

Spring 2020 : Issue 150

# Yorkshire DALES review

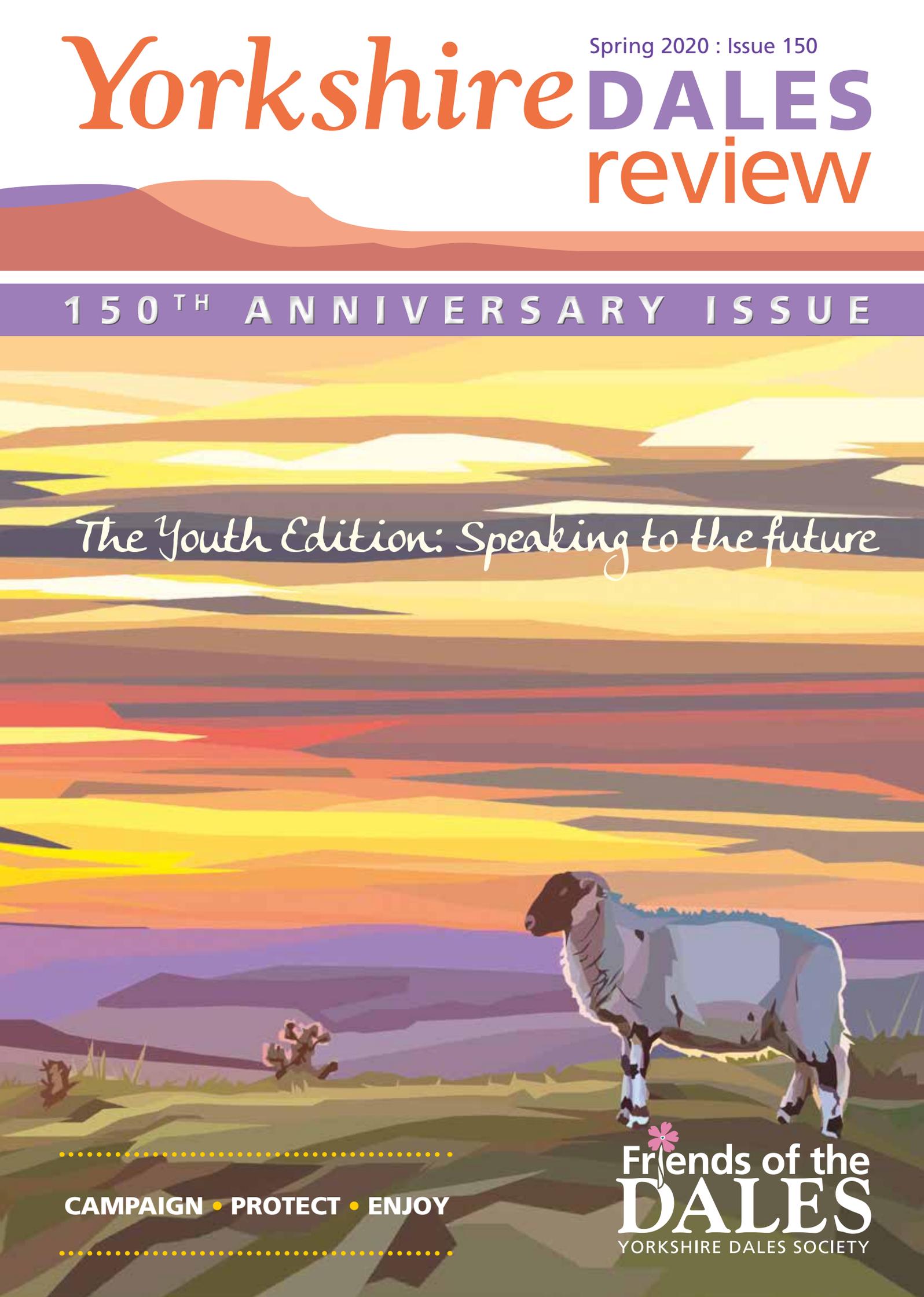
150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

*The Youth Edition: Speaking to the future*

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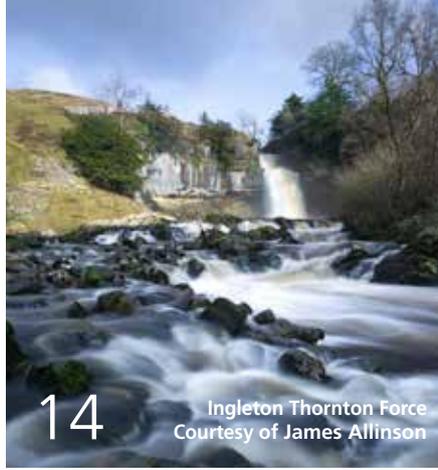
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Friends of the  
**DALES**  
YORKSHIRE DALES SOCIETY

Cover photo: Sunset Sheep.  
Courtesy of James Allinson



14 Ingleton Thornton Force  
Courtesy of James Allinson



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For any contributions or comments concerning this publication, please contact:

**Ann Shadrake**  
**Friends of the Dales**  
**Canal Wharf**  
**Eshton Road**  
**Gargrave**  
**North Yorkshire**  
**BD23 3PN**

Email:  
**ann.shadrake@friendsofthedales.org.uk**

Office: **01756 749400**

 **www.friendsofthedales.org.uk**

 **www.facebook.com**  
/YorkshireDalesSociety

 **@yds35**

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*Editor's letter*

This is a landmark issue of Yorkshire Dales Review. We've reached 150! We're grateful for your loyalty and – of course – heartfelt thanks to Colin and Fleur Speakman, for all the enthusiasm, dedication and determination, driven by their love of the Dales, that has seen this exceptional magazine flourish over the years.

To celebrate the 150th edition of the magazine, we've handed over the reins to the generation coming up behind us, asking young people living and working in the Dales to write on a personal basis about their love of the Dales and concerns for its future. It seems there are many, expressed here in fresh, fearless and sometimes controversial words. Plastic pollution and the climate change crises loom large in their minds. We look forward to hearing your reaction.

Here is an introduction to our talented young contributors. I'd like to say a huge thanks to them all for their time and effort in writing for us. It seems to me our future is firmly in very safe hands.

We really hope you enjoy this anniversary edition of our Review.

*Best wishes,*  
*Sasha Heseltine*



**Living with Climate Change, Melanie Shears**

I am completing an Environmental Conservation apprenticeship through the Green Futures Scheme at Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust. My placement is hosted by Cumbria Wildlife Trust, where I work as the Get Cumbria Buzzing Project Officer. I am also a Young Ambassador for the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust. .... 4



**Green Infrastructure and Health Benefits, David Ade Oyedemi**

I study at Leeds Beckett University as a post-graduate researcher at Leeds School of Arts. My research interests focus on built environment, health and wellbeing. My current research explores the impact of urban green infrastructure on the health and wellbeing of urban dwellers. .... 5



**Activism in my Art, Sarah Smout**

I am a cellist and songwriter in Skipton, and released my first solo EP and book of nature poetry in 2016. I am concerned about the impact of humans on the planet, and feel the need to protest against the inaction of the government on climate change through my art. The Dales are my homeland, and my experiences here will always inspire my art. .... 6



**Connecting People to Nature, Jayne Ashe**

I work for the Forest of Bowland AONB, as the Community Engagement Officer for the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, and live in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. I spend time in both landscapes, introducing other people the Pendle Hill landscape in my working day, and exploring the Dales in my own time. .... 8



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I am a Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust Young Ambassador and an apprentice with Ribble Rivers Trust. .... 9

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### **Remote Working in the Dales,** **Rosie Corner**

I am the newest planner working for the National Park Authority, and part of a team

of four working on the next review of policy, which will guide new development in the park during the period 2023–40. Part of my role is to manage the public engagement and consultation processes. I'm also leading on the Local Plan's climate-change strategy and on its sustainability appraisal. .... **11**



### **Peatlands,** **Nadira Wallace**

I am studying at Royal Holloway, University of London, doing a practice-based PhD.

