

Yorkshire Dales Review

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Yorkshire Dales
Society



£1.50

Development Control - Time for a New Agenda

The Audit Commission, the Government's independent watchdog which examines the work and effectiveness of local authorities, including National Park Authorities, has produced a detailed report about the way the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority carries out its Development Control duties. It makes deeply disturbing reading.

Noting what it describes as "inconsistent and unpredictable" decision-making by members of the National Park Authority, the Audit Commission report suggests that "planning decisions depend on which members are present on the day rather than individual issues." It is suggested that this inconsistency is both inefficient and unfair to applicants.

Equally serious, claims the Commission, is the number of occasions when Members ignore officer advice, even when it contradicts the Park's own Local Plan. The Audit Commission has found that developments well above Structure Plan requirements have been permitted in the National Park, permitting a significant amount of new development outside existing approved settlement boundaries. Over the period studied, 89 new houses were granted planning permission, but of these only 17 were "affordable" – i.e. for local community use, whilst over 100 properties were granted permission to extend, making them larger and therefore less affordable.

Ironically the Authority boasts a "Rolls Royce" development control service which turns round planning applications in record time, with up to 90% of applications successful. But is this really appropriate in a National Park? Some people might feel that, in an internationally important protected landscape such as the Yorkshire Dales, it might be more appropriate for planning applications for everything but essential local housing to be slower and perhaps even more difficult to obtain.

The truth of the matter is that Development Control is actually the reactive process of granting licences,

or permission, for new development. Planning permission might cost a few hundred pounds to obtain, but is worth tens if not hundreds of thousands of pounds to the successful applicant. The actual "planning" aspect comes in the form of the National Park Local Plan, publicly debated and approved by the Secretary of State, which in theory determines just how much new housing and other development there will be in which locations. But each time the Plan is undermined by wayward Park Authority Members, it loses authority and impact. The Park begins to suffer what our late President, Ken Willson, himself a former Member of the National Park Committee, so vividly described as "death by a thousand cuts" resulting from sporadic developments in a beloved landscape.

Do local people - let alone visitors - really want to see the scale of new development currently taking place which in a few years could transform settlements in the Park to executive commuter or privileged retirement home villages?

We always assume that a Park Authority handles Development Control better than District Councils, but it is difficult to honestly argue this case in the light of seemingly tougher regimes in other protected landscapes or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England such as the Chilterns or the Cotswolds, or even the nearby Forest of Bowland where it is probably harder to get planning permission for a new development outside the approved boundaries, and where unspoiled villages such as Downham or Slaidburn are as fine as any in the Dales.

As a result of the Commission's recommendations, the Park Authority is set to implement a number of important changes in procedure. These are welcome. But unless there is a fundamental change of attitude from certain members, the identical problems will continue.

But, looking at a wider agenda, is it not time the Authority became more pro-active? This summer,

world scientists have noted the alarming melting of the Siberian permafrost and record high temperatures in Greenland. They are seen as omens, a warning that global warming may be close to an irreversible "tipping point". Most experts believe the intensity of Hurricane Katrina and the resultant humanitarian catastrophe was a direct result of global warming. In this situation should not the Park Authority's planning system, rather than replicating 18th and 19th century traditional designs for privileged people in the Dales, now focus on ensuring all new development in the Dales meet the highest standards of energy conservation, using modern insulating materials (including sheep wool), low energy lighting and heating, photo-voltaic roofing, and heat retaining glass? Maybe Yorkshire Dales National Park Officers and Members should pay a visit to Lockton Youth Hostel in the North York Moors National Park, to see a range of brilliant ideas designed to minimise waste and maximise heat retention, cutting bills and reducing CO₂ emissions. It's also on the excellent Coastliner bus route. Maybe we also need to think more about wind power, with innovative low visual impact domestic wind generators or use of the abundant water resources of the Dales for small scale hydro-electric schemes. And how about bio-energy? Above all we need coherent Green Travel plans (unlike the Yorkshire Dales, the North York Moors National Park Authority has a robust Green Travel Plan in place with officers and members encouraged to travel less, and to share low energy consuming cars) for

visitors and local people alike. Transport is the fastest rising source of greenhouse gases in the UK. We need a significant modal switch away from the private car to encourage greener travel modes, including better use of good quality public transport both for local people and for visitors.

What limited development should be permitted should be concentrated in larger settlements where walking and cycling can be used to access local facilities rather than encouraging the almost total car-dependency culture of the Dales. But sadly traffic management and sustainable travel, the two prime elements for a sustainable future, are claimed by officers to be "low priority" for the Yorkshire Dales.

This all suggests some fundamental re-thinking by the National Park Authority of not only the vexed issue of Development Control, but the whole issue of the role of the National Park in a rapidly changing world. It is no longer appropriate for a National Park to simply react to development pressures. It should be helping to create the new agenda, developing what have been rightly called "Green Prints" for a sustainable future, which can influence action and behaviour elsewhere, both in rural and urban Britain. The truth has to be recognised that without this kind of vision to influence every aspect of our lives, there will simply not be a future. National Parks should be leaders, not laggards.

Colin Speakman



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Into the Valley of the Ghosts ...

