

AN ENDLESS CYCLE

Summer is a great time for exploring the Dales by bike. New trustee Kevin Armstrong shares one of his favourite rides.

There are so many routes I still want to explore in the Dales, but some I've already done keep getting in the way by luring me back. This is one, so be warned: if you ride it, you may end up with the same addiction.

Starting from Ilkley, ride all the way along what starts as Nesfield Road. You might spot the Brownlee brothers, whom I've seen whizzing along here training for Tokyo, but whoever's there, gold medal-worthy views of the Wharfe valley are guaranteed.

At the end, turn left towards the roundabout and follow the road past Bolton Abbey. When the Duke of Devonshire allows, you can ride over the bridge at Cavendish Pavilion

and above the river again on Storiths Lane. Otherwise, a ride straight on to Barden Tower and over Barden Bridge is a fine alternative. As you rise up the other side of the valley you'll pass bits of the Dales Way, cross Fir Beck and eventually reach Hazler Lane.

Follow the signs for Stump Cross Caverns, taking you up a challenging climb that's well worth the effort. There's a perfectly placed bench on the way up if you want to take in the sight of Simon's Seat, just as my Dad did when he patiently introduced a small, slow version of me to this ride many years ago.

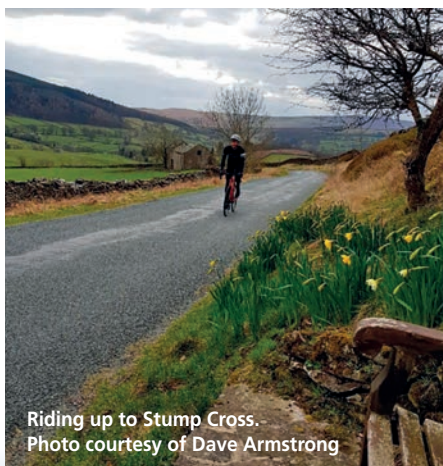
I often struggle to pass Stump Cross Caverns without popping in for a scone but when I eventually go beyond, I take a right turn onto Duck Street Lane at Greenhow Hill. From here you can spin straight down to Blubberhouses, or take an even more picturesque detour via Thruscross Reservoir and the road that

flows down beside the River Washburn. From Blubberhouses, ride beside the church on Shepherd Hill and eventually take a left turn when you see a sign for Snowden, leading you to one final energy-sapping hill.

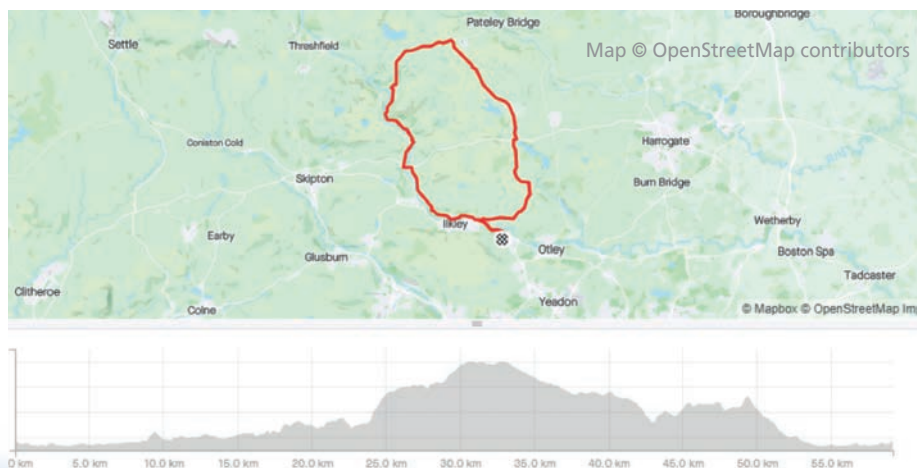
At the crossroads at the top, go straight over and enjoy the descent down Moor Lane to Askwith, where you can turn right at the T-junction to rejoin the River Wharfe and return to your starting point. If you're as lucky as I've been here, you may even get to ride alongside a flying barn owl.