I both write and write about poetry. I grew up in the Dales near Skipton, and return as often as I can to decompress and take long walks. I am a member of Extinction Rebellion, and believe nonviolent civil disobedience is a crucial tool today when it comes to defending the loveliness of the wild. .... **12**



### **My Dales,** **James Allinson**

I am a 23-year-old commercial and retail landscape photographer based in the Yorkshire Dales. I have been

taking pictures of the local landscapes for seven years, and last year I graduated from Leeds Arts University with a 1st class degree in Photography. Since graduating, I decided to try my luck as a freelance photographer and build a business here in the Dales. Many of the images in this Review are mine. .... **14**



### **Technology will reshape the Dales' approach to the Climate Crisis,** **James Marley**

I grew up as an expat in the

Middle East and Africa. After Royal Agricultural College, I spent eight years working with a textile start-up in California and then helped develop an existing company guiding hunting trips for America's super-rich. Disillusioned with this, I returned to the UK, where I work for a global corporation consulting with entrepreneurs by day, while developing green start-ups and writing about trees by night. .... **15**



### **Plastic Tree Guards,** **Laurence Parkin**

I'm a webcasting and video production assistant for City of York Council and a film studies graduate from the

University of Lincoln. Many of my projects relate to environmentalism, including an animation I'm producing that represents the concerns that school students have regarding climate change. The Yorkshire Dales is a brilliant getaway from city life, especially since graduating. I look forward to coming back every time. .... **15**



### **Taking Action Against Plastic,** **Tabitha Brown**

I am a student at Settle College, and currently working at my

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I am the author of "Questions and Answers about Plastic", published by Usborne. .... **18**



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I love living in the Dales and feel so lucky that I can walk

out of my front door and be somewhere people travel hundreds of miles to come and visit. I am currently studying for my A Levels at Settle College in Art, Geography and Psychology and hope to go on to University to study Geography. I also spend time with my friends, walking in the beautiful countryside or going out to eat. .... **20**



### **A Wilder Countryside,** **Joe Richardson**

I am a 23-year-old Landscape Architecture student in Leeds in my final year and I intend to

use my degree to restore our degraded landscape. I'm a member of Extinction Rebellion and my role is as a coordinator of XR Rewilding, which aims to connect people and support projects such as tree planting and workshops. .... **21**



### **Working on Capturing the Past,** **Ruth Garrett**

I grew up in Skipton and spent a lot of my childhood visiting the Dales for (mainly wet)

weekend walks. I have volunteered for Friends of the Dales during school and university holidays for the past five years, helping with mail outs, the website and Facebook page. I moved away from the area for my undergraduate degree and subsequently for work. Working on the Review Archive project was a great opportunity to return temporarily to the Dales. .... **22**



### **Additional photos by** **Jess Paylor**

I'm 21 years old and live in York, where I work full time for the NHS. Photography is one of my hobbies. The Dales

is my favourite place, due to its natural beauty and calmness – I certainly don't go there for the weather! To see more of my photos, please visit my Instagram page: jpphphotography312.



# Living with Climate Change



**Melanie Sheers,  
Get Cumbria Buzzing  
Project Officer,  
discusses eco-anxiety.**

Melanie Sheers with Amelia Fawcett, both Young Ambassadors for YDMT. Courtesy of YDMT

It is worth noting that climate change and global warming and cooling are entirely natural phenomena that our planet has experienced since the dawn of time. However, what our planet is currently going through is far from natural.

The rapid warming we are seeing is a direct consequence of human activity. Burning coal, oil and gas to produce energy and cutting down trees to produce the food we eat are just a few human activities that have caused this accelerated and enhanced warming. Changes that would normally happen over hundreds of thousands of years are now happening in decades, and this is why climate 'change' is now being referred to as the climate 'crisis'. We are putting our planet on course for catastrophe.

Eco-anxiety refers to the fear of environmental damage or ecological disaster, particularly in relation to the climate crisis. With the current state of our natural world and predictions of what is to come, it can be no surprise that more people are suffering from anxiety. These feelings of helplessness and fears about the future affect people of all ages, yet for the younger generation, there is added distress for the uncertainty surrounding the world they will inherit.

## Ecological disaster

Apocalyptic scenarios of mass species extinctions and whole countries disappearing under the sea may have once appeared far-fetched, but are now very real possibilities. Imagine knowing that this kind of future could be a reality within your lifetime. Indeed, scenes similar to these are already being experienced in some parts of the world.

Record-breaking temperatures and months of severe drought have fuelled a series of massive bushfires across Australia this year. The world has seen an increase in both the frequency and the severity of heatwaves and in 2019, Iran was recorded to have the hottest temperature on the 2nd July, with a whopping 51.3°C.

Bangladesh is one of the countries most at risk from sea level rise, and in 2019 more than four million people were in danger of food insecurity and disease because of flooding. Five small reef islands in the Solomon Islands have recently been lost to sea level rise and coastal erosion. The Bramble Cay melomys (a small rodent) that lived on a single island off Australia was the world's first mammal to become a casualty of the climate crisis, and was officially recognised as extinct in 2019. With increasing awareness of the risks associated with the climate crisis, the foremost question needs to be: what can we do to prevent this?

## What can we do?

Worryingly, NASA have predicted that "even if we stopped emitting greenhouse gases today, global warming would continue to happen for at least several more decades, if not centuries." This is truly terrifying!

Reading this caused a huge sense of panic for me and left me wondering what (if any) impact my small actions will have against the climate crisis. Although small changes are a good step, this is not a problem that a simple bit of recycling can solve. More emphasis needs to be placed on long-lasting positive behaviour changes on a local, national and global level.

This is why organisations like Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust are vital in combating the climate crisis, because they work to educate people to protect the natural world. Just one example of their work is the Green Futures project, which inspires, supports and empowers young people to create positive environmental change.

This is done through a range of schemes, including a Youth Forum, who hold an annual youth summit. In 2019, the summit focussed on empowering young people to act against the crisis. Attendees understood the scale of the climate crisis and discussed practical solutions and how they can make a difference. For one activity, teams worked together to produce clothes from upcycling materials. As well as being fun, this allowed them to think about consumerism and our throwaway society, and consider the benefits of reducing and reusing.

Other activities focused on food and sustainable eating. A regional manager from Carrs Billington (a partner of YDMT) discussed the importance of agriculture, and one of the Youth Forum representatives spoke about the benefits of veganism. A wellbeing walk took place, to allow time out from topics that might heighten feelings of eco-anxiety.

The climate crisis is not something happening far away that can be ignored or avoided. It doesn't matter what your age or ability is, there is something you can do to benefit our planet.

***"Record-breaking temperatures and months of severe drought have fuelled a series of massive bushfires across Australia this year."***

# Green Infrastructure and Health Benefits

David Oyedemi explains what we mean by 'green infrastructure'

There is no one specific accepted definition of green infrastructure. Generally, we are familiar with the term 'infrastructure', and when it is mentioned, what comes to mind includes schools, affordable housing, communication, transportation and water systems. So, 'infrastructure' is a basic structure or facility needed for effective and efficient functioning of a country or area. In a similar sense, 'green' infrastructure is a network of green spaces and natural features including water features in urban or rural areas. The urban infrastructure like water and roads is designated as 'grey' infrastructure, and depends on the engineering process, while 'green' infrastructure is based on an ecological process or natural approach.

The components of green infrastructure range from small scale – a building or community – to regional and global scales, including trees, shrubs, gardens, open spaces, green walls and roofs, planted landscaping, street trees, ponds, woodland, gardens and parks, river corridors, urban farms or allotments, nature reserves, beaches, greenbelts, national parks, wetlands, and international ecological reserves.

## Why green infrastructure?

The natural capital (all elements of nature) is an incredible natural resource to support life on earth. It offers food, air, water and protection from harm. Man has an interconnection with nature and depends on it for normal functioning, health and wellbeing. However, as towns and cities grow, the emergence of industrialization and urbanization led to expansion of grey infrastructure, with attendant depletion and pollution of natural capital. Urbanization impacts are, therefore, both negative and positive, and result in the disconnection of humanity from nature. While the positive impact of urbanization and improved technology has increased human life expectancy, the changing way of living, with new health challenges, has also emerged.

Similarly, a continuous depletion of the natural capital has resulted in environmental challenges including noise pollution, stress, soil erosion, carbon pollution, flooding and climate change. Many health problems are related to the environment, and the direct effect of the environment may compromise human health and wellbeing. However, green infrastructure can mitigate these effects and offer protection from urban stressors, providing an opportunity to stay in touch with the natural elements that support health and wellbeing.

## What are the health benefits of green infrastructure?

Green infrastructure provides a wide range of benefits, including the cleaning and management of water through the filtering of pollutants from rainwater and surface runoff. Others are the cleaning and management of air. Trees produce oxygen, which is needed by man, and remove pollutants in the air to make it clean and safe. Green infrastructure provides protection from wind, flooding and storm; it supports the production of food and medicine as well as the removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through the planting of forests. It also regulates local temperature and promotes energy conservation through the cooling effect of trees.