This latest work from acclaimed Dales author Dr Richard Muir, (YDS Honorary Member), highlights the human dimension of the history of the people of his own dale, Nidderdale. This introduction to his new book which will be published in the Spring gives a "taster" of what is to come. He suddenly found that he was writing, passionately about this subject, in a way that he felt that he had not done for many years. The words seemed to flow without any conscious effort and we too become involved in his excitement and his recollections. In this article Richard gives us a brief foretaste...

I had covered several sides of paper before I realised that a forgotten bottle of memories had been uncorked. Whatever the original intent, I was writing the eulogy and epitaph for a little nation, the people of the Valley. Thereafter, the story of the life and death of the community from the end of the last Ice Age to about 1970 seemed to write itself. However, it taught me things I had not recognised and it helped me to define the old Valley community and to see them in their landscape setting.

A day in March found me seeking strands of thought in Birstwith churchyard. This was in no way a morbid mission, for the names of the gravestones were passports to a cheerful past among gently dignified people who treated others with respect and received the same in return. First I pictured the faces and then I tried to recall the voices. For the first time, I really appreciated that we had our own language - well a very rich and distinctive dialect rather than a mere accent. I also appreciated, with great sadness, that I cannot speak it any more. Oh, once I could speak it as well as any other of the scruffs with grey flannel shorts, the chapped thighs that went with them from December till April, and spark-making blue steel boot studs from Mr Stott, the village cobbler. I tried to put a Nidderdale sentence together and couldn't remember whether we really said 'lither' for 'lazy' or whether I'd picked it up elsewhere. And when did we use 'thee' and what was the difference, if any, between 'thi' and 'tha'. Language is like a bike - if you do not use it, it goes rusty. But then you can ride your bike on your own, while language requires someone to talk to who understands what you are saying.

It was while I was lamenting the loss of my first language that another thought struck me: other

people whose culture was threatened by migration and incomers - the Welsh, the Gaelic-speakers of the Scottish Highlands and Islands and those of Ireland's *Gaeltacht* - have received special recognition. Wales has a Secretary of State and all kinds of cultural agencies. All these measures have not protected the Welsh identity against the remorseless advance of settlers from England. However, it has provided the communities concerned with a good measure of recognition: recognition that they *exist* and that their culture and traditional lifestyles *are of value*. Between about 1970 and 1990 Nidderdale was transformed by incoming wealth and colonists and nobody seems to have given a thought for the fate of the amazing community and the glorious landscapes that up to 500 generations of Valley people had created. Local people were not treated as valuable vessels for indigenous culture and tradition. At first they were 'characters' and then they were gone.

When I roam in the Dale I meet people from many past centuries. I began roaming as a lad, poaching and, thankfully, growing out of it, with just a dog or two for company. I was never, ever, lonely. I could feel the past all around me, sometimes it pressed down quite heavily but always in a friendly way, like a familiar quilt. Faint footsteps trod the old lane a few yards back, but the past folk were shy and always vanished when I turned around. There were so many questions one could have asked them. Eventually, I learned to fathom the clues in the landscape. Now I can find a lost monastic right of way or a fragment of an old salt road and it is easy to picture the threadbare friar begging his way around, the monk walking out to preach from the Minster or the foresters slinking home with their master's deer. These are the Ghosts, and the Valley is full to the brim with them. There they are: layer upon layer of them. You do not see them by looking, but through their handiwork. There are ghosts in every hedgerow, abandoned coppice, wall and causeway. They built a symphony of landscape, but they did it with slow, caring deliberation, not the breakneck rates at which we dismantle their handiwork.

Working on the book gave me better understanding of the Valley where I had lived half my life. I realised that it is not like rural Somerset or Norfolk or many other country places because there were always many people in other occupations to counterbalance the farmers and agricultural



workers: mill-workers working linen, flax, wool and even cotton; quarrymen; cottage-based spinners and weavers; jiggers or packhorse traders, lead miners and many others were represented. They added some interesting fruits and nuts to the rural dough.

I cannot claim to have gained Faith in my sojourn in the churchyard, but some thoughts did arrive to lessen my permanent sense of anger about the mindless disregard of life and landscape in the dale. For thousands of years, Valley people, be they Bronze Age shepherds, lay brethren from Fountains, waggoners, tenant farmers or mill girls, have died and been buried or cremated here. The atoms and molecules from their bodies are *still* here, and will be here forever more. The Valley, much lovelier then, must have been deeply loved by them, and in death they became a part of it. No giant, thundering lorry, no gimcrack industrial sheds, no gas-guzzling off-roader, no bureaucrat and no barn conversion can get rid of them. They will outlast it all. They are in the soil, in the beds of the becks, in the trees and in the pastures. Such thoughts help to put the meanness of present values in a more transient perspective.

If the book began to write itself, one problem remained. If one writes in an evocative way about, say the building of a church at Ripley around 1400, a clinical photograph of the building taken today just does not seem right. Then I remembered some experiments I did with infra-red film when writing

a book on photography in the mid-1980s. The film is quite low-tech and not easy to get hold of today. It partly behaves like a normal black-and-white film, but it is also sensitive to heat. Living things radiate heat, so that sunlit grass appears white, trees are rendered in shades of light grey and white, while the use of a red filter turns the blue sky dark. The overall effect is ghostly, dream-like and rather unsettling: the ideal visual 'feel' for this book. There is a problem: there is no way of calculating correct exposures and to obtain 80 or so images I took about 400 exposures.

