

Beauty and the Bleak?

Threshfield Quarry, near Grassington

Some find natural beauty where others see only a landscape scarred by previous industrial use. Here our Executive Director Ann Shadrake and artist Ann Rutherford explain why they find inspiration amid reminders of former quarrying in the Dales.

This is one of my favourite places in the Dales ... probably because it is so 'un-Dales-y'. I find the simple blocks of colour – grey, slate, cream, charcoal, steel blue, aqua – inspiring and uplifting. Despite its past as a working quarry, this post-industrial landscape feels to me wild and unmanaged. Unlike the familiar Dales scenery of dry-stone walls, meadows and barns, the quarry site doesn't feel 'man-made' although it patently is!

With climate breakdown, we'll most likely need to accept landscapes that look very different. These landscapes might not align well to your preferred view of the Dales. And they may not have much in common with those 'special qualities' for which the Dales was designated a national park (over 70 years ago). Can we learn to love landscapes of regularly flooded valleys, eroded tracks, soggy and scrubby uplands, and even more derelict walls and barns? Will we have a choice?

Ann Shadrake, Executive Director

Life Returns to Disused Quarry

Threshfield Quarry is a spectacular, disused limestone quarry near the villages of Threshfield, Skirethorns and Long Ashes with a stunning waterfall, pools and soaring, terraced walls.

Quarrying has been carried on for hundreds of years but it is only in the last century that this became heavily industrialised. It is now 2022 and the quarry has been disused for the last 12 years. Limestone-loving plants are creeping back onto the quarry floor, mosses and lichens are taking up habitation. Let's hope climate change doesn't affect this progress.

Rock is one of the central themes of my artistic practice. Threshfield Quarry is hard to illustrate and so finding details is a way to bring focus. The ancient limestone is revealed in its horizontal bands and the quarried face features strong verticals created by the blasting. I like to use charcoal to illustrate rock. The charcoal lends itself to a soft rendering of the weathering and quarrying processes that create the deeply textured faces of the quarry.

Ann Rutherford, artist and Threshfield Quarry Development Trust trustee



Charcoal drawing of quarry face, Ann Rutherford

Further information about Threshfield Quarry

Back in 2010 Tarmac gained planning permission to extend extraction at Swinden Quarry to 2030, in return for closing down its operation at the nearby smaller Threshfield Quarry. There was to be no net increase in extracted stone. A legal agreement (Section 106) was signed to ensure that the long-term restoration and management of Threshfield Quarry was properly delivered. Under the auspices of the Threshfield Quarry Development Trust, footpaths, viewing platforms and signage were installed to help visitors enjoy the former quarry site.

