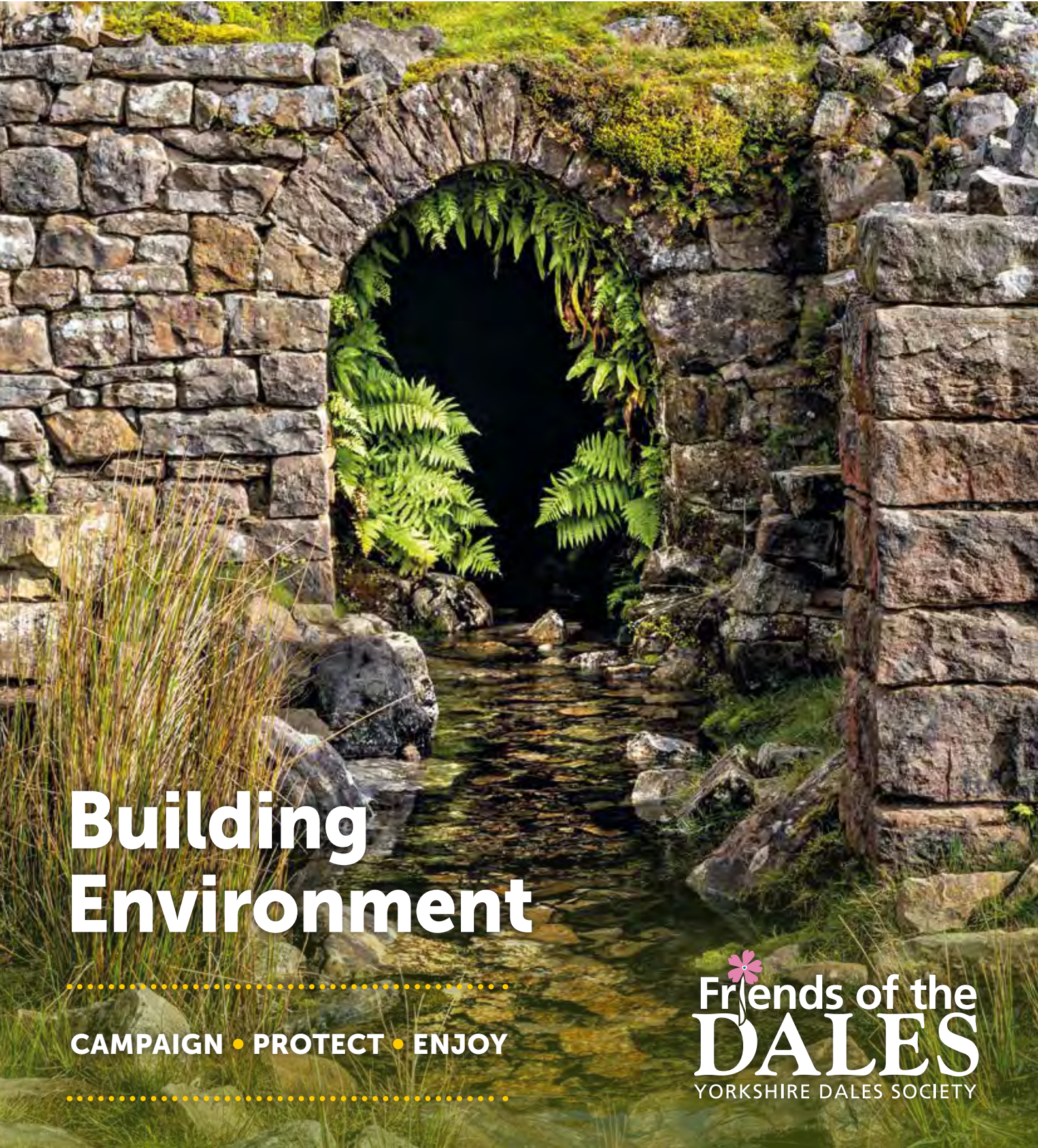


Spring 2023 : Issue 162

# Yorkshire **DALES** review



## Building Environment

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YORKSHIRE DALES SOCIETY



Front Cover: Entrance adit to Bunton Level lead mine, Gunnerside Gill, Swaledale. Photo courtesy of Joan Martin, www.photonorth.co.uk

Views expressed in the *Yorkshire Dales Review* are not necessarily those of Friends of the Dales.