As a footnote just let me note that, of course, not all the Dalesfolk are ghosts. At the end of *Valley of Ghosts* I describe going over to Grassington to hear my old school chum, Chris Simpson, and *Magna Carta*. Sitting with my son in the little theatre, I felt the hairs rise on the back of my neck. There was something odd going on - but what? Then I realised that the audience was full of Valley folk from the dales of the Nidd and the Wharfe. My people! Then it was over, we chatted and went our separate ways, past the barn conversions, the former farms whose once-friendly faces had been lifted and blighted by sackloads of cash, the pony paddocks and the black spaces where lights once shone. And so we were gone, like so many Cinderellas. There will be fewer of us next time. Who cares but us? We'll be like the black spaces where the lights do not shine. But the atoms and molecules will still be there.

Richard Muir

Dales Sustainable Travel Schemes Win National Praise

Three transport projects created by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) have been praised in a new Government guide to good practice.

A Department for Transport (DfT) guide for local authorities – called Making Campaigning for Smarter Choices Work – highlights the Dales Bus Discount Scheme which aims to boost both tourism and local businesses by providing discounts to visitors and attracting more to the area by public transport. The initiative was praised for its work in promoting sustainable travel and, in particular, for the link it makes with local business. The scheme was funded by Target II, a sustainable travel partnership involving the YDNPA, the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority Metro, Bradford and Leeds City Councils, North Yorkshire County Council, the Countryside Agency and the European Regional Development Fund. See www.traveldales.org.uk.



Grassington Interchange

A collaboration with Harvey Maps to produce walking, cycling and visitor guides to the Yorkshire Dales was praised for its work in involving a private sector partner's external funding to promote the Authority's sustainable travel and tourism messages. The pat on the back was given in a best practice guide for transport solutions that promote sustainable tourism and alleviate environmental impacts and congestion in National Parks.

The guide, produced by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the DfT, and the Welsh Assembly Government, also highlighted the Grassington Interchange next to the Yorkshire

Dales National Park Visitor Centre in the village that includes facilities for cyclists, walkers, motorists and public transport users. The interchange was praised for its approach to partnership funding and for the way it meets the needs of motorists, bus passengers, cyclists and walkers.

Minister for Rural Affairs Jim Knight, said: "With more and more people visiting National Parks in England and Wales, it is important to encourage transport and traffic management schemes which successfully balance the twin purposes of the Parks – safeguarding their sensitive environments whilst providing opportunities for recreation and enjoyment.

"After investigating how English and Welsh National Parks were dealing with visitor travel and reducing the impacts of vehicular traffic on the environment, some of the most successful schemes have been showcased in this new guide.

"Other local authorities can learn from these examples and are encouraged to develop similar projects to apply in their own areas."

Transport Minister Derek Twigg said: "Well-designed transport schemes in National Parks are good news for the environment as well as for the hundreds of people who visit the parks every day. Case studies in this guide show that there is a lot of good work being done to develop effective schemes, which other local authorities could learn from in developing their own schemes."

Andy Ryland, the Transport and Visitor Management officer from the YDNPA said: "I am absolutely delighted that three of our transport projects have been praised by Government. This recognises the contribution these projects have in supporting our core purposes of conserving the environment and promoting its enjoyment while supporting the local economy."

The pat on the back comes only weeks after Mr Knight praised the **I'm a City Dweller, Get Me Out of Here** project which aims to encourage socially excluded communities to visit the National Park and has been supported by the Authority through the Target project.

"CRoW is the Finest Piece of Legislation to come out of Government, affecting Protected Areas, since the 1949 National Park Act."

On a wet and blustery April day earlier this year, David Butterworth, Chief Executive of the YDNPA, warmly welcomed both the new Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Rural Affairs, Landscape and Diversity Jim Knight, and Sir Martin Doughty Chairman of English Nature, together with other keynote speakers and guests who had joined the Yorkshire Dales National Park at their historic Access Day event at Ribbleshead. We felt that his speech demonstrated he was a committed advocate for the new access legislation and his thoughtful address deserved a more detailed report.

David Butterworth explained that though consultation on the access issues had seemed at times interminable, nevertheless the CRoW Act had some excellent principles embodied in it and he was conscious of the fact that many people had worked very hard over the last two or three years for the Act's implementation. However, he warned against taking too cautious an approach and his staff had been encouraged to implement the legislation with vigour and enthusiasm, though he did appreciate that there could be some problems faced by landowners, farmers and conservationists. At the same time there was a need to remember what a superb piece of legislation the CRoW Act is for protected areas and especially for National Parks, rather than take a more negative view of the potential difficulties that surround it.

This did not mean that some of the issues that the Park would have to face as managers of the Act would be played down. Many had already been raised and the Park Authority was acutely aware that farmers and landowners, and well as those involved in game and nature conservation, had some major concerns. Soon we would have real evidence of the impact of this legislation on the land and its users, rather than speculation. Just at the point when people were actually taking advantage of the new Act, the Park would particularly need to work together with its partner organisations, to ensure that any difficulties were dealt with quickly and appropriately. The Park were aware of the scale of the task in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, where the area of open access land would increase from 4% to an impressive 62%, a massive increase, which he hoped would be reflected in an increase in future grant settlements from the Government!