Green infrastructure provides benefits across all dimensions of human health: physical, mental, emotional and social. It promotes physical activity, which is related to a reduction in stress, blood pressure, headache, respiratory disease and risk of stroke, obesity and cardiovascular disease.

Similarly, it helps with mental processes, cognitive ability and emotional wellbeing. These are connected to improved mood, positive emotions, attention restoration, relaxation and reduced fatigue, depression and negative emotions like anger, anxiety and frustration. Green infrastructure also has the capacity to bring people together, promoting social integration and improving the social wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.

## How do you access the health benefits of green infrastructure?

Engagement of people with green infrastructure varies significantly. Some is direct and deliberate, while others are indirect or accidental. Living in a forested area, gardening or visiting a park is direct and intentional, while visual contact is indirect. The availability of green infrastructure promotes human health and wellbeing.

## How do we say yes to green infrastructure?

Since the importance of green infrastructure to human health and wellbeing cannot be over-emphasised, and because we are plagued with an environmental crisis caused by the degradation of natural capital, we must at all levels, from individual to government, be proactive on planning, development and conservation of green infrastructure. I think we must deploy development control to prevent further destruction of scarce green infrastructure in our towns and cities. Similarly, we must encourage good maintenance of our existing parks to attract more users, as this remains the alternative to reconnect people to nature for health and wellbeing in cities today.



Green infrastructure like the Ingleton waterfalls are vital for our wellbeing. Courtesy of Jess Paylor at jpphotography312



# Activism in my Art

Sarah runs XR Skipton and the Dales. Courtesy of Sarah Smout

**In the house I grew up in, there was always a sense of the wild on the doorstep. The kitchen window looks out over a steep, narrow valley, old ash trees and hawthorns lining the banks above the beck. And beyond that, the moors. Over time, these banks have eroded and slipped down towards the river, causing crevasses in the fields and landslides, bringing the odd tree down to form a natural bridge. I spent hours here as a child, in this mossy, earthy, secret world, catching my clothes on the thorns and coming back with treasure I found. We would look for concretions in the riverbed – oval shaped stones, heavy and smooth, formed hundreds of millions of years ago.**

We had our own water pump back then, which was contained in a small shed near to a stream that trickled into the beck. The water had a high iron content, and would leave an orangey substance that we used as face paint, streaks of orange-brown mud on our faces. In the summer we would catch bullheads in nets, lying on our bellies for hours waiting and watching, just to look at them before releasing them again. We'd occasionally get a stickleback, which would get a gasp and a conclusion that the river was in good health. One year, all the fish disappeared, and a few barrels of chemical fertiliser were found dumped upstream. It took years for the eco-system to recover.

As I grow older, I see how much my childhood shaped me. I am part of this landscape that I call home, and I feel lucky. The wind still howls down the valley and the snow still sometimes keeps us from getting anywhere. The summer garden still buzzes and bristles with insects and butterflies, sheep and cows still scent the valley.

## **Climate change affects us all**

The most recent storm turned our little beck into a raging torrent. We are upstream, and new little becks formed in the fields, water just running off the slopes. All that water. Where can it go? I no longer

recognise the beck, and the fields have formed new cracks, slowly shifting down. This is why I can't write about dingly dells and idyllic childhoods anymore. Climate change has been at the heart of my art for nearly a decade. I am interested in the connection we have to our planet, and how our systems of living have changed the way we use the land. Industrial farming, consumerism and the demand of our population have increased the strain on this earth, with catastrophic consequences for animals and people.

I am interested in finding connections to landscape through my art. Some years ago, I started writing a song about polar bears. I'd been reading an article about how they were struggling to hunt due to the lack of sea ice, and how they appeared to just sit there and stare at the sun – the same distant ball of fire that we revolve around. I was overcome with emotion and felt this sudden, intense apology to them, for using oil and being part of a system that has caused their home to melt. The Arctic is melting – such a huge and intangible concept, but we're all part of it; it's the same sun, the same sky, the same rain that shifts the river banks in my little valley. This sparked my environmentalism, and my engagement with organisations such

as Greenpeace, the Woodland Trust and the Marine Conservation Society. I raised money and donated songs to their campaigns, threw my heart into becoming an advocate for the natural world. Writing about it gives me a way out, a chance to express my feelings, and perhaps most importantly, a chance to connect with others.

## Extinction Rebellion

The climate crisis is old news, and we've actually known about the damaging effect of carbon dioxide since the 19th century. But now Joaquin Phoenix is getting arrested and making speeches about veganism at the Oscars, and a conversation between a 93-year-old naturalist and 17-year-old environmentalist was broadcast on the radio. Governments are declaring climate emergencies and meeting to create new emissions targets but not delivering on them. Whole glaciers are disappearing and making news headlines. Extreme weather is getting more extreme and more regular. Like me, people all over the world are searching for a way to express their alarm at the events happening to the earth, to animals and to humans. The science tells us we are on a bleak trajectory for all life on earth if the current rise in CO2 doesn't slow down. Economic and biological breakdown, mass migration, starvation; we're talking about the end of civilisation as we know it. Enter Extinction Rebellion, or XR, the non-violent direct action group making waves in the fight against human-induced climate change. Heathrow Airport just received a court ruling against a third runway, thanks to protests from all corners of environmental organisations. The government is finally being held to account over its climate policy. This is why XR matters. It is a movement that is gathering momentum and achieving positive results for the future of life upon this earth. It is giving people a voice.

XR Skipton and the Dales is a local group that I set up in June 2019. We've had meetings and presented to council, we've held protests outside the town hall, we've flyer'd the town, and at our latest talk "Heading for Extinction", we counted 130 people. As a local branch, we're trying to spread the word of XR, raise awareness about the climate crisis, and present various ways people can become involved with the group. At the start of each meeting, we ask people their reasons for coming. Feelings of frustration, grief, helplessness, anxiety, and anger are always present.

## Engaging with others

Activism can feel scary. It can feel overwhelming and risky. There's a very good support network in XR, and the community spirit and warmth felt at gatherings is reassuring. No drugs or alcohol, no aggression. It's just people standing together with a common cause. There are different ways to support a movement that promotes activism. This could mean gluing yourself to a pavement, or it could mean communicating your message in an artistic, creative, alternative way. Engaging other people with the most relevant issues of our time is a responsibility I feel I have to undertake in my art. On a personal level, I find it hard to be the activist I want to be, but the time for getting hung up on this is over. I do what I can to reduce my own emissions and impact upon the planet, but we are all complicit, because the system does not allow us to be otherwise.

We're out on the moor in mid-November, under a cloud of fog and drizzle. We're traversing six-foot high trenches that are connected by bundles of straw. It's not difficult to lose your balance, and fall into a deep squelch. This moorland should be thriving with different mosses, grasses, birds and mammals. Instead, it's a desolate and bleak wasteland. A monoculture of grouse and heather, along with repeated burning and grazing, has dried out this peat bog, essentially gutting the landscape of its natural properties. Water runs off down into the villages, which cannot cope with the increasing amounts of rainfall. I think about all the gradually decayed trees, plants and creatures beneath me that have created this peat, this natural carbon sink. I think about all these layers being washed away, reversing the process of this soil which has so slowly built up over thousands of years. One metre down is 1,000 years ago. I think of the past being exposed, the carbon being released. I think about the future, my children and their children, and I wonder what it will be like for them.

I look out of my kitchen window to the moors, streaked in snow. I wish for them to be wild again; deep, black, peat bogs with cotton grass, shrubs and shrills of curlew, snipe drumming beneath, the reds and greens of sphagnum moss embroidered between orchids, and below, thousands of years of carbon, safely stored, absorbing the rain, quietly wild, and somewhere we do not go.

Sarah Smout



# Connecting People to Nature: we should be doing more of it

**I love introducing people to nature and their local landscape. Luckily for me, it's part of my job. Working for the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, I deliver sessions which aim to get people who don't usually access the outdoors involved in a variety of outdoor activities. A surprising number of people are missing out!**

Many people are aware of the benefits that spending time in the outdoors has on our mental and physical wellbeing, but there are various barriers preventing people from accessing the landscape – mental health, physical health, lack of transport or a general lack of knowledge are just a few. Eco-therapy projects, like the one I deliver, attempt to work with as many people as possible, are relatively low cost and offer huge benefits – yet they are few and far between.

