to celebrate.

Alice Owen

HEAD OF CONSERVATION POLICY

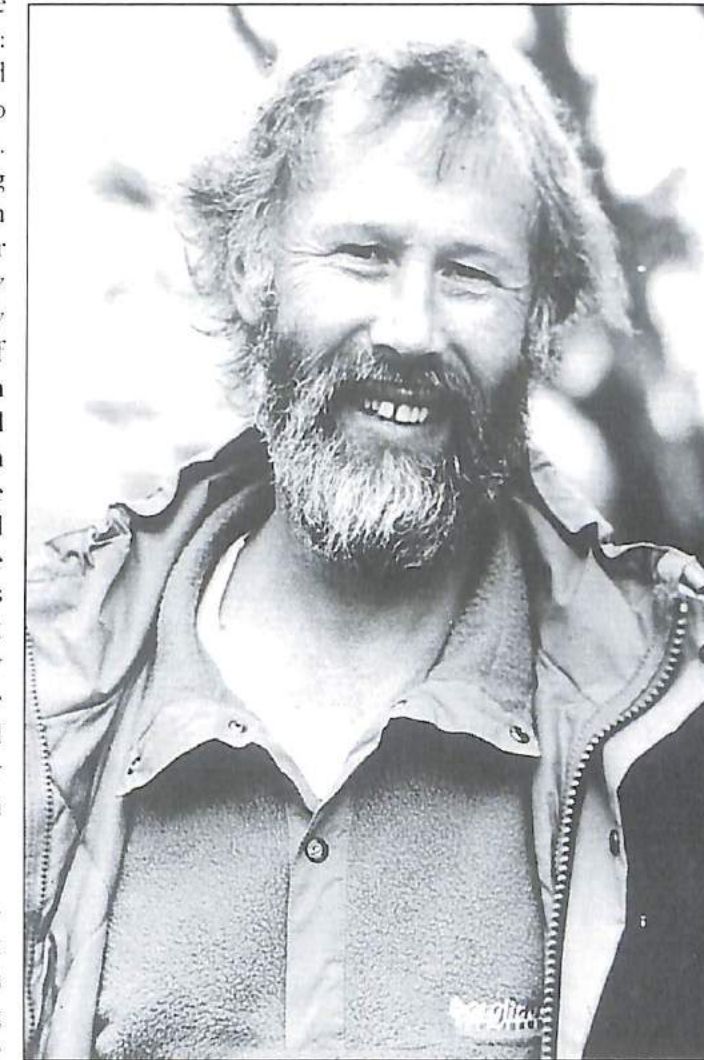
National Parks For All: The Next 50 Years

Sir Chris Bonington, President of the Council for National Parks, explains the significance of the 50th anniversary of Britain's National Parks:

1999 is the 50th anniversary of the Act of Parliament that set up the National Parks. I find it fascinating to look back at what those campaigning for National Parks were saying 50 years ago: their worries and aspirations seem so relevant to us today. For example, speaking in Parliament, in March 1949, the Minister for Town and Country Planning said "Today four people out of every five are living in urban communities, and this has resulted in an almost complete separation of town and country...Yet with the increasing nervous strain of life, it makes it all the more necessary that we should be able to enjoy the peace and refreshment which only contact with nature can give...."

The post-war generation recognised that the National Parks would be a lasting investment. During the same Parliamentary debate Mr Lipson MP said, "The beauty of our country represents a national heritage, and we, as the heirs for our generation, have a responsibility, in particular, to see that that heritage is preserved and enjoyed by as many people as possible." That is the task today of the National Park Authorities which manage the Parks, and the concern of the Council for National Parks, which is the only national charity dedicated to the protection of the National Parks and the promotion of the understanding and quiet enjoyment of them for the benefit of all.

The National Parks were designated for the benefit of the nation and the protection of these beautiful areas, yet now, as fifty years ago, there are threats to them. New and subtler problems have been added to those of long-standing concern. At the Council for National Parks we often feel like David fighting Goliath. Although the interests damaging the Parks are often companies and even government departments, we are able to win and make a difference time after time, because we stand up for the long-term survival of these unique landscapes.