David Butterworth then went to relate an anecdote which demonstrated his own views in relation to

the implementation of CRoW. While attending a local Parish Council meeting earlier in the year where one of the subjects to be discussed was CRoW and its impact on farmers and land managers, a member of the audience stood up and attacked the new Act in very unfavourable terms. He described it as the worst piece of legislation to be inflicted on the countryside in 50 years, and then went through a litany of the potential problems that it might cause. There were lots of nodding heads in the audience and the Chairman of the Parish Council, after agreeing with his comments, turned to David suavely and said, "I am sure the Chief Executive would like to respond." David replied, "Well, if I want to get home in time to watch the last 15 minutes of the Liverpool-v-Chelsea Champions League Semi-Final, I could agree with your comments and say that we are working really hard to alleviate problems. However, let me just say this. I think the CRoW Act is the finest piece of legislation to come out of Government, affecting protected areas, since the 1949 National Park Act. For me, growing up in South Yorkshire on the northern edge of the Peak District, it is the most fitting tribute to those men and women who risked cracked skulls and much worse in order to access the countryside. For all its potential problems - and I don't believe the reality is going to be anywhere near some of the doom-mongering we have heard - I think this legislation will be a boon for protected areas and for those who work and farm with them. It is important that the public good that is provided here by the hard work of farmers and land managers is recognised. For that to happen, access is critical. The days when we could all put up walls with big Keep Out signs and yet accept public money are coming to an end. The key to success is working together to deal with any problems."

The room went deathly quiet and, just as David was wondering whether to make a bolt for the door, another local farmer spoke up and said he agreed with him! "Times were changing," he said, and "there was a need for all of us to adapt and work together to sort out any issues."

David's gratitude was boundless – and he went on to say, that from his experience in the Dales, there were many people like that farmer, who would want to see the successful implementation of this impressive piece of legislation. The Yorkshire Dales Society would fully agree.

Our Silver Jubilee - Sharing Your Memories of the Society at Work

2006 will be the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Yorkshire Dales Society.

Our very first members' event was a farm visit, to Maurice Metcalfe's farm in Buckden, Upper Wharfedale where we spent a chilly Spring afternoon sharing Mr Metcalfe's passion for his herd of thick fleeced Wensleydale sheep.

At that time there were at most around 100 members of the small Grassington-based Yorkshire Dales Society, but the Society was soon to grow to the 1,600 or so members we have today, many living within the Yorkshire Dales, many in nearby catchment towns and cities, many elsewhere in the UK, and in some cases worldwide,

Twenty five years is a long period of anyone's life, and whilst there are quite a few of those "Founder Members" still very much around (including the Joint Secretaries), many, including our first Chairman, local dentist and former National Park Chairman Keith Lockyer, are no longer with us.

As even the younger amongst those of us who were around at that time become grey haired and a little misty-eyed, a Silver Jubilee is a good time both to think back and also to think ahead. One of the ideas suggested at our last AGM was that we should take the opportunity to put on record the origins and growth of the Society in those pioneering days, not only to share our experience with a new generation of members, but to ensure that we build our future on the vision of the past. Anniversaries are as much about looking forward as looking back, and deciding what kind of Society we now need in the 21st century, and what kind of organisation we would like to become in a rapidly changing world. Not even the Yorkshire Dales are immune to change, and the passing of what were once certainties and the growth of new, technologically driven opportunities which even a

decade ago were unimaginable.

So one project that has been agreed for 2006 is to tell our story – to provide a brief history of the Yorkshire Dales Society from its origins to the present time.

This is where we'd like help from some of our longer-established members, including those founder members who are still around. Were you around in those already distant 1980s, coming along to our events, meeting some of the people, sharing some of the fun? And it has been fun....

Perhaps you have a particular memory or even a picture or two of an event – a walk, a visit, a personality. Maybe you think we have, in some small way, been able to make a difference to life in the Dales, or how organisations such as the

National Park conduct their affairs. Wasn't the Society among the first of the organisations to raise awareness about the need for a thriving local economy to support the conservation of the landscape, to support sustainable forms of tourism, to prevent destruction of our precious green lanes, and to encourage development of new bus services in the Dales? As an educational charity we have tried not to lose sight of the fact that our prime objective is to "advance the public knowledge and appreciation of the social history, and the physical and cultural heritage of the Yorkshire Dales" as



All material should be sent to The Yorkshire Dales Society Office addressed to Our Silver Jubilee, the Yorkshire Dales Society, Cross Green, Otley, West Yorks. LS21 1HD. (If you would like photographic material returned at some point, please include an sae.)

Picture captions:

1. THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE YORKSHIRE DALES SOCIETY, 1991: The then Chairman, the late Ken Willson; YDS Secretary Colin Speakman; Joint Secretary Fleur Speakman; Eva Pongratz, Secretary of the Federation of National and Nature Parks of Europe; and the late Theo Burrell, winner of the Alfred Toepfler Medal for his services to European National Parks.

well as to "preserve its condition, landscape and natural beauty" – tasks not easily achieved.

In the coming months we'll be putting together some recollections, memories and thoughts about the Society. If you have such memories that you feel would be worth sharing with other members, and in particular if you have photographs, which show the Society at work or in action at any time over the last 25 years (but especially in those pioneering days) we'd love to hear from you.