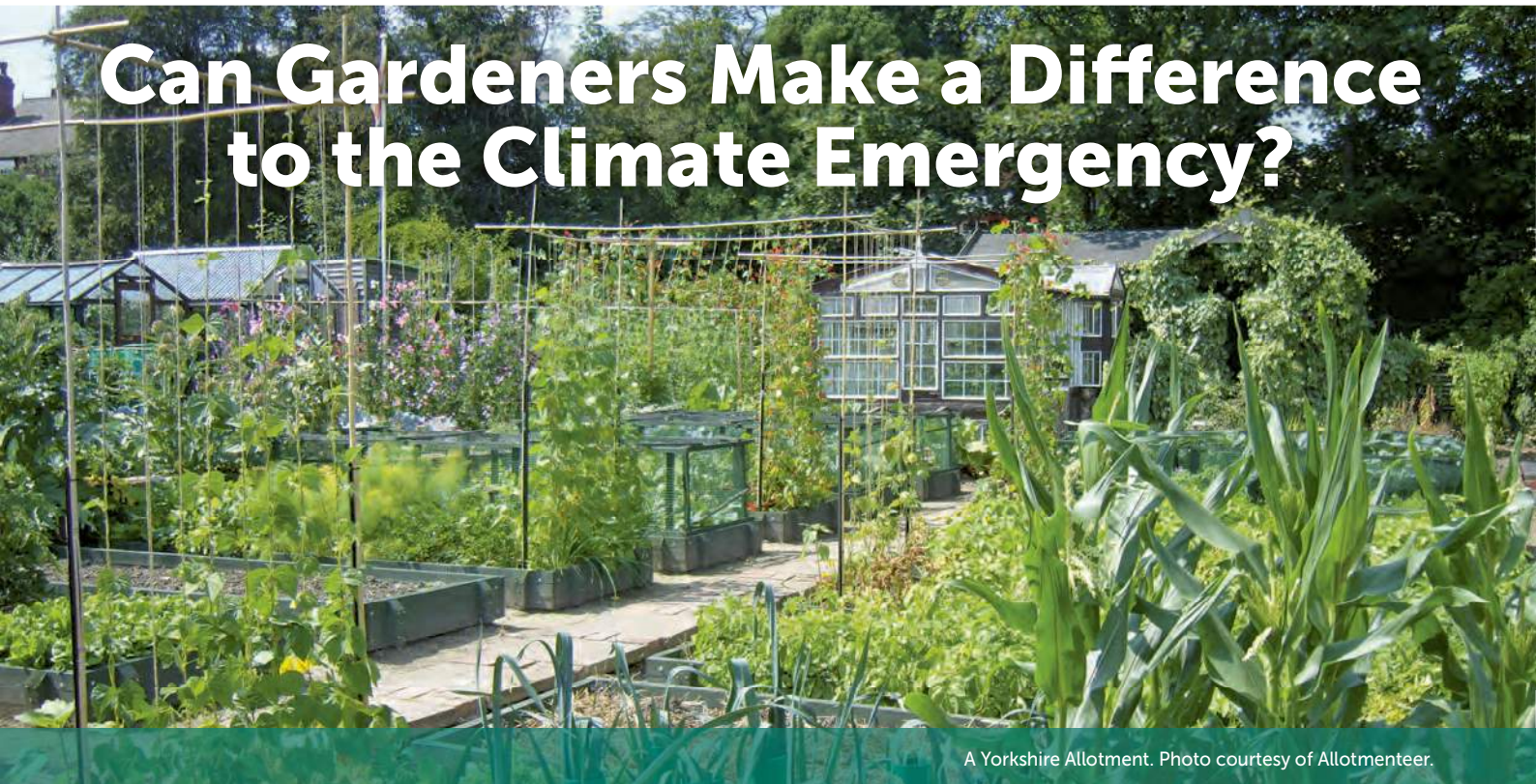
After concerns about visitors to the quarry in 2020, locked gates and 'Private Land: No public access' signs were installed at the main entrance on Skirethorns Lane. We hope that access for walkers will be restored to this spectacular site in the near future.

www.threshfieldquarry.org.uk

www.annrutherford.co.uk

App: Search for Threshfield Quarry Heritage on your smart phone

Can Gardeners Make a Difference to the Climate Emergency?



A Yorkshire Allotment. Photo courtesy of Allotmenteer.

We can all do our bit to help tackle climate change and biodiversity loss. Friends of the Dales are campaigning for the adoption of nature-friendly cutting regimes that could transform our roadside verges into wildlife corridors and some of our trustees described their efforts to create wildflower habitats in the summer 2021 issue of the *Review*. Long-standing volunteer Tony Smith shows how we can change our gardening practices to create havens for nature that can also withstand extreme weather events.

In September 2021 I attended the Royal Horticultural Society Chelsea Flower Show as a volunteer on the RHS COP26 Garden, which was inspired by the recent COP26 UN conference on climate change in Glasgow in November 2021.

The garden was designed by Marie-Louise Agius for the RHS and demonstrates how our gardens and public green spaces can play an important part in dealing with climate change. The design of the show garden was divided into four areas and gave practical ideas about how to modify a garden to adapt to climate change, with the predicted warmer, drier summers but more stormy rainfall.

The design was based on a cycle, the first area representing a garden in **decline**, showing impermeable paving and lawn monoculture leading to flash flooding, degradation of habitats and a loss of wildlife and biodiversity.

The next area was an **adaptation** zone, which illustrated some of the plants that could be used for a garden of the future – plants adapted to warmer and drier conditions and using better drainage to deal with heavier rainfall.