After 3,000 feet of ascent on 35 miles of meandering roads, my legs long for a rest – and my mind longs to do it all again. Summer is a great season to give this beautiful rollercoaster route a go, provided you're happy to ride it again *ad infinitum*.

Kevin Armstrong



Riding up to Stump Cross. Photo courtesy of Dave Armstrong



Simon's Seat. Photo courtesy of Kevin Armstrong



Brighter Future For Wildlife?

Light pollution is stressful. In humans it has been linked to sleep disturbances, mood disorders and even cancer – but if it's bad for us, the effects on wildlife can be much, much worse.

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Winterburn. Photo courtesy of Matthew Savage

Exposure to artificial light can disrupt animals' feeding patterns, prevent them from breeding successfully and interfere with migration. Some of our nocturnal wildlife is among the most badly affected and it's hoped that last year's designation

of the Yorkshire Dales as the UK's largest International Dark Sky Reserve will go some way to halting the decline in populations of birds, insects and other species.

Now the whole of the national park is being managed to preserve the quality

of its night-time skies, which are most outstanding in a core area comprising the upper ends of Swaledale, the Rawthey valley, Garsdale, Littondale and Wharfedale. Among the beneficiaries will be creatures such as bats and moths.



Little owl. Photo © Simon Philpotts www.wilddales.co.uk

The nocturnal wildlife of the national park also includes hedgehogs, which are in serious decline, and barn, tawny and long-eared owls. Dormice are a European Protected Species and found at only two sites within its boundaries. Work is now being carried out to create dark corridors between these woodlands near Aysgarth.

Ten of the 17 UK species of bats are found in the Yorkshire Dales, where huge swarms come together to court and mate in the limestone cave systems. The river valleys, where human settlement is concentrated, provide important feeding sites and summer roosts. Five species – the brown long-eared, Daubenton’s, Natterer’s, whiskered and Brandt’s bats – are known to be particularly vulnerable to light pollution. And while a few predators may benefit from hunting in artificially lit environments, the impact on prey that depends on a cloak of darkness for its survival can be devastating.

The effects on insects can have particularly far-reaching consequences. Sixty per cent of species are nocturnal and it is estimated that a third of those attracted to artificial light are killed as a result. Moths are often viewed as poor relations to their more flashy relatives, the butterflies, but they are important pollinators and form the basis of many food chains.

The Yorkshire Dales support more than 1,000 species of moths and many of the 45 listed in the Biodiversity Action Plan are in decline. These include the small square-spot, with numbers falling by 65% between 2019 and the previous five-year mean. The corresponding figures for dark spinach and garden tiger moths are 59% and 38%. Although this is largely attributed to habitat loss, artificial light is thought to reduce reproduction by inhibiting sex hormones. Direct contact with hot surfaces can kill the moths or damage their wings and antennae. Light pollution may also put them at the mercy of hunters such as bats.

But it isn’t just nocturnal species that suffer. The lives of many diurnal creatures – including humans – are also governed by 24-hour circadian rhythms induced by hormones in response to the cycle of day and night.

We are fortunate that the Yorkshire Dales are among the few places in the UK where it is still possible to look up and marvel at the wonders of the Milky Way. The main threats to their wildlife come from habitat loss or climate change, rather than light pollution. Friends of the Dales backed the national park authority’s application for International Dark Sky Reserve status* and we will continue to scrutinise planning applications to ensure that they do not impact on the animals that also call our villages and farmsteads home.

Lynn Leadbeatter, life member



Winterburn. Photo courtesy of Matthew Savage

How You Can Help

- ⇒☆ Only use external lighting where and when it is really necessary.
- ⇒☆ Angle lights downwards so they don’t shine near or above the horizon and install them at the lowest possible height.
- ⇒☆ Point them where they are needed – not in a direction that disturbs wild creatures.
- ⇒☆ Fit lamps of 500 lumens or less.
- ⇒☆ Avoid bright white and cooler temperature LEDs, which are harmful to wildlife.
- ⇒☆ Close your curtains at night.