Please let us have your material as soon as possible. Photographs (slides, colour or black and white) will be especially welcome.



2. THE WAY WE WERE: A young Tom Lord addresses members of the newly formed Yorkshire Dales Society at Jubilee Cave, Settle, in Spring 1982.

3. Honorary YDS Member Sir Chris Bonnington and his wife Wendy above Malbam Cove on their Dales visit in 1999.

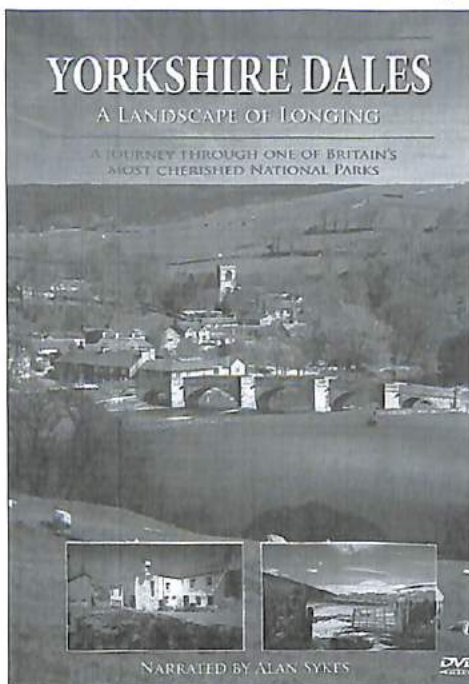
4. The opening of the Ratstrick Bench in the grounds of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Centre, Grassington in 2000.

A Landscape of Longing - A Journey through one of Britain's Most Cherished National Parks

EXCLUSIVE DALE FILM OFFER TO YORKSHIRE DALE SOCIETY MEMBERS

Steve Lord is an independent film maker based in Halifax, West Yorkshire who has produced an exceptionally fine new film about the landscape and villages of the Yorkshire Dales, featuring both the National Park and Nidderdale AONB, with landscape and action shots that give a true flavour and feeling for the Dale during all seasons of the year.

Commentary is by Alan Sykes, and the film is scripted by YDS Secretary Colin Speakman. It is being launched in October, in both video and DVD format, and the film company, Chromavision, has agreed to make a special introductory deal to Yorkshire Dales Society members which will directly benefit the Yorkshire Dales Society. Not only will YDS members get the film post free (normally costing over £1), but there is an additional £1 discount off the retail price, making a total of £2 discount per order.



£1 to the Yorkshire Dales Society for every copy purchased by a YDS member. So the Society benefits directly.

This is the perfect souvenir of a visit to the Yorkshire Dales, or an ideal Christmas present for a friend or relative, at home or overseas.

Landscape of Longing DVD format normal price is £16.99, but the price to YDS members is just £14.99 including delivery. In **Video (VHS) format** the price is £13.99, but only £11.99 to YDS members.

Orders direct (PO or cheques) to ChromaVision (Dept YDS), FREEPOST NAT 10332, Halifax, HX3 6BR tel 01422 354086, stating the number of copies required and whether in DVD or video format. It would also be helpful to quote your YDS membership

number when ordering.

In addition ChromaVision will make a donation of (See also image on back cover.)

Marie Hartley MBE - Congratulations from the YDS on your Centenary Year

Honorary Yorkshire Dales Society Member Marie Hartley recently celebrated her 100th birthday and we are delighted to add our very good wishes to the many others who have a warm place in their hearts for a very great lady and eminent writer on the Yorkshire Dales. Together with her first writing partner Ella Pontefract, and later with the late Joan Ingilby, she produced a number of classic texts

illustrated with woodcuts and photos. *The Yorkshire Dales* and *Life and Traditions in the Yorkshire Dales*, are just two of the works from her long-time writing partnership with Joan Ingilby. The Dales Countryside Museum at Hawes owes its foundation to the unique collection of Dales artefacts collected by these intrepid ladies.

CPRE and the Local Development Network

CLONED COUNTRY TOWNS, DORMITORY VILLAGES FOR COMMUTERS AND SEVERE LOSS OF HABITAT FOR WILDLIFE

CPRE Craven Branch Chairman Hilary Fenten who lives in an Upper Ribblesdale village near Settle, shares some concerns on the Local Development Framework and her fears for the future of the Dales environment.

The Government in making changes which have serious implications for our area with its promotion of "The Northern Way, is seeking to bring large scale development into Northern England, and the "Planning for Housing Provision" is expected to require local authorities to give planning permission for development on green field sites and the green belt, where it is deemed necessary. "Deemed" a rather impersonal and apparently innocuous word, can actually be used as a powerful tool to shape our places and spaces, thus becoming a major threat to the English countryside.

Yet the European Union Directive makes it a duty to have a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) on all plans and programmes for Northern Way projects. I believe that this is also advisable for all planning matters in Craven. An example of a failure to foresee early enough the implications of the scale and pace of housing growth in Milton Keynes and the South Midland Growth Area, meant that real damage was done to the environment and the quality of life was badly impaired. The Deputy Prime Minister's office warned when commenting on the Northern Way, "that one of the challenges is to think long-term and sustainably with an emphasis on quality and integration of economic, social and environmental goals, and on benefits that span both urban and rural areas."