National Parks are also places where we can find answers to the challenges of modern life: problems such as traffic congestion, agricultural malaise and the rapid consumption of natural resources. There is an enormous opportunity to tackle difficult issues in National Parks because of the emphasis on environmental solutions. All of us who care about National Parks need to ensure that the Government lives up to

its declaration about National Parks being role models for sustainable development. The complexity of managing the Parks is as challenging as ever, but the stakes are even higher now than when the Parks were first designated.

During 1999, I will be making a visit to each of the National Parks to meet the Authorities, and Societies, residents and visitors. The sense of awe that these amazing places give continues to inspire me and I looking forward to talking to people

about "National Parks for All" and our vision for the next fifty years of National Parks. In the Yorkshire Dales National Park, there are particular concerns about a number of issues which include the plight of the small hill farmer, quarrying rights, the proliferation of second homes and a desire to improve the range of and frequency of public transport within the Dales.

Please join me by becoming a Friend of National Parks. Support CNP's work, and for only £10 a year receive CNP's magazine Viewpoint and information on how to take part in campaigns to protect and enhance the National Parks for current and future generations.

If you would like further details of CNP's activities please contact:
CNP, 246 Lavender Hill, London, SW11 1LJ
Telephone: 0171 924 4077
Email cnphq@aol.com CNP's web site is at <http://members.aol.com/cnphq/>

Chris Bonington

Chris Bonington will be visiting the Yorkshire Dales National Park on Tuesday April 13th to look at some of the issues at first hand and will be spending a day with the Yorkshire Dales Society on Wednesday April 14th to look at some of the recent problems which have arisen on green lanes.

Two Years On...

The Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust will soon be celebrating its second birthday and two years of successful operation. It doesn't seem like two years ago that the contract with the Millennium Commission for the Dales EnviroNet project was signed, and with that the launch of an ambitious £8 million programme of projects that will have a lasting legacy on the built, natural and cultural environment of the Yorkshire Dales.

The First Year

The annual report for the first year of operation has just been published and includes a message from our patron His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. The report also highlights our achievements, acknowledges our supporters and shows just how far the trust came in that first year. From a core staff of only three when the contract with the Millennium Commission was signed in April 1997, the trust quickly recruited a project team who were in operation by June working on the projects. At the same time the fundraising activities were set in motion to provide co-funding for projects and develop a secure basis to fund the future operation of the trust.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of the staff who have been working ceaselessly hard and diligently, the support of our trustees and the commitment of all our supporters; new donors, corporate members and not least the members of the Yorkshire Dales Society.

The Dales EnviroNet Project

We are now well into the implementation of the Dales EnviroNet project. The project team have been working up projects on the action plans for

the first and second years. There are 230 projects on these programmes and so far over 150 projects have been approved by our trustees, 129 have been given offers of grant and 70 projects are now complete.

Over 300 applications for the next round of projects which will make up the year three programme were received last year and have been through a thorough process of assessment and prioritisation. The highest priority projects will be submitted to the Millennium Commission for approval at the end of March and the project team will get to work on these after Easter. This will mean that the team will be handling over 300 projects in this coming year, which will be a challenging time for our staff.

The total value of the programme changes all the time as the estimates for individual projects are revised and funding packages worked up. The grant from the Millennium commission is limited at £4 million, but if we can access more sources of co-funding, we can make that money go further. This graph illustrates the predicted spend using current figures and shows that we have been able to increase the total project value from £8 million to over £9 million. It also shows the value of capital going into the Dales economy to carry out these projects.

Where now?

The Dales EnviroNet project has given The Yorkshire Dale Millennium Trust a chance to put in practice a successful programme of conservation and community projects through the work of its project team and the grant distribution. However



the work of the trust will not end with the completion of that project in early 2001. It has always been the intention that this new charity would continue on into the new Millennium developing similar schemes.

This of course relies on the fundraising team raising sufficient revenue to cover core costs, and they have been working on their strategy to generate this income.