* see <https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/park-authority/looking-after/dark-sky/>

From Government to Grass Roots

Policy and Planning Committee member Rick Cowley takes a look at how new legislation could impact on the communities and landscapes of the Dales.

Previous editions of the *Review* have summarised important planning and environmental policy changes that could affect the national park, as well as the new Local Plan being prepared by the park authority. So what has been happening recently?

First, the highly controversial **Planning White Paper** of 2020 now looks as if it will shortly emerge as a bill, and thereafter as an Act, largely unchanged from what was in the White Paper, despite the critical reception it received from many environmental bodies, including Friends of the Dales. So it looks as if the zoning proposals, the significant increase in housing development (despite the huge number of outstanding planning permissions) and restrictions on public involvement in decision-making on development proposals may all well become law.

There is perhaps better news on the **Environment Bill**, which is still edging its way through parliament and contains many potentially useful and positive proposals to protect and improve the environment, including a general duty to enhance biodiversity and the preparation of 'local nature recovery strategies'.

There is now a new **Agricultural Act** on the statute book following the UK's exit from the EU. One of its key features is a replacement of the former EU Common Agricultural Policy with an Environmental Land Management Scheme to provide financial support for farmers producing environmental benefits such as thriving wildlife, improved animal welfare, better soil health and cleaner water.

More locally, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is currently progressing its preparation of a new **Local Plan** for the park and has recently been concentrating on its housing-led strategy for the national park's future. This is where Friends of the Dales have serious misgivings and have argued for a more balanced and sustainable approach

involving economy/employment matters as well as housing, and doing something about the up to 600 outstanding housing planning permissions currently sitting on the books.

Unfortunately the one area where practical progress has apparently been close to zero is the government's response to the national **Glover Review** of valued and protected landscapes such as the Yorkshire Dales, published in 2019. As reported previously in the *Review* (winter 2020) there were many desirable and practical recommendations in the report but it looks increasingly likely that it is destined for one of Whitehall's infamous dusty shelves – a great missed opportunity to make our national parks and other valued landscapes even better.

More updates in future issues of the *Review*.

Rick Cowley, Policy Committee volunteer



Malham Cove. Photo courtesy of Ann Shadrake

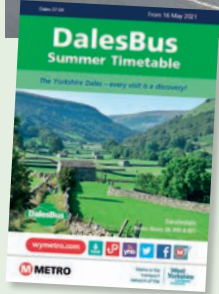
Planning Bill Alert!

In the aftermath of the recent Queen's Speech, the trustees of North Craven Heritage Trust are keeping a watchful eye on developments over the summer months. Whilst making a few minor concessions to public opinion, the government is still intent on reducing local democracy by giving the green light to building new homes in areas earmarked for growth, without any further input from district planning authorities and the general public.

Rural areas such as ours are ignored and we are doubly vulnerable here in North Yorkshire as we await the outcome of local government reorganisation. As the CPRE Policy Director puts it, 'The government must urgently rethink the Planning Bill. If not, we're facing an open season for developers on large parts of the countryside and a fatal weakening of local communities' right to be heard on the future of their areas'.

We must all join forces, stay vigilant and be prepared to act quickly.

Pam Jordan, Chair
Anne Read, President
North Craven Heritage Trust



Expanded DalesBus Network for Summer 2021

The DalesBus network is once again running a full timetable for the summer 2021 season, following a lengthy period of reduced services due to the pandemic.

The network provides sustainable access into and around the Yorkshire Dales National Park and neighbouring Nidderdale and Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Most of the buses on Sundays and bank holidays are managed by Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company, a subsidiary of Friends of the Dales.