I have concerns that although rural and urban areas have their own special qualities, throughout England country towns are often losing their own characters and becoming "cloned" with impersonal dormitory estates and even tainted with aspects of inner city blight rather than having a true quality of life. Rural towns such as Skipton, in my view, have a special character, but villages such as Gargrave, Clapham, Bentham and Long Preston, are at risk of potential damage to their communities long term. We need to preserve the special qualities of rural towns, villages, the countryside, natural habitats, waterways and soil conservation now by "rural proofing". The focus of development must be on existing brown field urban sites with tranquillity a top priority in the countryside.

In 2003 the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, made a commitment to maintain and increase green-belt areas; we must ensure that this continues to be honoured. At the same time countryside near to urban areas is especially vulnerable with environmental aspects too often ignored, yet these "green lungs" are vitally important both for townspeople and wildlife.

The special qualities nationally and internationally recognised of the Pennine Uplands are also at risk; new roads, more buildings and tourism could be damaging if not sensitively handled with conservation as an essential and abiding principle. Many species of flora and fauna are in crisis especially in Craven areas outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park, and more land needs to be acquired for nature reserves or protected areas before it is too late.

Affordable housing for local people is another vital part of the equation with fully professional surveys of such needs rather than simply catering to the needs of commuters or second home owners. Although Housing Associations can be very helpful as regards the low-cost element, can they guarantee that homes stay for rent if both main parties are committed to a tenants' "right-to-buy" policy?

Transport is often a Cinderella - planning decisions must not ignore the problems of too many roads and increased use of motor vehicles with their corollary of pollution, noise, stress, traffic chaos. Are planners really attempting to address climate change and the need to cut greenhouse gas emissions? It is high time that planners realised that any development needs to have easy access to public transport.

Energy efficiency and energy conservation must always be important considerations for any development: the dCARB-UK Project in Yorkshire and Humber is an example of one of those working towards the reduction of carbon emissions by 60% by 2050.

There are some gleams of hope, but essentially we need to put the ENVIRONMENT in the top category of our concerns - for our quality of life and the future health of the planet.

** The Editors would welcome comments on Hilary Fenten's article.*

Pennine Bridleway route opens in the Yorkshire Dales: part of one of the 15 National Trails in Britain

Mountain bikers, walkers and horse riders turned out in Settle on Thursday August 18th, to mark the official opening of the latest phase of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail in the Yorkshire Dales.

When it is completed, the Trail will cover about 350 miles in total, of which 52 miles runs through the Yorkshire Dales National Park from Long Preston in the south to Hell Gill Bridge on the Yorkshire/Cumbria border. Work started on the Dales section of the Trail in 2002 and is expected to be completed in 2008.

Mid-August saw the opening of the Settle Loop – the first section of the Trail in the National Park to be completed. The Loop is a 10-mile (16km) circuit starting and finishing in Settle and stretching east towards Malham. It was created to provide a day trip excursion for horse riders, mountain bikers and walkers wanting to spend time in the Dales rather than just passing through on their way up or down the Trail.

The creation of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail has been made possible to date mainly through financial support from the Countryside Agency and a Sport England award of £1.8 million. The section through the Dales is being funded by the Countryside Agency, with support from the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) and North Yorkshire County Council with additional funding from Yorkshire Forward.

Speaking at the launch, YDNPA Chairman Carl Lis said: "It's good to be launching this route from the heart of Settle, which we really hope will benefit in economic terms from the business opportunities that the use of the Pennine Bridleway should bring, for example to the local shops, accommodation providers, cafes, stabling facilities and bike shops to name but a few.

"It's been a really momentous period for the Yorkshire Dales over the last few months and it's really exciting that we now have a new National Trail passing through the Park. Looking ahead, I'm already looking forward to the full opening of the whole route through the Park in a few years time."

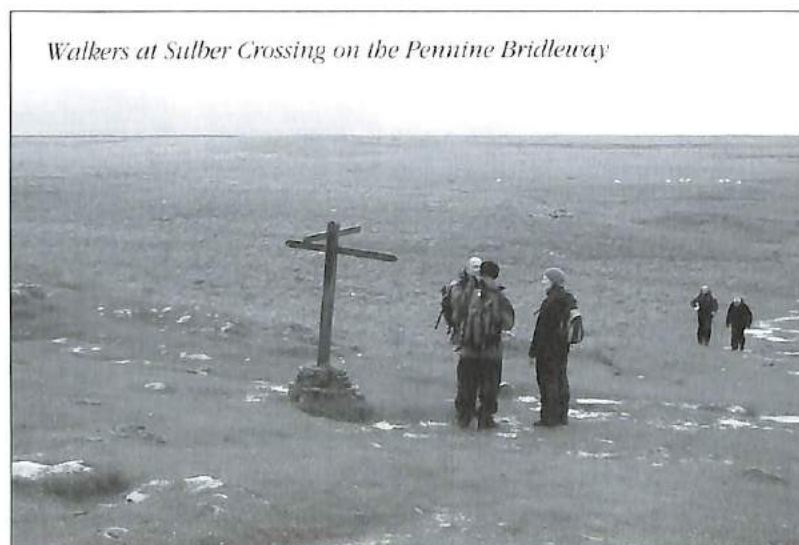
David Butterworth, the Authority's Chief

Executive, said: "I know this section of the Loop will be a great resource for people looking for a fantastic day out in the south of the National Park either on foot, on two wheels or on horseback. On a good day you can't beat the views that you'll see on your way around and on a bad day, well, you may have to use your imagination." He particularly singled out Gareth Evans, the YDNPA Pennine Bridleway Officer, who had given so much time, effort and commitment to this project.