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The Power of Community Action



Building Thriving Communities

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Helen Fielding is Director of Development and Investment for Broadacres Housing Association and has a 30-year housing career encompassing central and local government, and with housing associations. She lives in Northallerton with her husband and labrador Monty, who love walks in the Yorkshire Dales. .... 16-17

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Seth Benn is currently studying for a BA in Architecture at Manchester School of Architecture. Having grown up in the Yorkshire Dales, his favourite things to do include running or cycling through its landscape. .... 18

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# Partnership

## The Key to Dales National Park Success

**Perhaps the most important part of the story of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is how what were initially two somewhat authoritarian planning committees based in distant towns, largely preoccupied by development control and somewhat remote and academic ‘policy’ issues, gradually transformed into a single, much more community-involved management body for one of Britain’s finest landscapes.**

The key element in this radical change of direction lay in that small but powerful word partnership. From around the mid-1990s onwards, the park authority – which finally broke away from its parent, North Yorkshire County Council, only in 1997 – has achieved a new sense of direction and purpose through partnerships. These have been with a wide range of other statutory bodies and agencies such as Natural England and English Heritage, but also with the voluntary sector including the National Trust, Country Land and Business Association, CPRE, the Campaign for National Parks, Wildlife Trusts and yes, the Yorkshire Dales Society, now known as Friends of the Dales.

It is worth remembering that the Yorkshire Dales Society ran the first pioneering seminar on climate change in the Dales in Grassington in October 2011, with speakers from the national park authority. A decade earlier, it set up the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Alliance to encourage the national park authority to adopt sustainable management strategies for vehicular traffic on the ancient green lanes of the Dales, now a model for all other UK national parks.

### Winning Hearts and Minds

But, above all, the national park authority has brought individual landowners and farmers onside, working with them on such major schemes as the Limestone Country Project, Wild Ingleborough and, more recently, the inspirational Yorkshire Peat Partnership, conserving and restoring huge areas of carbon-capturing eroded peat bogs in the Dales.

The fledgling authority overcame much local hostility and ignorance of planning regulations to win admiration for pioneering work on sustainability, from protection and restoration of barns, walls and hay meadows in Swaledale, to upland management and conservation schemes with local farmers, and extensive native tree planting. In 1997 the authority created the hugely supportive Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, a fundraising charity that has drawn in millions of pounds for Dales conservation and social inclusion projects. Over a million native trees were planted in its first few years.

New and improved public access has also been one of the authority’s major achievements, with one of the best-managed footpath and bridleway networks in any UK national park. Over 60% of the national park is now designated open country as defined by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The pioneering Dales Rail scheme of 1975, in partnership with British Rail and West Yorkshire Passenger Transport

Executive, led to the Yorkshire Dales becoming the first national park in the UK to charter special trains to bring visitors from a city centre into a national park in a sustainable way. There is little doubt that Dales Rail was the crucial factor in saving the Settle-Carlisle line, and DalesBus, although underfunded, still provides one of the best, fully integrated Swiss-style public transport networks in any UK national park. The Three Peaks Project has managed to contain, if not cure, the problems on Britain’s most popular charity challenge walk.

### Designing A New Future

But what about the built environment?

There can be little argument that by not suffering what would have been massive speculative developments for retirement, second and holiday homes because of tough development control policies, the villages and small towns within the national park have retained their character. New development that has occurred, including much-needed social housing for local needs, has been sympathetic, following design guides emphasising vernacular features and traditional styles.