In the **mitigation** area landscaping and planting choices demonstrated how we can improve the habitat and help combat climate change – it contrasted markedly with the area in decline. A wildflower-rich meadow and wildlife pond created biodiversity and better drainage management using swales (shallow, broad channels with vegetation to collect rainwater) provided diverse habitats for wildlife. The presence

of a compost bin indicated how we can improve our soil by making our own compost and avoiding the use of peat as a soil conditioner, thereby protecting our peatlands.

The final zone, **balance**, envisioned a garden designed for a warmer climate with a mixture of plants to provide a more biodiverse habitat for the benefit of wildlife and pollinating insects. It still had a lawn but managed to provide an area left wilder and more uncut for longer periods and vegetables and fruit were grown alongside flowers and ornamental plants. And planting a tree, however small it is – even in a pot, will be beneficial. This vision is, in reality, a modern version of the cottage garden using a diverse range of plants as well as recycled materials where appropriate.

My task, as a volunteer, was to explain the design to the general public and to encourage them to implement some of the practical ideas into their own gardens, to help reduce our impact on the environment and improve biodiversity. There are around 30 million gardens in the UK and if some of these ideas were implemented, it could have a major impact on the climate emergency. **Together gardeners can make a difference.**

The RHS has developed a Planet-Friendly Gardening Campaign, which provides support to gardeners to reduce their negative environmental impacts and improve the positive ones. It has shown that there are three areas where gardeners can have the biggest impact on sustainability: home composting, buying peat-free and switching from mains to rainwater to water plants.

Tony Smith, Friends of the Dales volunteer



Belonging: Fashion & a Sense of Place

As a 'dedicated follower of fashion' I didn't require any encouragement to take time out to visit Halifax's Bankfield Museum, which is hosting – until March 2022 – a fashion exhibition to rival any that I've seen at the V&A. Alexander McQueen, Burberry, Red or Dead, Cunnington & Sanderson (and more), along with breathtaking artefacts from the museum's extensive fashion archive, reawaken the history, ingenuity and creativity that have long sat at the heart of Yorkshire's enduring textile industry.

Belonging: Fashion & A Sense of Place, a curatorial collaboration with Leeds Arts University, brings to the fore the visceral connections that still exist between landscape, community spirit, wit and fashion, with one of the standout stars of the exhibition being Edward Crutchley from Clapham in the Yorkshire Dales. Crutchley, one of the industry's most experienced and knowledgeable experts in materials (he is Director of Fabric for Dior Men), is also a fierce advocate for the development of sustainable and traceable 'farm to yarn' practices in manufacturing.

Featuring several pieces from Crutchley's stunning ready-to-wear collection, which he describes as a 'love letter to home', the exhibition celebrates the Yorkshire Dales through fabrics such as wool and cashmere, textures and imagery in a unique, modern way. With a gratifying absence of tweeds and the usual hunting and shooting iconography, Crutchley showcases a different side of the Dales, weaving together aspects of his personal history with cultural folklore – whilst using traditional techniques such as embroidery to create vibrant and thought-provoking clothes for a fashion-forward audience.

Standout pieces include an embroidered blouson and latex laser-cut top, which

Crutchley says offers 'that feeling of being in the countryside, being on a fell or in a wood and how that space makes you feel'. His Legends of the Dales embroidered boiler suit offers an innovative and fascinating insight into some of myths and legends of the Dales, beautifully reinterpreted through his skilful embroidery, with the majestic Pen-y-Ghent sphinx being my personal favourite. Crutchley's sense of humour also shines through in his homage to the 'gritty glamour you only find up North', as the archetypal 'rollers and headscarves' look, once pervasive in the 1950s and 1960s, is reimagined as the Floating Headscarf, a design he created in collaboration with celebrated milliner Stephen Jones.

Edward Crutchley grew up in Clapham near Settle, studying fashion at Central Saint Martins in London, where he learned about the importance of authentic research in the design process. He has previously worked for Pringle, Kanye West and Louis Vuitton. Now working at Christian Dior, Edward Crutchley also designs for his own label.