When the Pennine Bridleway is complete, it will extend for nearly 350 miles from Middleton Top in Derbyshire through Lancashire, the Yorkshire Dales and Cumbria to Byrness in Northumberland.

For more information about the Pennine Bridleway or to plan a trip for a day or longer on the Trail, please visit the Pennine Bridleway website at www.nationaltrail.co.uk/penninebridleway or phone the Countryside Agency on 0161 237 1061 to obtain free accommodation and services guide.

The Pennine Bridleway is the first purpose-built National Trail for horse riders and mountain bikers as well as walkers. It was conceived by Lady Mary Towneley who, in 1986, rode from Derbyshire to Northumberland to highlight the state of the country's bridleways. A 47-mile circular route, called the Mary Towneley Loop, passes close to Hebden Bridge and Todmorden and forms part of the 120 miles of the National Trail already open to the public between Derbyshire and the South Pennines.



Walkers at Sulber Crossing on the Pennine Bridleway

Daleswatch

TRIAL GREEN LANE REGULATION ORDERS TO BE EXTENDED

YDS members were delighted to learn that the four experimental traffic regulation orders (ETROs) on four key Green Lanes in the Yorkshire Dales have proved a success. The four - Mastiles Lane from Street Gate to Kilnsey, on Long Lane from Clapham to Selside, on Topmere and Starbotton Cam Road from Kettlewell and Starbotton to the Coverdale road and in Horsehead Pass from Halton Gill to Yockenthwaite have all had dramatic reduction in the use by motor vehicles. The ETROs banned the use of recreational motor vehicles like 4x4s, quad bikes and motorbikes. After some discussion, the Craven Area Highways Sub-Committee of North Yorkshire County Council, after strong representations from the National Park Authority and the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Alliance (of which the YDS is a member) has agreed to make them "permanent" for another 12 months.

How just 12 months can be described as "permanent" is a puzzle, but presumably this was a compromise in response to equally strong lobbying from the off-road motoring and motor cycle groups. It is important that YDS members take every opportunity to see what is happening on these important green lanes and, if necessary make their views known to the National Park Authority and NYCC to ensure that the ETROs continue, and indeed are applied elsewhere where there is serious damage and conflict with other users including members of the local community.

Even more heartening perhaps is the news that North Yorkshire Police is taking a "get tough" policy with off-roaders, especially motorcyclists, who are taking their machines illegally onto public footpaths or open countryside, with many arrests



Traffic Regulation Order in place, Long Lane, near Clapham (this route now carries the Pennine Bridleway)

being made and even bikes of persistent offenders being confiscated.

THE WEDDING WAY

This notice to deter motorcyclists was observed on a green lane in Wensleydale. Clearly a case of not upsetting the bride!



NEW GRANTS FOR COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY QUARRYING

A new fund offering grants of up to £50,000 to North Yorkshire communities affected by quarries involved in the extraction of sand, gravel and crushed rock is launched this week.

The North Yorkshire Aggregates Grants Scheme aims to offer communities, private landholders and local councils the opportunity to plan and implement a range of community and environmental projects that compensate local communities for the impacts of aggregates extraction. Eligible projects include the restoration of land to beneficial use of biodiversity, geological or historic interest and public amenity, the restoration of monuments, sites and structures and the conservation of biodiversity following damage caused by aggregates extraction, and projects that provide, improve, repair or maintain a public amenity.

Projects must be located in areas that suffer from the impact of aggregate extraction, have clear public benefits, involve or have the support of the voluntary or community sector, and be additional to the responsibilities of quarry operators. Grants can cover up to 90% of the cost of approved works. The fund is being administered by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and has been

allocated on a pro-rata basis to North Yorkshire County Council, the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the North York Moors National Park.

Bob Sydes, North Yorkshire County Council's Heritage Manager, said, "The scheme will enable local communities to instigate projects that can offset some of the impacts of quarrying. We are delighted to be involved and we welcome proposals for worthwhile and deliverable projects that will make a real difference to the local community and environment."

With income generated through the Aggregates Levy, the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has provided £410,000 for 2005/6 with further funds available for 2006/7. The Aggregates Levy was introduced by the Government in 2002 to reduce demand for primary aggregates by making them more costly and to make use of recycled and secondary materials more viable.

PEREGRINE FALCONS ROOST IN MALHAM

Peregrine falcons rule the roost when it comes to crowd pullers in the Yorkshire Dales. Figures

released at the end of this year's Falcon Watch show that two of the birds perching high on the rocks in Malham Cove have been responsible for drawing more than 21,000 people to the beauty spot in the last three months. Visitors have flocked to a special site manned by a team of RSPB and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority staff and volunteers to watch the majestic birds through high-powered telescopes. The peregrine falcon is the Ferrari of the bird world. It is listed in the Guinness World Records as the world's fastest animal – having been clocked at flight speeds of up to 217 mph (350km/h).