But is this enough? Provision of additional social housing to meet urgent local need is outside the legal responsibilities of the national park authority. But could it, as a planning authority, pioneer new kinds of sustainable architectural design in our larger towns and villages? Not just replicating 19th-century-style expensive and perhaps thermally inefficient stone buildings but taking on board radical new ideas of much lower-cost, prefabricated wooden structures – the concept of the Passive House (see page 19), now realised in many German towns, with zero- or low-energy requirements for construction and heating, and durable for centuries. Work is needed with organisations such as community land trusts to acquire suitable sites that blend into the landscape, with well-designed houses and apartments that could be far less visually obtrusive than modern (permitted) agricultural buildings.

Another challenge and partnership opportunity perhaps for the national park authority for the mid-21st century?

Colin Speakman, Vice President

*The history of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is covered in more detail in Nigel Watson’s book **Guardian of the Dales**, which is reviewed on page 22*



Sedber Lane. Photo courtesy of Tim Green





## Colour Without Chemicals

A Yorkshire firm is turning the clock back by manufacturing traditional paints made without plastics.

Brouns & Co mixes natural pigments with oil made from pressed flax seed. The paint also contains no or minimal volatile organic compounds but does not need the addition of harmful chemicals that are often used to make such water-based alternatives effective.

The company says that this approach is not just environmentally friendly but can limit water damage and help to create a healthier living environment that is free from mould and fungi. The manufacturing process uses little energy and the raw flax is grown in West Yorkshire.

Heritage projects using Brouns & Co linseed oil paint include Chatsworth House in Derbyshire and Brodsworth Hall near Doncaster.

For more information visit <https://linseedpaint.com>

## In Numbers

In November North Yorkshire County Council agreed to double council tax on second homes within two years to prevent local people being priced out of the housing market.

The new premium could generate more than £14 million in revenue annually, which can be spent on key priorities including providing more residential accommodation in areas most affected by the affordability crisis.

The average cost of a property in the Dales is nearly £400,000, while the weekly wage in North Yorkshire is just over £530.

According to the National Housing Federation, there are 8,199 second homes in North Yorkshire.

## Cultivating Carbon and Cows – Film out Now

As featured in *Yorkshire Dales Review* winter 2023, Anthony Bradley, former trustee and member of our policy & planning committee, stars in a short documentary film by 25-year-old Ruth Garrett, a New Perspectives bursary winner.

Ruth's film, *Cultivating Carbon and Cows*, highlights the voice and experience of a Dales farmer who is at the forefront of changing the way he farms his land to mitigate climate breakdown. Ruth worked closely with Anthony over the spring of 2022 and Campaign for National Parks released her film just after the winter *Review* went to press.

You can view this warm and engaging film on Ruth's YouTube channel @kittiwakeproductions9164 or via the CNP YouTube channel.

Ruth has set up her own freelance business, Kittiwake Productions. You can contact her via [info.kittiwakeproductions@gmail.com](mailto:info.kittiwakeproductions@gmail.com)

## Plastic Tree Guards Hit the Airwaves

It is encouraging to hear the campaign against plastic tree guards gathering momentum, with a character in Radio 4's *The Archers* now championing the cause.

## Don't Leave Mowing Too Late

The last 80-90 years have seen the acceleration of a biodiversity emergency in the UK as more intensive farming has eroded our once prevalent species-rich hay meadows, which are more resistant to climate change and store more carbon than non-biodiverse grasslands.



The good news is that we can protect and enhance those former strips and remnants of traditional grassland that have survived as roadside verges.

The principles of nature-positive verge management are simple:

- Cut verges or other village grassland no later than April and clear cuttings away to prevent the build-up of thatch, which increases soil nitrogen levels and can encourage docks, nettles and thistles to take hold.
- Do not cut the grass between May and August (inclusive) to allow plants to flower and set seed.
- If cutting can't be avoided, consider mowing paths or narrow edge strips but leave some areas uncut as a wildlife refuge. This can also help to address concerns about untidiness and safety.
- Remove invasive weeds (nettles, thistles, docks) by chopping down/uprooting, not spraying.
- Do a second cut in September – clearing all cuttings away.