The exhibition and museum are free to visit; the exhibition runs to 5 March, 2022.

More information at www.calderdale.gov.uk/museums and www.edwardcrutchley.com

Victoria Benn,
Membership and events officer



Hopes for New Beginnings in the Dales

Dr Alexander C Lees, Senior lecturer in conservation biology, Manchester Metropolitan University

“One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds. Much of the damage inflicted on land is quite invisible to laymen.”

Aldo Leopold



Derelict barn in Widdale. Photo courtesy of Alex Lees

Aldo Leopold's quote from his *A Sand County Almanac* is rarely far from the back of my mind when ruminating on the land uses and land covers of Britain's beleaguered national park system.

My relationship with the Yorkshire Dales has been considerably more fleeting than that with other national parks (I now live in the Peak District) but started over three decades ago when I tried and failed to see a wandering golden eagle frequenting Nidderdale. Such a sighting would now probably attract national news coverage, but at the time wandering juvenile eagles were recorded annually in the Dales. One such ringed bird came to grief upon pylons at Grassington in November 1986 and proved to be one of the offspring of the famous Haweswater pair: the last English eagles, which stopped darkening skies in the Lake District five years ago and had failed to breed since 2004. As a result, eagles in the Dales are now a vanishing memory; but they have a deeper history too – remembered in place names like Yarncliffe or Arncliffe, derived from Old English for eagle.*

My subsequent Dales visits have been infrequent – most recently (prior to the invitation to write this piece) – to a wedding in the north of the park, followed by a morning in Arkengarthdale spent watching black grouse. (I first saw this species in the Peak District in the early

1990s – but it is now locally extinct there.) The fate of these two birds exemplifies a trend across the uplands, with some of our most charismatic species slowly fading from the landscape and eventually from memory. Twite are now poised to follow corncrake to local extinction and nature's orchestra will lose another unique note.



Black Grouse. Photo courtesy of Alex Lees



Malham Tarn. Photo courtesy of Michael Spencer

Magnificent Desolation

Vegetation was conspicuous by its absence when Professor Brian Cox visited the Yorkshire Dales during production of the recent BBC Two series *Universe*.

After comparing a wintry High Force waterfall in Teesdale to the event horizon of a black hole, the presenter moved into the national park, where sequences shot at Malham Cove and Gordale Scar evoked the bleak beauty of a moonscape.

Scenes filmed at Brimham Rocks in Nidderdale, Fountains Abbey and the North Yorkshire coast also focused on stark and rugged terrain to illustrate the grandeur of the cosmos.

Bleak Outlook

On being asked to contribute to this magazine I decided I needed to reacquaint myself with the Dales, so on a foggy November day I travelled a transect across the park to try to give myself an ecological overview of the state of nature there. First off, the countryside around Malham Tarn, which bore more than a passing resemblance to the White Peak: no accident given the underlying geology.

Although the region may retain some traditional hay meadows and precious species-rich calcareous grassland, improved pastures seemed the norm. The absence of any vegetative complexity beyond the odd shelter belt was stark: hard edges, no scrub, no visible signs of regeneration. Trees were not a feature of the wider landscape – they largely appeared at roadsides, on cliff faces, in gardens or railway cuttings. The potential guerrilla-rewilding culprits – itinerant flocks of berry-guzzling and seed-dispersing redwings and fieldfares – were, however, very much in evidence.

* *Germanic Old English Erne (arn, earn, yarn, yearn)*
Ekwall 1960, Kitson 1997, 1998)

** See www.friendsofthedales.org.uk/policies

A Fresh Start

Hope for a more variegated landscape appeared further north: a differentiated hillside visible from afar proved to be Brae Pasture, part of Ingleborough SSSI, which itself now forms part of the Rewilding Britain network and a graphic demonstration of what a rethink of grazing pressure can deliver for biodiversity.