Projects that support people getting outdoors are not only beneficial, but also for individual health and wellbeing, and also provide a greater awareness of local landscape issues and global concerns, such as climate change and biodiversity loss. Climate change is one of the biggest issues of our time, affecting many aspects of our natural world. We want people to care about deforestation in the Amazon and coral bleaching in the Great Barrier Reef – but how can we expect that when they don't know about the species in their back garden?

## **EU laws have protected wildlife and habitats**

The UK is going through a transition. Post Brexit, we will lose a number of EU laws that protect (or affect) our wildlife and habitats; the recent Glover Review has made suggestions for the future of our designated landscapes; while farming could end up more focused on delivery of 'public goods' such as clean water, carbon storage, nature recovery and recreation, alongside its historic and dominant role in food production. Chapter 2 of the Glover Review is entitled 'Landscapes for Everyone' and recognises that many people in our society do not access the landscape and it should be more welcoming. The NHS is under immense strain and mental-health services are not robust enough to deal with the current challenges – the idea of social prescribing is increasing in popularity (if gradually), but eco-therapy and spending time in nature is a huge part of this. It is so important, now more than ever, that we encourage people to get outside and care for the countryside – to safeguard its future and the future of our wellbeing as a nation.

Even though the importance of spending time outdoors is recognised, funding focus is yet to catch up, and is often not extensive enough. In many cases there is a need to go further in terms of the amount of support and community engagement provided.

Projects like ours exist in other AONBs and national parks. People and the Dales, run by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, has enjoyed success over the past few years with its goal of bringing more people to the Dales from further afield, and was an inspiration for our own People Enjoying Nature project. However, for projects to be sustainable, people need to be able to revisit sites that they can easily access. Not many people live within a bus or car ride of a designated landscape, which requires local and county councils to focus more on their own sites.

Over the past few years we have seen local authority-run countryside services face funding cuts and staff reductions, relying on volunteers. As social prescribing gains wider appeal, public health officials are recognising their green assets. However, what is not understood is that many people who don't currently access the outdoors need a friendly face to meet them and guide them through their activity, so that they can build the confidence to go back and do it by themselves. Hopefully there will be more funding and an increased recognition of the benefits individuals get from connecting to nature.

Jayne Ashe, Community Engagement Officer for the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, Forest of Bowland AONB

# You're Not Alone

**Amelia Fawcett,  
Yorkshire Dales  
Millennium  
Trust Young  
Ambassador and  
apprentice with  
Ribble Rivers  
Trust, thanks  
Dales farmers.**



Amelia Fawcett at a Parliamentary Reception for The Wildlife Trusts' partnership "Our Bright Future".  
Courtesy of Anne-Marie Sanderson

When I think of the Yorkshire Dales, I don't think of the brick arches at Ribbleshead, the Three Peaks, or even the bleak beauty of our moors. I think of the farms. All the farms tucked away on the side of hills sheltering from the relentless weather, all the barns that stand unused, and the miles of dry-stone wall running across our countryside.

Then my mind wanders to the people, and the fact they are as hardy as the Swaledales or Dalesbreeds they look after, and how you can't have a farm without a farmer. How do they do it? How do they live in one of those beautiful farms tucked under the hillside miles and miles away from everyone else? Do they get help? Are they making a profit? Are they happy?

I wonder about all these things because I live on a farm, just a small one, and I started farming when I was young. I grew up doing what I wanted, roaming the fields, losing multiple wellies in the mud, dressing up pet lambs and parading them round the yard, climbing on hay bales and whatever else I could think of to keep my mum and dad in a constant state of worry. When I was growing up, I couldn't imagine doing anything else but farming. My little farm felt like the whole world and nothing could touch me.

Unfortunately, that bubble had to burst. I learnt a lot of what I know about farming from my grandmother. Some of my best memories are of learning from her. She was my everything. If I didn't know what to do, I would go to her as she could fix the world for me. When we lost her, I couldn't imagine farming without her. She was the one I followed around all day, and we did everything her way. She'd told us to do what we wanted with the farm once she had passed, but for a while we didn't dare to for fear we would mess it up. We were reluctant to change. We still make a few little bales; we still have the hay meadows and we still have the one goat, because that's what she did. It's these things that make every farm special. No two farms are the same, and for me that's what makes farming so interesting.

## **The work never stops**

When you lose someone on the farm, you can't take time to process, clear your head and then go back to work. It's always busy. In winter the cows are in, in spring the sheep are lambing, in summer you're cutting grass or harvesting, and in autumn you're getting ready for winter. Then there's milking the cows twice a day. It never stops, because your animals rely on you just as much as you

rely on them. Farming isn't a job, it's a way of life. Your farm is also your home, it's where you spend all your time and there are no set hours.

I'm sure within any farming family, there have been times that you've sworn you'll sell up. But I bet you are still there, and I'm so happy you kept going. There are some folks within our farming community that feel as if they can't go on though, and those people have decided to end their lives. According to an article written by John Swire on FarmBusiness, one farmer per week takes their own life. That's once every week a family ripped apart, a community mourning the loss of a loved one ... yet somehow, we are still letting it happen.

Where we live in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales, you are never too far away from a farm. They are part of our countryside, and it's the generations of families working those farms that have shaped the landscape we know and love. I hope that none of our Yorkshire Dales farmers feel that they are alone. Farming is in everything we see in the Yorkshire Dales, and I think it's time we told the farmers thank you and that they're not alone.

# Is Living in the Dales a Viable Option for Young People?

**Katy Foxford, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority communications apprentice, argues that contrary to popular image, many young people enjoy living in the countryside and choose a rural lifestyle over an urban one.**

This claim may seem unusual but it marries with the current situation nationally and globally, which shows there is a strong affection for nature among the younger generation, and many young people recognise the benefits the environment can provide in regard to health and wellbeing. However, many feel pressurised to leave the countryside or remain urban-based because of the difficulties of sustaining a rural lifestyle.

In 2010, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation published the results of a study for the Commission for Rural Communities, entitled 'A Minimum Income Standard for Rural Households'. The report found that for a single, working-age adult with no children, household costs were 9% higher in a rural town, 18% higher in a village and 24% higher in a hamlet. It stated that people in rural areas generally need to earn well above the minimum wage to make ends meet, but since many rural jobs are poorly paid, many people have less than they need.

So is it feasible for a young person to live independently in the Yorkshire Dales, based on my own experiences of living here for two-and-a-half years?

## Privileged to work in the Dales

My experience is not a reflection of everyone's. However, from a young person's point of view, I have realised that it can be very difficult to live independently in a rural area, as there are many challenges.

While it is a privilege to live and work in the beautiful Dales, it is a choice that comes with a cost. I love the cultural history of the area,

the open spaces and the recreational activities that it offers, and appreciate the sense of community; however, I won't shy away from saying that it can be tough financially. Lower salaries, renting costs, running a car, and the higher cost of living in the countryside all make it challenging, and not all young people have financial support from their family.

My personal frustration is that I enjoy the job I do and I love the area where I live and work, and looking ahead, would like to own my own home. This looks like a distant dream because of the lack of affordable housing and the shortage of permanent, well-paid jobs.

## Buying property versus renting

The world of work is changing. To find permanent full-time employment is difficult; many jobs are part-time, seasonal or short-term contracts, which are of no benefit to a young person looking for job security to plan for the future. Low earnings are common in the countryside sector, especially when compared with private-sector companies in urban areas. This lack of job security, and the low salaries available, means it is almost impossible to consider purchasing a flat or house – even if there was any lower-cost housing available to choose from.

The other option is rented accommodation; however, there is a limited choice of good-quality, affordable rental housing in the Dales. This is exacerbated by the number of properties that are second homes or holiday homes, due of the desirability of living in and visiting the Dales. There is less affordable rental housing and social housing

in rural areas than in towns and cities. When I first started looking to rent, the choice was very limited, and my starting salary was insufficient to cover my living expenses, so I had to take on part-time weekend work.

Perhaps rather than looking at affordable housing to buy, the focus should be on providing more better-quality, affordable rental accommodation in the park. This would be dependent on government policy, a willingness to change cultural mind sets, and creating more awareness of rural disadvantage at policy-making level, as well as more investment in housing for single occupants. The need for more affordable housing is clear, but with more housing comes the infrastructure necessary to support these Dales communities. It is a fine balance, but it is crucial that this change should not occur to the detriment of the countryside.