This year double-deckers are being used on DalesBus 822 from York and Ripon to Fountains Abbey, Pateley Bridge and Grassington, and on DalesBus 875 between Leeds, Ilkley, Grassington, Kettlewell, Aysgarth and Hawes. These provide extra space for passengers as well as great views of the Dales countryside.

DalesBus 825 has been extended for the 2021 season to run between York and Richmond, providing access to the lesser-known eastern section of Nidderdale AONB. Dales and Bowland CIC has also stepped in to support service 24 between Harrogate and Pateley Bridge on Sundays during the summer.

In response to many requests, a Saturday service has been reintroduced between Skipton, Bolton Bridge, Blubberhouses and Harrogate on a trial basis. There are four return journeys every Saturday, which are served by double-deckers.

Most other services are similar to those that ran in summer 2019, and the buses are already proving popular with people keen to get out into the countryside again following the long periods of lockdown restrictions.

Full details of the DalesBus network are online at www.dalesbus.org and in timetable booklets available throughout the area.

It now costs over £100,000 per year to run the network, so Dales and Bowland CIC is grateful to the many organisations, businesses and individuals providing financial support, including an increased grant from Friends of the Dales starting this year. Fundraising is an ongoing challenge, but it is hoped that more support will be forthcoming from local authorities from April 2022 under the government's recently announced National Bus Strategy.

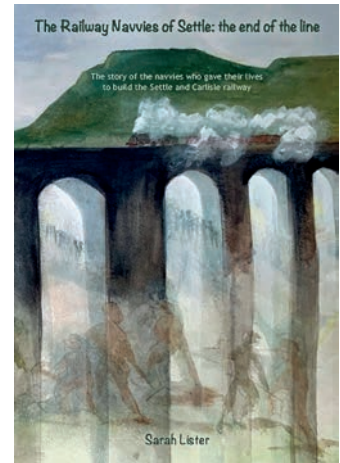
Paul Chattwood, Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company

The Railway Navvies of Settle: The End of the Line

Sarah Lister

Price £4 including p&p

I was given a copy of *The Railway Navvies of Settle* to read, and I must admit that this is not the sort of book that I would normally have thought to pick up. Despite my normal appreciation of local history, railways have not been an area that I had read about before. However, this little gem of a book well and truly scratched that history itch of mine, and may well have opened up a new line of interest for me.



The book shines a light on the fallen navvies of the Settle to Carlisle line who are buried in Settle and Giggleswick, providing an insight into personal stories that would otherwise have remained untold. Sarah Lister uncovers the lives and deaths of 22 men in a caring and insightful way, ensuring that stories of ordinary, everyday people are not lost to history, and bringing a human element to that engineering spectacle. The manner of their deaths is examined, often with comparisons to modern-day safety and living standards, alongside a personal history of each navvy and his family. The amount of information uncovered is impressive, especially considering how difficult it must have been to find out about these people, who moved around so often in search of work.

The book is filled with atmospheric artwork by Teresa Gordon and the text is supported by contemporary newspaper cuttings throughout. These help to create a sense of the period through the tone and language, giving the impression of a very different time. All of this provides a fascinating insight into the history of Settle and how much it changed when the railway came to town, and how much of what we see now can be traced to that point.

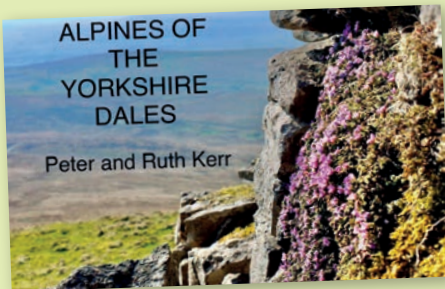
I found this book to be very accessible - easy to read and hard to put down. It is written in a conversational style, so you could imagine the author telling you these stories over a brew, and with my own cup in hand I breezed through it and enjoyed every page. There is obvious care given to these unexpected residents of Settle, and it is nice to see a voice given to those who died building the railway.