The future direction is being shaped with the input of trustees and staff and ideas from our partner organisations. We have already identified that there is still a case for more capital funds to help conserve the fabric of the dales that we all value so highly. Over the next year we will be developing a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund that will be aimed at providing funds for practical conservation projects. But we want to add a new dimension to some of these and create opportunities so people can become more actively involved in the conservation of their local environment. This bid will be developed by working closely with all our

partners and the community, and will have a strategic framework based on the seven principles of the new National Park Plan being developed by the National Park Authority. The strategic framework will also incorporate the organisational aims of our partners such as English Nature, the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission and the local authorities.

We have also identified some other areas of work that the trust could possibly move into. These are rural recycling schemes; volunteer and training initiatives; research and consultation; and establishment of a native tree nursery. Staff Working Groups have been set up to look at these ideas and will report back to trustees.

We will be keen to hear your ideas on the future direction of the trust, so please do contact us if you have any thoughts or if you can support us in any other way.

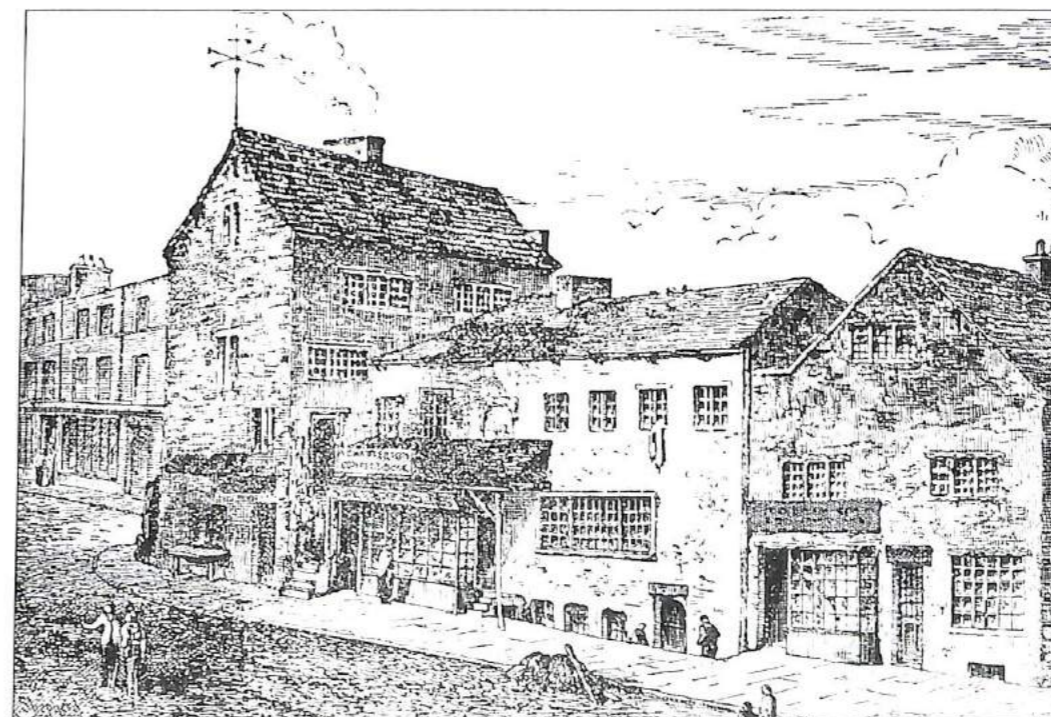
Fiona Chalmers
Project Manager

Book Reviews

MEDIEVAL YORKSHIRE TOWNS – People, Buildings and Spaces by *George Sheeran*, published by *Edinburgh University Press* at £19.95, at local bookshops.