The other major factor that makes everyday living in the countryside difficult is the lack of adequate transport. For example, it is impossible for me to get to work on public transport. This means that running a car is essential, but it's very expensive.

So the question remains – is living in the Dales a viable option for young people? I believe that while it may be viable, it is fraught with difficult challenges. More initiatives are necessary to make it attractive for young people to live in rural areas. Young people are crucial to the future sustainability of the countryside, and it is imperative that they are involved in decision-making on the future of the countryside.

# Remote Working in the Dales

**Rosie Corner, who works in planning at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, looks at the perils and delights of working from home.**

Homeworking in the Dales gives easy access to Gunnerside's natural beauty.  
Courtesy of James Allinson

I write this sitting in the kitchen sink. Well, not quite, the sink being full of pots, but, critically, I'm at home and simultaneously at work. Because I, like generations of workers before me, am employed in a cottage industry.

Bear with me here, because I don't actually produce anything except the written word, while my predecessors produced a whole lot more. They were knitters, tanners, weavers, embroiderers and shoe-, soap- and paper-makers and, before the Industrial Revolution, every Dales village would have boasted dozens of part-time artisans.

## Too many people leaving the Dales

They're on my mind a lot these days as I scratch my head over the new Local Plan for the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Every planner worthy of the name sets out to make land use policies that foster dynamic communities with plenty of local shops, post offices, pubs, sports pitches, play areas ... the industry term is 'place-making'. But services need residents to keep them going, and that's something we struggle with in the Dales. Don't get me wrong, Dales folk are the best people on the planet, but we're losing too many as they leave to seek work in the big smoke.

We have a limited supply of jobs in the park and a lot of our residents have to make long commutes to work. Young people who want to live and work in the place they grew up rarely have that option. I'm bucking the trend by working back in the area where I grew up. I've spent the past 10 years working all over the UK and I swear my mum's still shocked when I turn up on her doorstep on a Friday evening sniffing about for some tea because suddenly she's only one hour away and not eight.

But, at long last, the nature of work is changing and more people have the option of working remotely in contemporary cottage industries. Hands up, I'm really talking about people working in the location-agnostic knowledge economy where, as long as you have enough broadband and a kettle, you can pretty much work anywhere. And why live and work anywhere else when you could live and work in the Dales?

## Networks for homeworkers

The Irish have got this working pattern down. Grow Remote is an organisation that coordinates Local Chapters that connect remote jobs, remote workers and local communities and makes sure that workers can access training, broadband and local co-working spaces. Any redundant or underused building can become a workspace: churches, schools, village halls, pubs, shops. It's a great alternative for historic buildings that have outlived their original purpose but are still valued by their communities.

There are some excellent pay offs. Companies reduce their overheads by downscaling their office space and employ talented people from a wider geographical area. People who adore the Dales, but are struggling to put down permanent roots because they can't find work locally, can bring their work with them. Workers gain back all that time lost to commuting and, business needs permitting, you can do your work at the times of day that suit you. Imagine having a couple of hours in the middle of the day to walk in the glorious countryside that's right on our doorstep? Most importantly of all, remote workers have more time to invest in their community, whether that means caring for relatives, volunteering or spending lunchtime in the teashop down the road.

If this all sounds very bucolic, there are a number of downsides. Working at home alone can be lonely, it's difficult to switch off at the end of the day and there is always a pile of laundry or washing-up glaring at you malevolently when you should be herding spreadsheets. Oh, and did I mention the constant paranoia that you're falling behind because no one can actually see you working? Well fear not, because as more people work remotely, companies are investing in collaborative online working platforms that mean that you and your colleagues (and crucially your boss) no longer feel miles away.

Remote working isn't for everyone, and it will struggle to take off in a big way without targeted investment in rural broadband, but it might just help bring Dales villages back to life.

# SAD FACTS

- Western European countries have lost over 90% of their natural peatlands.
- 96% of upland peatland in England is degraded.
- Damaged British peatlands release 20 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year (= all households of Leeds, Cardiff and Edinburgh combined).

CO<sub>2</sub>

DAMAGED PEATLANDS RELEASE CO<sub>2</sub>

burning grouse moors dries out soil

BRITISH HORTICULTURE

peat is on sale in garden centres\*

grip drainage for agriculture and forestry = peat 'hags' = erosion

overgrazing  
pollutes water contributes to flooding

Written and illustrated by Nadira Wallace, Extinction Rebellion member

\* peat is no longer extracted from England, but from peatlands in Ireland & Eastern Europe.

• Yorkshire's Thorne & Hatfield Moors represent 1/3 of remaining peatland in the UK – home to more than 4,000 types of insects!

• How you can help: avoid peat in all forms – bagged compost, potted plants and so on (if products don't say they're peat-free, they won't be!). \*

LESS SAD FACTS

CO<sub>2</sub>

PEATLANDS ARE NATURAL CARBON SINKS



\* you can also write to your MP – ask them to support 'England Peatland Strategy'



# MY DALES James Allinson

I believe that the Dales is the perfect place for me to get started as a photographer. Having lived and worked here my whole life, I believe it has shaped me into the artist that I am today because of the attachments and nostalgic memories I have made. I typically try to portray a sublime and elevated version of the Dales in my landscape work and this may be somewhat influenced by the fact I grew up with a positive outlook on the countryside and eagerness to explore close to home. I hope that people who view my work get a sense of adventure and excitement to experience the Dales, the same way I did growing up.

Over the years I have gained a good understanding of the area and made many connections within the community; this was particularly beneficial for me last year when I was working on a photography project locally because, not being an outsider, my subjects had the confidence to trust me and allow me to represent them and the work they do.

My recent project is entitled 'Shadows of the Fells'. This is an environmental documentary project which centres around the Yorkshire Dales National Park and those who have a working relationship with its landscape. My project features portraits of a wide variety of people, who play a role in shaping, maintaining and conserving the natural heritage of the Dales. Those who make a direct impact on the landscape include: National Park Rangers, Game Keepers, Tree Surgeons, Dry Stone Wallers, Quarry Operatives and Crop and Livestock Farmers.



I made this project with the aim to highlight the historic landscape, celebrate its hill farming traditions, the people and the work that they do, such as the restoration and management of the moors, woodlands and rivers as well as re-establishing game in the area. The Yorkshire Dales would look radically different if it wasn't for the people, who work in the shadows of the fells.

I hope that someone who views this project perhaps learns something new and comes away with a positive outlook and appreciation for their conservation efforts which have influenced and shaped the landscape we know and love today. Working on this project was a lot of fun and a great learning experience, I got the chance to step out of my comfort zone photographing some of my first ever portraits and it was a nice change of pace documenting a topic over time as opposed to creating stand-alone images.

My project has since gained national recognition with thanks to AON and their Community Art Awards held each year. My work is currently exhibited alongside other shortlisted artists for 12 months in the Leadenhall Building, London. To see my full body of work, please visit; [www.jamesallinson.com/shadowsofthefells](http://www.jamesallinson.com/shadowsofthefells) .



*"Are most landscape photographers too focused on beautiful landscapes rather than those who shape it?"*

I don't believe photographers are too focused on beautiful landscapes; it is common for photographers and particularly journalists to focus on the rawer topics, but more effort could be taken to show appreciation of individuals and to raise awareness of environmental concerns and issues, both locally and nationally. This goes for me too.

Contacting James

**Website:** [www.jamesallinson.com](http://www.jamesallinson.com)

**Instagram:** [@james.allinson](https://www.instagram.com/james.allinson)

**Facebook:** James Allinson Photography

**Contact:** [jamesallinsonphotography@gmail.com](mailto:jamesallinsonphotography@gmail.com)



# Technology will reshape the Dales' approach to the Climate Crisis

**How do you feed billions of people when modern agriculture is wiping out carbon hungry habitat? Where food production meets environmental impact can cause conflict. Often the debate ends up as a question on whether we prioritise planet or people? Interestingly, the solution is coming from neither farmer nor environmentalist – but from software.**

One of the main complaints farmers make against government agri-environment policy is that it can offer few advantages for specific farms, fields or habitats. The pervading wisdom in the Yorkshire Dales is clear: they're designed for someone else's land. Last year, Natural England released a report showing that, since 2015, Yorkshire Dales land in an agri-environment scheme reduced by 30%. This is the biggest decline of all the national parks. That means Dales farmers took a decision to choose intensive farming measures over environmental subsidies.