Visit [www.friendsofthedales.org.uk/campaigns/verges](http://www.friendsofthedales.org.uk/campaigns/verges) to access resources including a village biodiversity guide, monthly planner, video by our Living Verges campaign champion, Dr Anne Readshaw, and a sign you can print off to let your neighbours know that you are managing verges for nature.

Let us know if we inspire a change of approach – and please send photos of any botanically rich verges and grassland you encourage.

For all questions, comments and feedback email [victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk](mailto:victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk)



## #PeatFreeApril - Leave Peat Where it Belongs

Ninety-four per cent of UK peatlands are in a decimated state, an environmental catastrophe resulting from more than 70 years of inappropriate farming policy and ongoing commercial extraction for amateur and professional horticulture.

The encouraging news is that peat for the amateur gardening sector will be banned in England from 2024, with several retailers already selling quality, peat-free composts. Yet, concerningly, there is no date when peat use in the professional sector will be banned. The Royal Horticultural Society has pledged that all its gardens, show displays and plant sales will be peat-free by 2025 (its bagged compost already is), but your consumer pressure is needed to encourage other show gardens and garden centres to follow suit.

Tips for going peat-free this April include:

- Visit [www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-go-peat-free](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-go-peat-free) for a list of which retailers are – and aren't – peat-free.
- Check labels on potted plants, pellets, plugs and composts and buy only those that state they are peat-free. 'Environmentally friendly' does not mean peat-free.
- If retailers don't stock what you want in a peat-free option, ask for it and explain why.
- Experiment with ways of improving your soils naturally and organically. [www.gardenorganic.org.uk](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk) and [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk) have guidance for creating healthy soils and developing your own compost, one of the most environmentally friendly ways to go peat-free.
- Share the #PeatFreeApril campaign message with friends and family.

Visit [www.friendsofthedales.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthedales.org.uk) for further information about our peatlands policy and peatlands campaign.

**Yorkshire Peat Partnership estimates there are around 94,760 hectares of blanket bog in Yorkshire and that around 80% of Yorkshire's blanket bog has been damaged in some way.**



Ian Harrison, one of our Eyes on the Bog volunteers, monitoring the effectiveness of Yorkshire Peat Partnership's restoration activities at Stags Fell. Photo courtesy of Beth Thomas.

## Giving Communities a Voice

A charity that seeks to preserve the unique architectural heritage of the western Dales is encouraging more people to get involved.

North Craven Heritage Trust works to safeguard the beauty and character of the area and encourage high standards of town planning. Its activities also stimulate public interest in the built environment.

'One of the most far-flung outposts of our great county is in danger of being sidelined if a body such as North Craven Heritage Trust does not take a lead,' say President Anne Read and Chair Pamela Jordan. 'We are not only concerned about individual buildings and landscapes, but about the wider context in which they sit. Every community is different in its needs and priorities and these differences must be taken into account by local people who know and understand them.'

'North Craven Heritage Trust has always had a reputation for vigilance and this is ever more important as we move under the jurisdiction of a new authority, which covers an enormous area of Yorkshire. We shall continue to monitor planning applications with great care and object to those that do not meet the standards set out in the National Planning Policy Framework or in authorities' own local plans, such as Craven District Council's controversial application to redevelop a toilet block in Settle, which was refused permission recently.'

'We have members living all over the country with local connections who enjoy the benefit of our highly respected annual journal. To help carry on our work, please consider joining at [www.northcravenheritage.org.uk](http://www.northcravenheritage.org.uk).'

Friends of the Dales has a small volunteer team, who review the weekly planning list published by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, focussing on applications likely to have a major and significant impact. You can read our latest comments at [www.friendsofthedales.org.uk/planning](http://www.friendsofthedales.org.uk/planning)

## Reimagining the Future

The Black Mountains College in the Brecon Beacons National Park is this year offering a radical new degree course designed to prepare students for a career in times of climate breakdown, and build a generation with the innovative skills and ideas required to tackle the crisis.