The book is available to purchase online at www.foscl.org.uk

Matt Brown, Project Leader, Capturing the Past

Note: To read more about Sarah Lister's work on the Settle Graveyard Project see Yorkshire Dales Review Winter 2021: Issue 153

ALPINES OF THE YORKSHIRE DALES



Publisher Assembly Marketing Ltd

Price £7.50

They say you don't appreciate what you have until it's gone – but a new book by Peter and Ruth Kerr is a timely wake-up call for those of us who might otherwise take the unique flora of the national park for granted.

The authors have used an article written in 1970 by Chris Haes as their starting point. In *Alpines of the Yorkshire Dales* they follow in the botanist's footsteps, seeking out the wild plants that he described and exploring the threats faced by particular species and the efforts being made to conserve them.

The beautifully illustrated book covers a wide range of flowers growing in the Yorkshire Dales today – not just those found at higher altitudes but also species that favour hay meadows and woodland and even native trees. It gives an overview of both the environmental pressures impacting on them and some of the initiatives that have

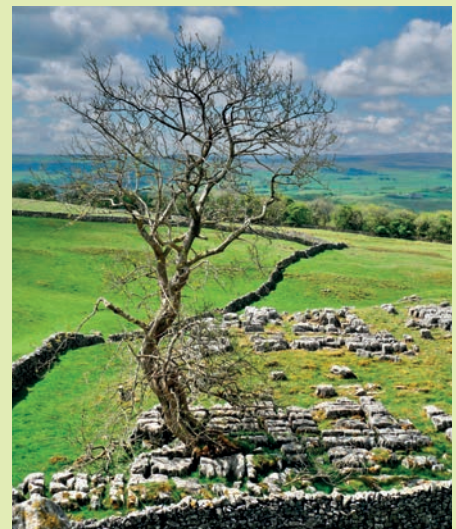
been taken to preserve them, such as the establishment of new nature reserves at Malham Tarn, New House Farm and Ling Gill.

Much has been lost over the last 50 years. Wild daphne has now almost disappeared from the Dales. The marsh gentian is very difficult to find. Ash dieback threatens our most iconic native tree.

But there have also been some remarkable success stories. The rare lady's slipper orchid is being actively conserved at protected sites and is making a comeback. Hay meadows have declined by 97% in the last 100 years but are now being re-established. The English or Yorkshire sandwort, which grows only on the limestone plateaus between Ingleborough and Horton-in-Ribblesdale, is still found in good numbers. And the many striking photographs are a reminder of the wealth of wild flowers that we can still enjoy.

You can obtain a copy of *Alpines of the Yorkshire Dales* from the Stripey Badger Bookshop in Grassington and The Folly museum in Settle.

Lynn Leadbeatter, life member



Lady's-Slipper Orchid

In the late eighteenth century the lady's-slipper orchid was once so common across the limestone areas of the Yorkshire Dales that bundles of the flowers were sold on Settle market. Today it is one of the rarest species in the UK, and the only wild site in the country is a secret location in the national park, which is guarded to ensure that specimens are not taken illegally.

The orchid is notoriously difficult to conserve. It can take up to ten years before flowering and, even then, it produces a single bloom. It can germinate only by forming a symbiotic relationship with specific species of fungi that live among its roots. And its beauty means that it is extremely popular with collectors.

But there are signs that the lady's-slipper orchid could be back from the brink. Seeds have been successfully propagated at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Kew and the flower has been reintroduced to a number of sites including Kilnsey Trout Farm, where it can be viewed by the public.



Ash Dieback

Yorkshire Dales landscapes are likely to be particularly badly affected by ash dieback, the fungal disease that was first recorded in 2012 and is now widespread across the UK. Many of the trees infected will be veteran or ancient and are irreplaceable.

The national park authority is future-proofing the landscape by planting a diverse range of species in anticipation of the loss so that woodlands are more resilient to climate change and future and current pests and diseases. It is also raising awareness of the importance of biosecurity.