It is rare that a book manages to balance academic expertise with accessibility to the more general reader. *Medieval Yorkshire Towns: People, Buildings and Spaces* effortlessly achieves this

balance, making us re-examine much received wisdom. Sheeran's opening chapter on "Constructing and Deconstructing the Town" helps us to define what the word town actually meant in contemporary terms, complemented by a substantial well illustrated section on the "Pattern and Plan of Towns", including Skipton in the Dales. There is also much of interest, for example, in the variety of trades apparently occupied by the



medieval woman, the different types of medieval hospitals and the ways that castles often functioned not only as a means of defence, but also as manorial or urban administrative centres. Fascinating also is the section where some medieval authorities took measures to combat potential hazards from fire and flood and their regulations on refuse disposal. Generously

Hoult House, Bradford, illustrated in "Medieval Yorkshire Towns – People, Buildings and Spaces"

Book Reviews, continued

illustrated, ranging from the glories of York, Beverley and Richmond to perhaps lesser known features in some West Yorkshire towns, we learn how the actual architecture of the towns was a way of demonstrating control over society through religion, the law and "seigneurial and civic administration," and how this evolving urban culture was to reach its epitome in the fifteenth century.

Fleur Speakman

GRASSINGTON - AND OTHER VILLAGES TOWARDS THE MILLENNIUM - by Ian Goldthorpe, published by The Dales Book Centre, Grassington, 188 pages, £4.99

Ian Goldthorpe is an architect, retired planning officer, Yorkshire Dales Society member and author who lives Upper Wharfedale. His book on Grassington and other villages is a remarkable guide for walkers, strollers and local historians. Superbly researched and illustrated, with Ian's own photographs, detailed maps, and drawings (as well as some equally delightful ones by the late Ted Gower of Grassington) this book is a joy, and difficult to put down. As well as personal recollections of Grassington, this is very much an account of Grassington as it is today.

The Methodist Church, Grassington, illustrated in "Grassington and the surrounding villages towards the Millennium"



with its characters and personalities, on the eve of a new Millennium. There are eight short rambles to other villages in this popular part of Wharfedale, all familiar enough routes, but described rich in historic detail. For the less energetic there are strolls (which can be combined with the rambles) around Grassington, Linton, Threshfield, Hebden, Thorpe, Burnsall, Conistone, Kilnsey Arncliffe, Hawkswick and Kettlewell, all explained through the eyes of a trained architect.

Not only is this an indispensable introduction to a well loved part of the Dales, but Ian has agreed to generously donate all royalties from the book to the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust. This means that when you buy the book you are also contributing to the maintenance of the fabric of this unique landscape. At £4.99 it is a real bargain. Copies of the book are available from the Dales Book Centre in Grassington or other local book shops or by post £6.40 to include postage and packing from The Dales Book Centre, 33 Main Street, Grassington, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 5AD.

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Daleswatch Report

1. Rites of Access

(And it is important to distinguish between Rights of Way, the Right to Roam and Rights of Access).

A body of recreational walkers - Ordnance Survey Map in hand and enjoying their traverse along a signposted footpath - use their Right of Way by virtue of a legal right to do so. If they encounter an obstacle (which may have been caused by the local landowner), they can remove enough of the obstruction to enable them to pass, or they can go round it. If they do, they must ensure that they do not wander on to another landowner's property or they might be committing a trespass. There are several other rules and provisos, but that is about that for most of us, and we can wander contentedly over the countryside - making full use of the magnificent network of paths with which our Yorkshire Dales are blessed.

Similarly, someone riding on horseback or bicycle along a bridleway (but not on a footpath) has a legal right to be there; as does the driver of a motorized vehicle along the route possessing vehicular rights, such as a county road, byway open to all traffic (BOAT), or road used as a public path (RUPP) - or any other way that possesses vehicular rights for that matter. But a cyclist cannot legally go on a footpath, nor can a four wheeled drive vehicle or motor cycle traverse a bridleway.

These rules, if not exactly simple, seem straightforward enough - although there is a small complication in that some areas in some parts of the country have been designated as "open access land". Basically this means that whoever goes there does not have to stick to paths, bridleways and the like, but can wander at will: in such places the visitor is able to enjoy that seemingly legendary privilege - the "right to roam". Many (but not all) of these particular designations are tied to land rights surrendered by the landowner (usually for a fixed term) - usually in exchange for relief from some disbenefit, such as the paying of death duties. And, in case anybody doesn't know, it might be as well to note that the Yorkshire Dales National Park has two open access areas within Wharfedale - Barden Moor and Barden Fell, both part of the Bolton Abbey Estate.