The first students for its BA in Sustainable Futures: Arts, Ecology and Systems Change will arrive at the rural campus in September to take the three-year, cross-disciplinary course.

## Letter to the Editor

### Call to action

Congratulations – the winter *Yorkshire Dales Review* was comprehensive and compelling. It does not just describe; it encourages action. It was the best I have read in 10 years.

*John D Anderson*





# Keeping it in the Families

Long-time *Review* reader Helen Gundry tells how shared ownership of a Langthwaite cottage has enriched the lives of generations of Dales lovers.



The Bungalow, front view.



The Bungalow, back view.

In the late 1950s Peter Anison used to drop into the Workcamps office at Friends House on Euston Road for a cup of tea. He studied textiles at Nottingham University and also had contacts in Leeds University, including potholing friends, who loved to explore the former lead mines and limestone caves in the Arkengarthdale and Swaledale areas of the Yorkshire Dales.

They got tired of camping on cold, windy fields and clubbed together to buy a 300-year-old cottage in Langthwaite, Arkengarthdale. It was known by locals as 'The Bungalow' because that is what it looked like from the roadside. However, it had been cleverly built on the steep bank of Arkle Beck so another level of rooms nestled below, with an old kitchen range to keep everyone warm and fed. Two outside stone terraces held The Bungalow up at the back, dropping down to Arkle Beck. Whoever built it understood the rages of nature. When The Red Lion Inn at Langthwaite, just across the bridge, achieved television and internet fame after being badly flooded in 2021, The Bungalow lost only its back garden gate and a few garden plants.

Young people came from across the North, squeezing into cars on Friday nights after work, to join in the excitement of exploring the caves and mines of the Yorkshire Dales. They found The Bungalow needed roof repairs and other work to save it from the hard Dales winters. Peter decided a few people needed to be persuaded to put some money in, and to start a trust to look after the building. He turned to Quakers, attenders and other friends for help. The Bungalow Trust Deed was written and approved by solicitors.

## Labour of Love

The cavers and some new trust members now had young families. We began to meet annually with a shared lunch, to agree how The Bungalow would be looked after in the coming year. These meetings have been held every year for 57 years now, although we had to have one on Zoom in recent times.

Internal walls and bunk beds for the kids were built. The old range leaked and was replaced by a fireplace for logs and coal. The huge, cold stone flags of the kitchen



floor were turned into terrace steps outside. Years before, cattle and sheep stayed in 'The Dungeon' to survive harsh weather, their body warmth helping to heat humans above. Around 1975, this gained windows and was converted into a lovely living room.

Some trust members liked to drink cocktails in the garden and others liked to climb Calva Hill before breakfast. For 60 years, eight families took turns to visit. There was the Langthwaite village shop and local milk production, run for years by John and Ella Stubbs. Trust members would catch up on local gossip in the shop, The Red Lion Inn and The Charles Bathurst Inn. Children loved to play near the 'water splash' (ford), which was made internationally famous by the television version of *All Creatures Great and Small*. We never tired of feeding lambs and calves or watching the milking.

Peter's confidence and expertise in textiles led him and his wife Ruth on to take over Outhwaites Ropemakers in Hawes, which they ran as successful local employers, suppliers and as a tourist attraction, for several decades.

## The Next Chapter

Through the years various families sold on their shares, always to people they knew well, whom they knew would love The Bungalow and continue the spirit of shared ownership.

Now, 57 years on from the start of the trust, the old stone stairs echo with many, many memories of members and friends from all walks of life, who have enjoyed The Bungalow once, a few times or often during their lives. Coal won't be sold for open fires after April 2023, and so a multifuel stove is being considered. Internal insulation and double glazing have been steadily added and the old electric storage heaters need upgrading.

It doesn't take much persuading for people to fall in love, for a lifetime, with The Bungalow.