My journey ended in Widdale – supposedly 'wooded valley' in Old Norse but largely dominated by the recurring ecological nightmare of purple moor grass barrens, which abruptly met dark plantations (albeit a last redoubt of our native squirrel), a theme of so much of upland Britain. Derelict barns and eroding hillsides in the same region seemed to speak of socioecological failure too, a landscape no longer delivering for people or wildlife. Despair turned to hope on my return as I discovered that the Woodland Trust has acquired land there at Snaizeholme and after reading the forestry and woodland and farming policies of Friends of the Dales, which aim to reverse biodiversity loss through socially just ecosystem restoration**. There is ample room for hope, but we can't dawdle.

Read more about the Woodland Trust's plans to increase biodiversity at Snaizeholme on page 9

Growing Up in Desperate Times

Freya Baggaley, 23, is a volunteer on the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's Up Skill, Down Dales programme, which helps young people to develop the skills needed for careers in environment or outdoor learning.

When I was growing up, places of natural beauty were always seen as tainted by the destruction we have caused -- where humans are enemy number one to nature. My most vivid memory of this was my school's performance of Debbie Campbell's *The Emerald Crown*. One particular song still haunts me -- *Twentieth-Century Highwaymen*. There I stood, 10 years old, dressed like a tree, singing *He'll rob from the forest and steal from the trees; he gets what he wants and he wants what he sees*. By the end, I was overwhelmed by the bleak reality of how people treat our world, and given no solution to the problems that have been dumped on us.

I escaped this doom and gloom outside. Places of natural beauty have always been a refuge to me, even when hiding in a tent during a biblical downpour. Moving up to the Dales from Milton Keynes was a dream come true -- trading the concrete cows for actual cows. The time when I thought I was a city person is now laughable. I cycle along the Wharfe in the hope of spotting an otter. I no longer run around in a frenzy shutting windows when farmers are muck spreading. I truly miss the Dales when I leave: from the rolling hills outlined by dry-stone walls to the purple hue of the heather on the moors -- even the temperamental weather. You can't find a place like this anywhere else: that is what makes it beautiful. Its very nature is unique and deserves to be protected.

This is when I panic. Our history with nature is not good. I wonder if the Dales can truly depart from the trend of seeking profit to the point of extinction. How long can the Dales I love survive in that kind of world?

Every generation has faced a struggle: mine is knowing only a dying planet. Pessimistic? Yes. Dramatic? Perhaps. I, like others, blame my school for this overwhelming cynicism. We weren't asked to draw the planet bursting with life but a dying one. My drawing of this was a grey-scale earth, choking on smoke, which stayed on my teacher's display board for six years. It was right under her sign that said 'Fail to prepare, prepare to fail'. I know the sign had more to do with homework, but it always seemed oddly fitting to me.

When I watch the news, and read about the non-binding climate agreements that give countries decades to solve time-critical issues, the image of that sign surrounded by drawings of a dying earth pops into my head.

Yet when I feel that weight bearing down, I open the front door. I am welcomed by what I can simply call bliss: the *Highwaymen* finally drowned out. That is not to say I feel the weight disappear, but it lifts in the face of what we are trying so desperately to protect. I am surrounded by a beautiful countryside and have come to know a community of people fighting to preserve it. For me, that is enough to keep trying.

Freya Baggaley



Inspiring Change

Long-standing business member Chrysalis Arts has produced a guide for creative practitioners wanting to adopt more environmentally-friendly working practices or address related issues through their work.

The Gargrave-based development agency reaches out to audiences in York, North Yorkshire and other rural areas. The *Greening Arts Practice* guide is among a wide range of resources supporting skills development with a focus on addressing the climate crisis and sustainability.

It features 11 case studies including Fabric Of Place, which saw four artists in residence working with Swaledale communities. The programme attracted 324 participants including 138 young people and culminated in a touring exhibition at the Dales Countryside Museum, Keld Resource Centre and Catterick Library. The themes explored included lichens, dark skies, folklore and historical pottery.

It is ironic that parts of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale were overwhelmed by devastating floods in 2019 -- a decade after an extreme weather event caused two rivers to burst their banks in the Cumbrian town of Cockermouth. In another case study artist David Haley describes an initiative to help its communities become more resilient based on the realisation that this would not be an isolated incident. Just 30 years ago, when I was living in Cockermouth, the possibility of flooding would not have featured highly on a list of many residents' social and environmental concerns.