It is expected that a small proportion of ash trees will have greater genetic tolerance to the fungal pathogen. If these are spared from felling, they could form the basis of the next generation.

Photos courtesy of Peter and Ruth Kerr



Membership News

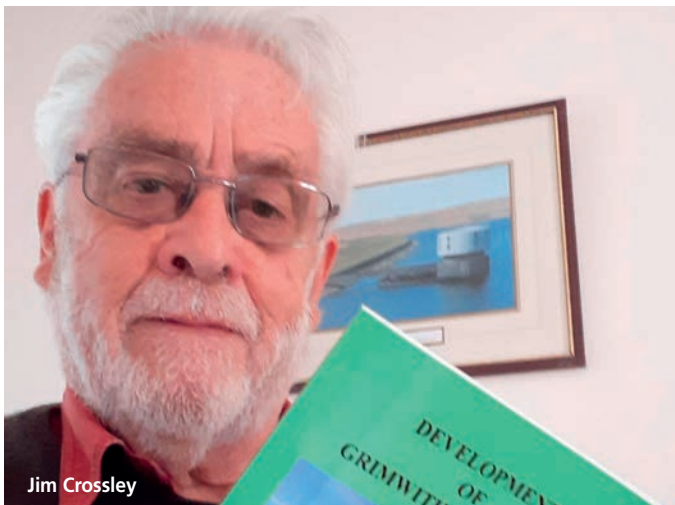
We'd like to extend a thank you to all our members who stayed with us during this difficult year. We are also delighted to report that we secured a modest increase in membership numbers by the year end, largely thanks to a recruitment campaign we placed in *The Dalesman* whilst staff were working from home. We also offered a deferral to our business and group members for their membership fees in recognition of trading conditions being so difficult, yet 20 were able to make a voluntary payment of their subscriptions, for which we are very grateful.

Finally, as we continue to celebrate the charity's 40th year, we have a challenge: it would be amazing if 40 current members could recruit at least one new member each. Penny Lowe, Administration Assistant, is on hand to post you our leaflets or email you a membership 'plug', which you can adapt and send to friends or family if you wish.

Please contact Penny on penny.lowe@friendsofthedales.org.uk



Two new members joining up 'pre-Covid'.
Photo courtesy of Mark Corner



Jim Crossley

Jim Crossley – Condolences

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We were very sorry to hear of the unexpected death of long-standing member Jim Crossley, who passed away in April. Jim was a great supporter of our charity and led a very well-attended 'walk & talk' day in autumn 2019 on the topic of Skipton's water supply. He was also a well-regarded local author, most recently on the development of Grimwith Reservoir, drawing on his professional background as a chartered civil engineer for that project. Our condolences go to his family and friends.

Friends of the Dales Welcomes Victoria Benn

We are delighted to welcome a new, third member of staff to our small team at our Gargrave head office. Victoria Benn, an author and writer, joins us as our part-time Membership & Events Officer. The aim of the new post is to have one person committed to promoting Friends of the Dales to different audiences so that the charity and the strength of its voice can continue to grow. It's early days for Victoria, but moving forward she will be taking over the management of our talks, walks, social media and publicity.

Victoria said: 'My childhood provided a fantastic immersion in the people, land and traditions of the Dales. These formative insights and experiences came from my maternal grandmother who'd grown up on the land in some of the remotest parts of the Dales and from my parents, especially my father, who was – and still is – passionately involved in the traditional sport of fell running.

'As an adult, I've taken great pride and pleasure in uncovering and celebrating the stories and characters of the Dales through my writing, so this role feels absolutely perfect for me. I look forward to meeting current members and volunteers over the coming months as well as spreading the word to potential new members about the charity's important work.'



Victoria Benn

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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



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

SHARE THE
LOVE...



When you've read and enjoyed this magazine please pass it on with our regards.