If you are interested in finding out more about this shared ownership house, and how to be part of its future, please contact Helen Gundry on [helenspost@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:helenspost@hotmail.co.uk)

Helen Gundry



**This modern house is in a conservation area in Kirkby Lonsdale, just outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park, and was featured on Channel 4's *Grand Designs*.**

The property is on Mill Brow, a steep, narrow road leading to the River Lune. It was built as a permanent family home on the site of the 'old vegetable garden' belonging to a grand house higher up the hill. Parts of the structure are stone-faced and zinc-clad. The surrounding buildings are mainly 18th and 19th century and there is a background of trees.

Photos courtesy of Ken Humphris



# Old Meets New

# Death by a Thousand Cuts?

**Trustee Nancy Stedman highlights the risks posed to Dales landscapes by increased numbers of small recreational developments and barn conversions.**

A small group of us keeps an eye on planning applications, and there are a couple of trends that we have identified recently that give us cause for concern. One is the proliferation of applications for relatively low-cost holiday accommodation, comprising glamping pods, 'timber tents' or supposedly 'traditional' shepherds' huts. Often there are just three or four such constructions, but sometimes many more, and including additional features like hardstanding, fencing and decking.

On the one hand, these sites provide basic and relatively low-cost accommodation, thus enabling a wide range of people to visit and enjoy the Dales countryside. On the other hand, they can be quite visually intrusive and certainly do not contribute in any way to the distinctive vernacular of the Dales.

## National Park or Play Park?

More worryingly, sometimes the applicant mistakenly thinks that the development will be acceptable if hidden from view within a small woodland – after all, the trees have been there for years, so surely they will continue to function as a convenient screen? But even small constructions require some sort of foundation to rest upon, along with all the associated trenches for services, and tracks for access on foot and by car. That's just the construction period – the woodland is then going to have to endure the additional pressures of lots of feet, dogs, ball games and so on.

A distinctive feature of the Dales is its small broad-leaved woodlands that punctuate the patterns of walls and barns. These woodlands are often neglected, sometimes grazed, and thus lack a good understorey, which would include lots of species like bluebell and wood anemone, along with naturally regenerating tree species, ready to take over as the mature trees age and die. Whilst we might think they have been there 'for ever' and will continue to be there 'for ever', many of them are in desperate need of management to maintain their wildlife interest, or even to survive in the long term. Using them as campsites simply speeds up their decline and eventual loss.

Sometimes the sites are in open fields, highly visible, or are located on the edge of a conservation area, designated for its fine buildings of local stone that reveal the history of the settlement. New build, especially timber-clad sheds, wouldn't be permitted in such locations, so are pods and cabins acceptable? In some instances, a public footpath runs through or alongside the proposed camping facilities, going past the hot tubs that now seem to be an essential feature. Generally small-scale developments, it is difficult to object to them, but the cumulative impacts will be considerable – there will be a gradual change from a working, rural landscape to a landscape of recreation.

## Barn Conversions – Development by Stealth

The other issue that concerns us is the treatment of converted barns after permission has been granted. You will be aware that we consider the relaxation of the policy on barn conversions, driven by central government, has gone too far. The aim of the barn conservation policy, under which conversions are assessed, is to repurpose some