Natural England, the YDNP and Windle Beech released another economic report showing that local farmers are working long hours for the equivalent of less than the minimum wage. Profits are marginal at best – on average £16,500, compared to the national upland average of £26,000. The livestock enterprise provides just 55% of the total farm income, with the remainder coming from government support payments and diversification.

## Confusion over Brexit

Brexit has made farmers uncertain of what the future will bring. Why would struggling Dales farmers commit to a scheme that might restrict future ability to react? To add to this, if the current agri-environment policy doesn't take into consideration local limitations, what chance is there that future policy will be more mindful? Has over-simplified policy led to over-simplified farming causing, according to the WWF, the UK to become "one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world"?

By 2050, there will be almost 10 billion people on the planet, requiring current food production to increase by 70%. That's just to feed the world. If you're talking about nourishment, the problem becomes more severe. The Committee on Climate Change has said there are only

100 harvests left in the UK, because three quarters of all topsoil has disappeared in the last 150 years. While this mainly relates to arable land, intensive livestock farming is dependent on supplementing feed from arable land.

In November last year, Azure FarmBeats was released. This is a data-driven farming program aimed at increasing world food production. It works by giving farmers access to precise readings on temperature, pH level, moisture, location of weeds, and where cattle defecate. Initially, the intended market for FarmBeats was the developing world, where the potential for food production is greatest. However, the success of the program suggests this may become standard on all farms, which will have wide-reaching implications for policy, land use, land value and planning.

The concept of data-driven farming has been around since the 1980s. Initially, it faced restrictions in technology and cost of sensors. Creating the artificial intelligence to interpret mass amounts of data is useless unless that data can be transmitted from sensors to the computer. Clever innovations, such as the use of unused 'white spaces' on the television broadcast spectrum (plentiful in rural areas), allow mass data to be sent in the same way as broadband. Overcoming the cost of sensors was a challenge; the originators of FarmBeats set themselves the target of bringing the price down from \$8,000 to just \$80.

In practice, this now means farmers can place a sensor every few hundred meters, hook a mobile phone up to a drone and let the artificial intelligence create a data map of the entire farm. If this digital map were overlaid with the farmer's inherited knowledge, such as traditional field patterns or tree and hedgerow locations, then simulations can be run to sandbox the environmental and economic effects of alternative agricultural methods.

Highly informed decision-making is then supported by precision farming methods. Rather than blanket the entire farm in nitrogen or pesticide, it can be administered to specific areas. This will result in lower cost, greater yield and less environmental impact. Not only that, the environmental impact of all applications can be measured precisely. Implementation of such a technology will be incentivised and data collected for national food and environmental planning. An accurate data map of the UK would mean realistic targets set, accurate results recorded and the value of land for either food production or carbon sequestration reconsidered. This then poses the question: how might struggling upland farms in the Yorkshire Dales fare?

UK national parks preserve the community and farming heritage as part of the unique landscape. If the Dales becomes highly valued for its purity of soil and biodiversity then, notwithstanding the tourism advantages, the value of smaller herds known for their Dales provenance is going to explode. It's almost poetic; when we digitise the land, farming becomes more analog.

*James Marley, Corporate Consultant*



Looking out over the Howgill Fells.  
Courtesy of James Allinson.

# Tree Guards A Growing Problem

Illustration and Design by Laurence Parkin.  
Words by 'Friends of the Dales'.

## More trees please – not more plastic!

- 👍 Since 1995 an estimated 3 million trees have been planted in the Dales
- 👎 An estimated 1 million plastic tree guards are now redundant – creating an eyesore and pollution
- 👍 Trees help combat climate chaos, retain water and soil, and restore biodiversity
- 👎 The Dales needs more trees, not more plastic

## An unsustainable choice

- 👎 Making and delivering plastic guards uses fossil fuels
- 👎 Redundant guards may be left for years, long after the tree needs protection
- 👎 Tree guards blow over or wash downstream, spreading the pollution
- 👎 Microplastics reach the soil, streams, the oceans, marine life (and us)

## A wiser future

- 👍 We'd prefer planting to be done without guards where possible
- 👍 Tree guards, if used, should be compostable or at least recyclable
- 👍 We'd like manufacturers to pay for collection & recycling of plastic guards
- 👍 We'd like regulation of planting grants – to ensure responsible disposal of redundant guards
- 👍 We'd like research into sustainable options like fenced high density planting and natural regeneration

Please support our campaign for wiser tree planting in the Dales, see - [friendsofthedales.org.uk](http://friendsofthedales.org.uk)

# Taking Action Against Plastic

Settle College student Tabitha Brown takes up the fight against single-use plastic.



Tabitha selling her Switch to Stitch products. Courtesy of Settle College

Plastic. It's everywhere in our modern lives, from single-use wrapping on food and other products to phone cases. We are just waking up to the pollution in our oceans killing off marine life and destroying our ecosystems. We, personally, can't do much about taking the multitude of plastic out of the ocean, but we can stop throwing out non-reusable plastics, and we can prevent the situation from getting worse.

A lot of plastic is used in the beauty sector, and as a lot of girls in my school wear makeup, I thought I could make a few reusable products to sell at school to raise awareness of plastic pollution and at the same time raise money for the RSPB. I began to knit makeup removers (face scrubbies), made from 100% cotton, to be used instead of cotton wool balls or makeup wipes. Once you have used a scrubbie, you simply wash it and use it again! I also crocheted bags to fit body soap into, as other big plastic polluters in the bathroom are shampoo and shower gel bottles. Although a few of these may now be made with recyclable plastic, using a shampoo bar and shower gel bar uses much less plastic. The soap bag can hang in the shower and help the bar to last longer. Again, once the soap is all used up, then you just wash it and reuse.

I named my enterprise Switch to Stitch, to encourage people to think about alternatives to plastic. When I held my stall at school, during lunch breaks, I received a lot of interest and support for my products, from teachers and students alike. Following the success of Switch to Stitch at school, I went on to sell my goods at some local Christmas markets. I added reusable bamboo cups and knitted mug hugs for them, so that they keep more of the heat in and are softer to hold. It was a lot of hard work knitting, crocheting and running the stalls, but it was a brilliant experience and at the end I only had a couple of soap bags left.

I donated all the profits raised (over £100) from my stalls to the RSPB, as I think they are an important charity to support because they are helping to preserve nature. In an increasingly urbanised world, habitats and ecosystems are lost and access to nature can be difficult to find. Living in the Yorkshire Dales, we can experience birds and wildlife just in our back gardens and I feel extremely privileged to live here, but we also need to preserve this for the generations to come. Helping to reduce our plastic waste, even just a little bit, can really help.

# All About Plastic



Q&A at Settle Primary School.

**Katie Daynes, author of “Questions and Answers about Plastic”, is grilled by the Year 4–5 children at Settle Primary School.**

## **What inspired you to write this book?**

Watching David Attenborough’s Blue Planet II was the moment I realised just how awful the plastic problem is – and how crazy it is that we take something that’s made to last forever and use it just once. I decided a questions and answers book would be a great way to explore this topic.

## **Do you know how strong plastic is?**

It depends how thick it is and what kind of plastic you’re using. Park benches can take the weight of lots of people and last for hundreds of years, but you can easily tear cling film or scrunch up polystyrene.

## **Which single use plastic is the worst?**

Polystyrene takeaway trays are definitely one of the worst. You can’t recycle them and they easily break up into little pieces of plastic that will damage wildlife for years to come.

## **Do you only write information books?**

Yes, pretty much. I’ve written a few fairy-tale retellings, but information books are my passion. I love writing about something that’s really real.

## **How long will it take us to make a difference to the amount of plastic waste?**

You can make a difference today! Simply by NOT BUYING things wrapped in pointless plastic, you’re helping the problem. But it will take much longer for manufacturers and consumers around the world to change their habits. Governments can help by introducing strict rules banning single-use plastics.



All images courtesy of Katie Daynes

Why?

**Where did you find the facts for the book? And... How did you know it was correct?**

Documentaries were a really good starting point. There's a fantastic documentary called "A Plastic Ocean" produced by Jo Ruxton, who has also worked with David Attenborough. I contacted Jo and asked if she could be an expert adviser on my book and she was delighted to help. I found lots of useful information online, but sometimes it's hard to know what the REAL facts are, so then I would ask Jo and she would set me straight.