Andy Buntin, RSPB North of England Regional Director, said that the Malham peregrine viewing exceeded all expectations. Visitors to Malham Cove had responded enthusiastically to the scheme which had greatly added to their enjoyment when visiting the area. Unfortunately the pair of peregrines did not rear any young on the Cove this year, but put on a wonderful show for the visitors. Other wildlife visible included nesting little owls, green woodpeckers and redstarts. With the scheme such a success, there are already plans to repeat the project in 2006 with the YDNPA.

The Parry People Mover comes to the Wensleydale Railway

Proving that the Wensleydale Railway is not just about nostalgia or heritage tourism, but technical innovation, the Railway Company is currently

working in partnership with the novel ultra-lightweight Parry People Mover rail car. The Parry People Mover can carry up to 50 people and will operate for an experimental period between Northallerton and Leeming Bar Station, where it will feed into the existing 17 mile line to Redmire.

For further details of this and regular rail services contact the

Wensleydale Railway Company on 0845 50 54 74 or on www.wensleydalerrailway.com.



The Parry People Mover

Autumn Events

Look forward to Autumn and Winter with some attractive walks round Leyburn, Clapham, Pool and Settle and some interesting lectures on industrial archaeology, wildlife and ancient settlements. Members are reminded that dogs accompanying them on walks should be kept on leads and under control. Lecture admission price: £2 per YDS member, £3 for non members.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 8TH WALK ROUND LEYBURN. Meet at Leyburn Market Place at 10.30 am for a 4 mile moderate walk over Leyburn Shawl to finish about 12.30. Packed, pub or café lunch. Park Leyburn Centre. Bus 156 from Northallerton Nags Head (via station) d. 0931, bus 159 direct from Ripon bus station d. 0930. Leader Colin Speakman, tel: 01943 607868.

LECTURE: Thornborough Henges by Keith Emmerick, English Nature at Leyburn Methodist Church Hall at 2.15 pm.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 19TH WALK ROUND CLAPHAM. Meet at the village car park at 10.30 am for a 4-5 mile moderate walk to finish about 12.30pm. Train leaves Leeds 0819, Skipton 0842 for Clapham at 0928 (1 mile walk from village). Packed, café or pub lunch. Leader Chris Wright tel: 01756 749699.

LECTURE: People and Wildlife: Focussing on Communities and the Environment by Don Vyne, at Clapham Village Hall at 2.15 pm.

Out of Oblivion: A Landscape through Time

From Paleolithic times to the twentieth century, a fascinating new website, produced by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, offers a window into the archaeology and history of this beautiful area and landscape.

This is an excellent scheme and is to be warmly welcomed. It is bound to stimulate and inform, and help to fire the enthusiasm of potential future archaeologists.

The website www.outofoblivion.org.uk offers something for all, to the specialist and non-specialist alike and also to the young archaeologist working on a Dales' project. There are seven main themes : Agriculture, Defence, Domestic, Industry, Religion, Transport and Recreation and there are essays on related subjects such as "Canals and Railways", "Markets and Fairs" and "Places of Worship" which link up with a special "gazetteer"



SATURDAY DECEMBER 3RD WALK ROUND POOL IN WHARFEDALE. Meet at Pool Village Hall (car park at hall) at 10.30 am for a 4 mile moderate walk (with one steep ascent) to finish about 12.30. Bus 757 direct to Pool leaves Leeds bus station 0930, City Station 0935. Packed or Pub lunch. Leader Rhona Thornton, tel: 0113 2751359.

LECTURE: Lime Kilns - their impact on Dale life and landscape by David Johnson, writer, at Pool Village Hall at 2.15pm.

SATURDAY DECEMBER 17TH CHRISTMAS WALK ALONG LANGBER LANE - HELLIFIELD TO SETTLE. A moderate 7 mile walk with some uphill sections. Train to Hellifield 0849 d. Leeds, Skipton 0926, arrive Hellifield 0940. Meet at station where it is hoped to have coffee at the station café. Drivers park at Hellifield in time to meet party at 0940 return by train from Settle – walk back to car. Leader Chris Wright tel: 01756 749699.

SATURDAY JANUARY 14TH 2006 WALK ROUND SETTLE. Meet Settle Market Place at 1030am for a moderate 4 mile walk to finish about 12.30pm. Train Leeds d. 0849, Skipton 0926. Packed, pub or café lunch. Leader Ron Stone, tel: 01729 840451.

LECTURE: Re-thinking Ingleborough or The Case for the Iron Age Hill Fort that isn't by Yvonne Luke at Settle Victoria Hall at 2.15 pm.

of Dales' archaeological sites. The Out of Oblivion project is designed to make it easier to access and understand the information in the Historic Environment Record, held and maintained by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. The Record consists of a comprehensive database, photographs and paper records about the historic environment of the Dales, and is continually updated and developed through the flow of information from people researching the area's history and landscape.

Public transport and access information are included if you wish to visit the sites in person, and maps with walking routes are included. The Explore section of the website will also be available on the touch screen computers at the YDNPA Centres.



Front Cover picture: *Autumn Fungus*. Photo by Colin Speakman.

Back Cover picture: *Malham Cove* from "*Yorkshire Dales - A Landscape of Longing: A Journey through one of Britain's Most Cherished National Parks*". See review and offer on page 10.

Yorkshire Dales Society website: www.yds.ork.uk

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