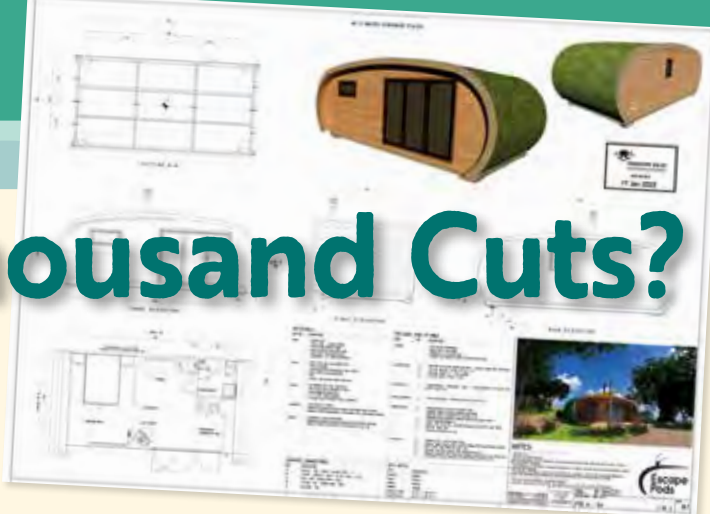


Image taken from the application for four luxury camping pods on an agricultural field (S/11/52) Land to the East of High Middleton Hall, Middleton, Carnforth. We objected to this application largely due to overdevelopment of remote countryside, noting in addition the unjustifiable use of plastic 'grass' as the roof treatment. At the time of going to press the application was undecided. All our planning comments can be viewed on our website and on the national park authority's Citizens' Portal (until decided).



of the many barns that are such distinctive features of the Dales, and to convert them whilst retaining their historical integrity and their contribution to the landscape. But by March 2022 211 permissions had been granted, for holiday lets or local occupancy, with 65 conversions completed. This surely exceeds both expectations and needs. Indeed, as we feared, many of these barns are being converted into bijou residences in prime countryside locations, priced well beyond the reach of local working people.

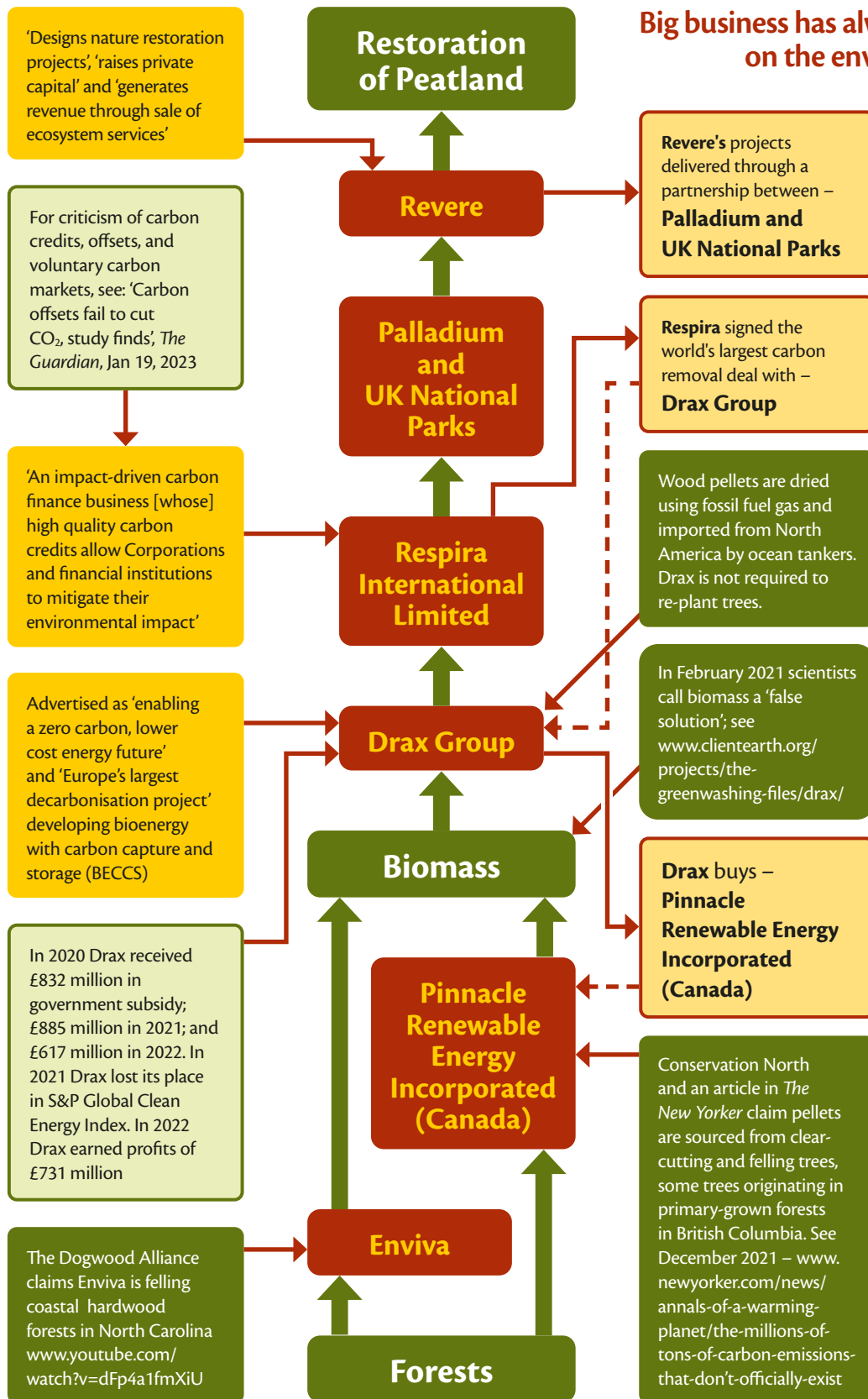
One recent barn conversion, located on a track just off a main road, was a modest and satisfactory proposal involving little external alteration. On receiving planning permission, the owner sold it on to a developer, who subsequently submitted a planning application to revise the original plans. This proposal included the construction of a substantial building to provide a double garage with storage above, along with a significant extension to the curtilage. We considered this to fly in the face of the conservation aims of the policy, so we objected, and were pleased to find that the planning officers agreed with us. Their report pointed out that, had these proposals been included in the original application, it would have been refused. Subsequent planning applications must not be allowed to undermine the conservation aims of the policy.