**Are you trying to help plastic pollution and climate change?**

YES! After starting work on my book, I wanted to do more in my local area so I set up Plastic Free Skipton. We hold events, write articles and give talks to explain more about the problems with plastic and how we can all make a difference. I'm now writing a couple of books on climate change, and I've taken part in several Climate Strikes in Skipton. I also try to make changes in my own lifestyle. It always feels better to be doing something rather than nothing.

**What made you think about the idea of the book?**

I've written lots of books in the Questions & Answers series, and it seemed like an obvious fit for the subject of plastic. People have so many questions they want answered – the book was my opportunity to help.

**Did you write the book because you wanted to spread the word about us stopping using single use plastic?**

Absolutely! But also because I wanted to explore the topic further. How did we get into this situation? It's fascinating to learn that plastic was originally invented to PROTECT nature. And even now, there are still some very good uses of plastic. But yes, it's the single-use plastic and our throwaway society that really has to be stopped.

**How did you come up with so many great ideas for the book?**

I'm lucky to have two inquisitive kids myself, who are the inspiration behind many of my books. I think kids are much better at asking questions about the world than adults. As people grow up, they stop questioning why things are the way they are and just go along with it. I think it's extremely important never to stop asking questions. How else are we going to make a better world?

**Do you use more than or less than 100% plastic?**

Much less! But rather than replace plastic things with non-plastic versions, I often try to use nothing at all. For example, I'd rather have no straw at all then use a paper one which gets thrown away. When I buy apples or onions or carrots I don't use a plastic bag or a paper bag – I just put them loose in my trolley, then put them all in my reusable fabric bag.

**How much research did you do for the book?**

LOTS! Not just for writing the text but also for finding references for the illustrator, so the images could be informative too.

**How long did it take you to research facts for the book? & 15. How long did it take you to write the book?**

Hmmm that's hard to say. It probably took a month to research and write the first draft of the book, but more like six months from start to finish to get the illustrations in place and working well with the text.

**Do you want to get involved and help plastic pollution?**

Yes, both by telling people about it through my books, but also by rolling up my sleeves and trying to improve my local area. For example, Plastic Free Skipton is planning a Spring Clean litter pick on 28th March. I hope Settle will join in too!

**Why did you choose to make the book about plastic?**

Because it's ruining our planet, and books are a great way to educate people and empower them to make a difference.

**Why did you make a pop-up book, were you aiming it at a specific age?**

Flaps are great because they're interactive. I mean, who can resist opening a flap! Flaps work specially well with the question-and-answer format. It makes the subject more attractive to children and helps them to learn. I'd say the book was suitable for anyone at primary school – but that most adults would learn lots from it too.

**Did you write the book on paper before it went onto the computer?**

Some of it. I like making notes by hand and coming up with the questions on scraps of paper, but quite quickly I need to type the text up on the computer so I don't lose it!

**Have you ever used plastic and not recycled it? (be truthful!! )**

Yes, often. My family has a bad crisp habit, so lots of crisp packets end up in our bin. Now I try to collect them and take them to our local terracyle recycling drop-off point, but I wish there was a non-plastic option in the first place!



**"Questions and Answers about Plastic" is published by Usborne at £9.99.**

# Has sustainability become a problem of the privileged?

In recent years, talk of sustainability and living a sustainable life has been on everyone's lips. Increasingly we are seeing the consequences of climate change through mainstream news, forcing us to realise the impact we are having on our planet. Equally, the media has brought our attention to inspiring individuals, such as Greta Thunberg, who are acting in the face of the climate crisis; demonstrating 'no-one is too small to make a difference', inspiring us all to do our bit for the planet.

Unfortunately, this 'sustainable lifestyle' has become more of a trend than a bid to save the planet. Shops have jumped on the bandwagon, selling us a plethora of often-expensive, re-usable water bottles, coffee cups, straws and so on, reinforcing the rhetoric that to be sustainable you must have these things, but is that really achievable for everyone? No movement for the greater good of society should exclude the poorest and most underprivileged in society, but is that where the sustainability movement is going?

## Consequence of consumption

Go into any typical supermarket to buy milk, and you will find that a standard pint of cow's milk will be far cheaper than a dairy-free alternative. This is the case for many specialist, vegan, locally grown or otherwise sustainable foodstuffs, and when you total up the cost of buying these products, there is noticeable

price hike. While many of us will happily pay a bit extra in the knowledge it is better for our environment, this isn't a privilege everyone has. An individual struggling to put food on the table is probably not thinking about the consequences of their consumption.

This isn't an issue limited to food shopping. The clothing industry is guilty of a huge disparity between what is accessible and what is sustainable. On the face of it, you would assume those with more money buy more and therefore have more impact on the planet, and while there is truth in this, often the more sustainable options are more expensive. The cost of ethical clothing is ultimately down to fairer wages for workers and the use of more sustainable practises, which to many seem worth the expense. However, is this going to be the concern of someone who struggles to afford clothes at all? People often turn to fast-fashion

industries where the latest trends are available at the lowest prices, but unfortunately at the highest cost to the environment.

## Is right to protest a privilege?

The issue deepens as there has been of increase of people buying second-hand, vintage clothing, which should be a cheaper, more accessible option. However, due to an increased demand, consumer prices in vintage shops have increased – shopping sustainably has come to be more about following the 'sustainable trend'. Equally, this shows us if we are buying things we don't really need, it cannot be truly sustainable – after all the most sustainable option is to use what we already have.

What's more, climate activism isn't a space everyone can participate in, whether that's due to work or study priorities, a feeling of disenfranchisement, a disability or lack of transport. Our 'right to protest' is also unfortunately a privilege. For those of us who have the means to protest, this is something we cannot afford to waste, we have a responsibility to call for change that will ultimately affect everyone.

So why do you need to know this? Have I just told you to make you feel bad? Definitely not. Whoever you are, and whatever you can afford to do for the planet **is enough**. A social movement that pressures people to stretch themselves beyond their means is no movement at all. However, those of us who are part of the **guilty privileged**, please use your position of power for good! Those of us that can live sustainably should do so wherever possible, allowing the movement to grow and therefore become more accessible to everyone. After all, the climate crisis is a global crisis; it is not a time to act in our own interests but in the world's interest.

Lily Whittle, Settle College student



Flooding at Middleham – a consequence of climate change? Courtesy of James Allinson

# A WILDER COUNTRYSIDE

**The ecological crisis that is gripping the Earth is the result of human-caused greenhouse gases, but nature has the ability to heal itself; it has been doing this for 4.5 billion years. Allowing nature to self-govern and regenerate through natural processes that shape, regulate and restore land and sea, requires humans to take a step back from managing it. The richer the ecosystem, the more effective are the ecosystem services. These are natural processes that aid our survival through flood alleviation, water purification, biodiversity support and most importantly, carbon sequestration. But the further we eradicate ecosystems, the less effective this vital carbon sequestering is, thus exacerbating climate breakdown.**

Our countryside could be a powerful asset in mitigating climate change and supporting Britain's dwindling wildlife if a greater focus were put on natural regeneration. The countryside in other countries across the world celebrates a more imaginative biodiversity in its broadest sense, with a glorious exhibition of natural processes harmoniously intertwined with thriving industries.

## **Farmers earn a meagre wage**

Yet not only has Britain failed to preserve its wildlife, but it also has failed to support those industries. The average age of a British farmer is 59 and only 3% of farmers are under the age of 35. The rate of suicide among farmers reflects the long, solitary hours spent earning a meagre wage. Young people are leaving their rural homes for what they imagine might be a more attractive life in the city, and who can blame them when this ancient profession is often reduced to subsistence living?

Efforts to restore the land could be focused on our national parks, which are less populated than other areas and already protected. The Yorkshire Dales expands over 2,000 sq km, so it could easily support large-scale natural regeneration projects.

Roughly an hour from the Dales in West Cumbria lies the Ennerdale Valley, where sheep farming and forestry have been shaping the land for hundreds of years. Interwoven within these industries is a natural regeneration project led by National Trust, Forestry Commission and United Utilities, which has shifted the management of the 47.5-sq km site towards one focussed around ecological processes. For the past 15 years, the valley has been shaped by nature and is now home to red and roe deer, red squirrel, hardy Galloway cattle and around 100 bird species. The project's success rests in its large-scale approach, made possible through the collaboration of local landowners and environmental organisations.