But it all seems to be a complicated way for people to enjoy wandering around their homeland, and there is a tug on many people's sense of justice at a restraint on the right of an Englishman to walk

upon England. After all, over the centuries our forefathers have worked for, sweated for, and died fighting for their country. And some of the landowners who gain advantage have come by their land through the devious, sometimes illegal, and possibly brutal actions of their progenitors in the distant past. Whilst others have come from afar and bought wide tracts of "our" land for their enjoyment. Yet we do do better than many. In some parts of America there are large signs proclaiming that "trespassers will be shot" and you have the uneasy feeling that they mean what they say!

But even in Yorkshire life is more complicated than it was. We seem to be finding that some of the rules we thought we were using are not unnecessarily what they were - and that a growing number of people are ignoring them anyway. The advent of mountain bike, trail bike and four wheel drive (listed in probable reverse order of potential peace and tranquillity destruction) has seen a rapid increase in their use in the open countryside - including in some of the most cherished parts of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. A good deal of this use is licit; some flirts about in an area of confusion; but a significant proportion is outside what most people think of as reasonable behaviour. And also of the law.

There is considerable disagreement as to how to deal with the problem. In many people's eyes the omission of the concept of "quiet enjoyment" from the purposes of National Parks - as laid down in in the 1995 Environment Act - was an unforgivable mistake in what was, otherwise, a sound piece of legislation. Certainly the lack of such a reference greatly increases the difficulties. Nonetheless, using a big stick too soon to solve a difficulty can create more problems than it solves. It is very easy to suggest that all parts of the National Park should be policed and offenders identified and reported, but it is less easy to implement in practice. The responsible side of the various user groups is as concerned about the situation as we are - and they can probably exert more influence on the cowboys than can those outside the particular fraternity. But, as with most problems, the best way to obtain a peaceful and lasting solution is to use the time honoured process of reasoned discussion and negotiation. The National Park should take the lead; it is up to bodies such as the Yorkshire Dales Society to support and assist. A better and longer

term solution that is recognised and observed by all (or nearly all) will have a much better chance of emerging as a result.

2. Transport in the Dales

It has been my privilege to be an appointed Member of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee for almost seven years. Throughout that time I have persistently and consistently pressed for greater resources to be given to what I have always considered to be the single most important and vital issue facing the Park - namely the provision of public transport services that are both affordable and of genuine value to the visitor and, even more importantly, resident, alike. I later increased the considerable increase I suggested even more considerably. The unbelievable and the incredible happened. The Local Transport settlement announced a few weeks ago gives the YDNP some £300,000 for local transport developments along Wharfedale and Airedale from

Ilkley and Skipton into the National Park. The credit for this enormous achievement goes first and foremost to our own Colin Speakman, who did the actual nitty gritty work with North Yorkshire County Council to put the Package Bid together; also to the new management in the Park - and especially to its chief executive, Heather Hancock - for having the foresight to use Colin's expertise in this way. And, in many respects it is a victory for the Yorkshire Dales Society itself. It was the Society's initiative - researched by our members a few years ago - that has now come together to bring forward proposals for an integrated system into the Bolton Abbey area, which will be a major part of the larger TPP Package scheme. With things on the transport front also beginning to move in Wensleydale, we may yet see the integrated transport system covering the whole of the National Park that, but yesterday, many people thought was pie in the sky.

Jim Burton



Apple Blossom. Photo: P. Sharp

Dales Digest

A quarterly periodical for £6 annually, packed with information on a variety of topics culled from the local and national press which affect the Yorkshire Dales. Subscribe today by sending your £6 to the Yorkshire Dales Society, Civic Centre, Cross Green, Otley, West Yorkshire, LS21 1HD.

Spring Events

Enjoy what's on offer with the YDS in the Dales this Spring:

- choice of interesting walks and visits
- fascinating AGM weekend with talks and a walk
- reception at Craiglands, Ilkley to introduce a friend to the YDS

THURSDAY APRIL 22ND - WINE AND CANAPÉ RECEPTION at Craiglands Hotel, Ilkley at 8pm for members and guests, pre-booking only. A few tickets available still if you contact Fleur Speakman on 01943 607868 as soon as possible. Members tickets cost £5 each, your guests are free. Bring them along to learn about the work of the Yorkshire Dales Society.