You can download a copy of *Greening Arts Practice* at www.chrysalisarts.com/resources

Lynn Leadbeater, Life member

Find out more about how the work of Dales artists reflects environmental concerns on pages 12-13.



Talks and Walks in Spring 2022

Online Talk – Climate Breakdown – What Does it Mean for the Yorkshire Dales?

Wednesday, 19 January 2022

4:30pm

In the face of inevitable change due to the breakdown of our climatic system, what do we want the Dales to be like by 2050? In this talk, Richard Boothman, an environmental associate lecturer with The Open University and founder of Ideostone Limited, an online environmental learning provider, will explore climate breakdown and its associated environmental changes. He will also be asking what those of us who care about the physical and social landscape of the Dales want them to look like and what we can do to achieve this objective – with the underlying proviso that staying the same is not an option.

To book your place on this Zoom talk, email victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk



River Wharfe in Flood.
Photo courtesy of Victoria Benn

Booking for our events is easy. Either email our Membership & Events Officer, Victoria Benn, at victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk or add your booking request to our **contact form** on the home page of our website, www.friendsofthedales.org.uk.

The best way of keeping abreast of our latest events information is via our **e-news**, which you can sign up for at www.friendsofthedales.org.uk. This is a monthly newsletter delivered direct to your inbox, which brings you all our most up-to-date news and stories.

Finally, our **social media** pages on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are another great way of joining in the chat and finding out what's going on.

Online Talk – Working with Crayfish in the Yorkshire Dales

Wednesday, 16 February 2022

4:30pm

This talk, presented by Paul Bradley, Director of PBA Applied Ecology, and Dr Dan Chadwick, will be an insight into the challenges of conserving our native crayfish in the Yorkshire Dales. Based in Settle, PBA is uniquely involved in delivering management of crayfish across the Dales, drawing on experiences from academia and industry.

To book your place on this Zoom talk, email victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk



White-clawed crayfish.
Photo courtesy of PBA Applied Ecology

Online Talk – Biodiverse Verges

Wednesday, 16 March 2022

4.30pm

The Yorkshire Dales has hundreds of miles of roadside verges. In spring and summer they form an integral part of the verdant Dales landscape. These verges have a rich diversity of different plants growing in them, supporting lots of different insects, which in turn support all manners of other wildlife. Dr Anne Readshaw, leader of the Friends of the Dales campaign to protect and enhance roadside verges for biodiversity, will give an update on its progress and explain how local authorities and communities can help to make road verges an important, safe and healthy sanctuary for plant and insect species.

To book your place on this Zoom talk, email victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk



Wildflower verge near Stackhouse, Ribblesdale.
Photo courtesy of Mark Corner

Walk – Exploring Crummack Dale

Saturday, 19 March 2022

10:15am – 4:00pm

As a follow-up to Ken Humphris's popular talk entitled Exploring Crummack Dale, you now have the opportunity to do just that with Ken as your guide. Commencing in Austwick, you will be taken on a clockwise walk around Crummack Dale, taking in its geology, natural beauty and some of its social and cultural history. This 4 – 4.5 hour walk is mainly easy underfoot. Packed lunch essential. The walk loosely fits with buses from Skipton – see dalesbus.org.uk for up-to-date timetables.

To book your place on this Zoom talk, email victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk



Crummack Dale. Photo courtesy of Ken Humphris

A talk hosted by our friends at the North York Moors Association (www.nyma.org.uk/walks-events)

Online Talk – The Responsible Retrofit of Traditional Buildings: Risks and Opportunities

Tuesday, 25 January 2022

7:00pm

This talk will be led by Nigel Griffiths, who has 25 years' experience of working in the sustainability and energy efficiency sector. Currently an adviser for private clients on retrofit strategies, Nigel is also the author of several books including the *Haynes Eco House Manual*.

To book, email: secretary@nyma.org.uk



Grade II listed Prospect Gallery, Arncliffe.
Photo courtesy of Native Chartered Architects

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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



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