What I would love to see happen in the Yorkshire Dales is, firstly, a rejuvenation of human communities – in which farmers don't work until they keel over, and young people can find exciting work. Secondly, a rejuvenation of ecological communities as a result of existing landowners such as the park authority, farmers and grouse-moor owners collaborating with environmental bodies like the National Trust, Forestry England and Natural England. I want to see a Yorkshire Dales where walks aren't only punctuated by dry stone walls, but by crane's nests, great oaks and herds of Galloway cattle.

## **Grouse moor issues**

Looking further afield, the Biebrza Marshes National Park in Poland supports elk, wolves and nearly every bird species that is in the process of vanishing from the British Isles. That national park is roughly a quarter the size of the Dales. So where, in our vast rolling carpet of green, is our wildlife? One only needs look at an aerial view of the park to understand. Almost half of it is privately owned grouse moor, burned each year to prevent succession to woodland, thus maintaining a heather monoculture that feeds grouse that are shot for four months of the year. This moorland is devoid of rich vegetation, rendering the land unable to slow the flow of rainwater descending into the valley.

On a chilly January morning, my girlfriend and I caught a train to Hebden Bridge where we strolled the beautiful streets looking for tasty treats. We found plenty. What a wonderful town. Had I been wandering outside the same bakery a month later, I would have needed a dinghy. At 8am on Sunday February 9th, flood sirens echoed along the streets. Millions of pounds have been spent on flood alleviation in the Calder Valley since the 2015 flood but, despite this, about 500 homes and 400 businesses were flooded again. Many Calder folk blame the grouse-moor owners for the flooding of their homes and livelihoods.

They say "money doesn't grow on trees," but it does seem to grow on moorland, where the rich own swathes of land for lucrative grouse shooting. When they hear the truth but don't act on it, they claim a privilege that comes at the expense of people whose homes are being flooded and at the expense of wildlife. So, I wonder, does the countryside really belong to the people?

**Joe Richardson**



Nancy Stedman, trustee, and Ruth Garrett, project leader, at work in the Friends of the Dales office

# Working on Capturing

In early 2020, I had the opportunity to join Capturing the Past – a project set up and managed by Friends of the Dales to enable local history groups to upload digital copies of important but fragile local records, such as wills, maps, plans and photographs. My role in the project was creating a searchable archive of every issue of this magazine – Yorkshire Dales Review – for the past (almost) 40 years. This work was part of the celebrations of this special 150th edition.

The work turned out to be a much more complex process than first expected. I worked alongside a trustee of Friends of the Dales, Nancy Stedman. We discovered that the task was really only possible by working as a team, tackling each step of the process together to a) maintain consistency and b) our sanity (!) when wading through (aka carefully reading) each of the 149 issues. Along the way, unsurprisingly, I learnt a lot about the history of Friends of the Dales (previously known as the Yorkshire Dales Society); the changing campaigns and the extraordinary

achievement the publication has been. As a result, many issues and events I was semi-aware of growing up in the area were placed in context, and I learnt an awful lot more about recent Dales history. I now know who Arthur Raistrick\* is! Nancy was invaluable, putting up with my constant questions about topics, and telling me her own anecdotal recollection of events, based on her many years living and working in the Dales.

## Learning the ropes

Nancy and I were trained by Ian Fleming, who is one of the experienced volunteers working on the Capturing the Past project. Firstly, we learnt how to use specialist scanning equipment to create a digital/pdf copy of each issue of the magazine, working from the hard copies stored at the charity's office. The digitising took us two full days. Ian then came back for more specialist training, and taught us how to use the archive's bespoke software so we could upload each pdf and create a consistent catalogue reference for each issue.

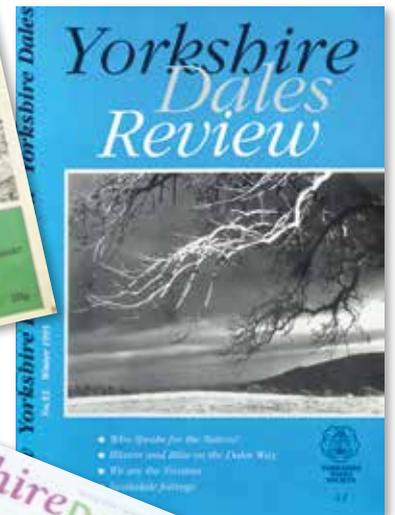
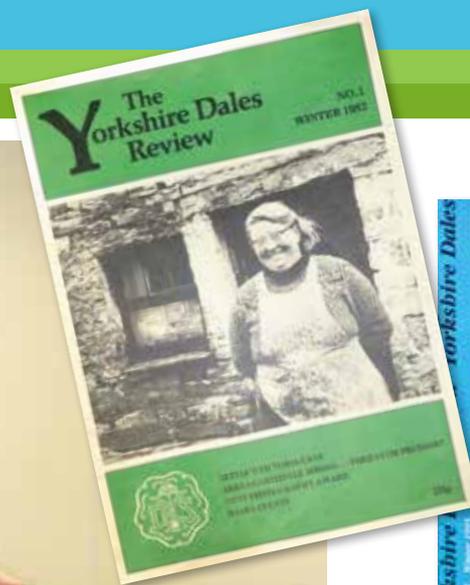
At this point, we needed to read and summarise each issue. We noted key articles and identified notable contributors and subjects that people may wish to search on the website, then uploaded each issue in turn. This took the bulk of the project time – a further 10 days of focussed effort. The end result is a searchable archive permanently hosted on the Dales Community Archive website ([www.dalescommunityarchive.org](http://www.dalescommunityarchive.org)) covering the years 1981 to 2020.

## Changing the focus of the magazine

Through these articles, a picture is painted of the different efforts and campaigns up to the present day. In the 1980s, there was a spotlight on quarries in the Dales and on the protection of the countryside surrounding them. The campaign and subsequent victory for the protection of the Settle-Carlisle railway line was a key focus of the 1980s and 90s. The fight for protecting Green Lanes and then achievement of open access to the countryside (Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000) were popular topics in the 2000s.



Ruth Garrett with the full paper copy archive of the Yorkshire Dales Review (Issues 1-149)



Magazine covers from the 1980s, 90s & 2000s



All images courtesy of Friends of the Dales

# the Past

In the 2010s, the magazine was beginning to focus more on issues surrounding climate change and the debate around Dales field barns (which had cropped up sporadically from the 1980s). The DalesBus has been a high priority since its launch in 2007, with regular updates covering the trials and tribulations of this rural transport service.

As well as being a fascinating reflection of the past 40 years of Dales life, and a record of the changing challenges facing the Dales, the Review was surprisingly entertaining. For example, an article in issue 53 (Winter 1995) titled Swaledale Jottings, compiled by Charles Hepworth, is a collection of old guidebook

reviews of Swaledale including such gems as one describing Muker as a “romantically placed but miserable-looking village with a church to match”. There is an article from issue 80 (Autumn 2002) about the origins of Hey Diddle Diddle and its historic links to Bolton Abbey, by Keith Buddor, and an article in 118 (Spring 2012) by Andy Singleton about how Chinese traveller Chiang Yee recorded his visit to the Dales in the 1930s.

Personally, this project has given me a new appreciation for the Dales and admiration for the work of the people who try to conserve it. It also made me realise how big the Dales is and how much of it I have yet to explore. The heritage

website itself is a remarkable record of the culture of the Dales – and the Yorkshire Dales Review is a microcosmic reflection of this, taking note of key events, issues and campaigns. It’s worth bringing light as well to the outstanding achievement that the publication of the magazine was and continues to be. This could not have been possible without the dedicated contributions of Colin and Fleur Speakman, whose passion and love for the publication enabled its production for the majority of its run. Contemporary issues will be uploaded in the future as a batch every year or so.

Ruth Garrett, project leader,  
Yorkshire Dales Review Archive

*‘The work turned out to be a much more complex process than first expected. I worked alongside a trustee of Friends of the Dales, Nancy Stedman. We discovered that the task was really only possible by working as a team.’*

**Editor’s Note:** \*Amongst many achievements, Arthur Raistrick was a renowned industrial and field archaeologist, pacifist and socialist, and was posthumously named “Dalesman of the Millennium” by the Yorkshire Dales Society.

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# 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

## Support us, support the Dales

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

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

### ➔ JOIN US

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

### ➔ DONATE

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

### ➔ VOLUNTEER

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

### ➔ LEGACY

- Please consider making a gift in your 'Will' to **Friends of the Dales**.

### ➔ BE 'DALES-FRIENDLY'

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

[www.friendsofthedales.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthedales.org.uk)

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



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