SATURDAY APRIL 24TH - A SPRING WALK TO SEDBUSK AND MILL GILL. An eight mile walk along Wensleydale between Hawes, Askrigg, and Bainbridge, using the new Wensleydale Railway Company Bus Service with Colin Speakman (01943 607868). (Walk details may vary depending on bus times.) Catch the 0847 Settle-Carlisle train from Leeds, (0925 ex Skipton, 0946 ex Settle) to Garsdale for WRC 1040 bus to Hawes - book Explorer ticket (with YDS discount).

SATURDAY MAY 15TH - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, CRACOE VILLAGE HALL AND MINI-WEEKEND IN WHARFEDALE. Annual General meeting starts 2pm prompt followed by tea and biscuits. Speaker: Director of Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust **Richard Witt** on *The Work of the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust*. This will be followed by **Alice Owens** on the *The Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan - Yorkshire Dales National Park: Today and Tomorrow*. At 7.30 **Gervase Phynn**, author of the delightful *The Other Side of the Dale*, will give his highly individual account of his life as an inspector of schools in the Dales. Normal YDS lecture rates (£1.50 members, £2.50 non-members) at the door.

SUNDAY MAY 16TH - AGM WEEKEND WALK TO BOLTON ABBEY AND BARDEN MOOR. Park at Embsay Station to catch the 1045 Embsay - Bolton Abbey Railway steam train to Bolton Abbey Station - book single to Bolton Abbey. (Public transport users should catch 784 bus ex Leeds at 0834, Ilkley 0930 alight Embsay lane end and walk



1 mile to Embsay Station). 8 mile moderate walk via Bolton Bridge, Bolton Priory, Halton Heights back to Embsay. Bring packed lunch. Leader Colin Speakman 01943 607868.

WEDNESDAY JUNE 2ND - VISIT TO NEW HOUSE FARM FLOWER FIELDS, owned by the National Trust. This is a very important habitat and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Strictly by pre-booking, maximum number 20 in party. £1 per person to YDS office address as above by Friday May 14th. Please note there is no parking at Newhouse Farm. Meet in Malham National Park car park at 10.30am for a walk to the farm, an approximate distance from centre to farm is 3¼ miles, with a long climb from Gordale Bridge along Hawthorns Lane. Please bring packed lunch. Walk Leader Dennis Cairns, tel: 01282 812956. The tour of the Flower Fields starts at 1pm and will be by a member of the National Trust. The tour and talk on the farm will take about 2 hours. The return walk will be shorter by Janet's Foss. Return to Malham approx. 4.30pm.

SATURDAY JULY 12TH - WALK TO QUAKER MEETING HOUSE FARFIELD HOUSE WITH TALK ON ITS HISTORY. Meet at Addingham Memorial Hall car park at 2pm (buses X84/762) for a lovely walk via Lobb Wood to the Meeting House. The walk will take about an hour, led by David Hickson tel: 01943 609839. Please note there is a steepish climb and no facilities for either toilets or refreshments at the chapel. The building contains historic seating for 25 as well as plenty of standing room. Don McLellan, an expert on Quaker history and the features of the building, will give a short talk and answer questions. The return route will be via the river and we should be in Addingham by approx. 4.30pm.

CUTTINGS DEPARTMENT - CLIPPINGS WANTED

If you regularly get either the Telegraph & Argus or the Yorkshire Post newspaper and are prepared to send suitable cuttings about the Yorkshire Dales on a regular basis to Dawn Burton for the Dales Digest, please get in touch with her on 01943 602918 as soon as possible.



Front cover picture: Cyclists, Mastiles Lane, March 1983.
Photo courtesy of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.
See article by Alice Owen (page 6) and compare with the pictures on pages 3 and 5.

Back Cover drawing: Harewood Castle, a tower house built around 1366 and now the best surviving remains of an urban fortified house in Yorkshire.

See "Medieval Yorkshire Towns - People, Buildings and Spaces" by George Sheeran (Edinburgh University Press) and Book Review on page 11.

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