Some post-conversion changes are less easy to control. Because of their often-sensitive locations in open countryside, permitted development rights are usually removed, which means that the owner must apply for permission to add things like sheds, fencing, bin stores and stables. However, we have noticed a few such developments, and we can only continue to press the national park authority to enforce against these.

**Nancy Stedman, trustee and member of planning & policy committee**



# Something Nasty in the Woodshed?



**Big business has always been quick to climb on the environmental bandwagon.**

From fossil fuel giants to cosmetic manufacturers, companies with activities linked to climate breakdown and biodiversity loss have always been quick to spot the PR benefits of being seen to support 'green' initiatives.

But now carbon offsetting has taken this practice to a whole new level. Not only is government endorsing the buying and selling of 'credits' but lengthy supply chains and a complex hierarchy of middlemen and brokers have made it increasingly difficult to work out whether the funding has ethical sources. In effect, it's produced the environmental equivalent of money laundering.

Take Drax, for example. As chair Bruce McLeod's diagram shows, campaigners say that the Yorkshire power plant is receiving billions of pounds in government subsidies whilst being responsible for the felling of healthy trees on the other side of the world to produce wood pellets for burning as biomass.

Because an accounting quirk means that Drax can claim to be using a cleaner alternative to coal, it is able to sell carbon credits – and some of these could eventually be used to support environmental initiatives in the Dales such as peat restoration.

In the face of a climate and biodiversity crisis, it's tempting to embrace 'good news' with open arms but perhaps we should make it our business to look behind the spin. And, as the debate over Drax's true environmental impact reveals, we should certainly be calling for greater transparency about how projects aimed at tackling climate breakdown and habitat and species loss really are funded.

This infographic is not Dales-specific.



# No Two Days the Same



Trustee Ken Humphris has been volunteering for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority for more than 20 years yet still finds the activities varied and rewarding.

Dales volunteers repairing a stone step stile above Crosby Garrett, looking out over the north Pennines.

Photos courtesy of YDNPA

One of the first things that struck me on becoming a Dales Volunteer was how cheerful and friendly the others were.

Setting off on a damp morning with a wheelbarrow and shovel to spend a day moving tons of aggregate for a footpath doesn't sound particularly exciting. But it's surprising how upbeat people can be, and it's the people who make the difference.

There are over 300 Dales Volunteers scattered across the Yorkshire Dales National Park, most of whom were active in the past (Covid-impacted) year. Together they volunteered more than 5,000 days, roughly equal to an extra 20 full-time people.

Not everyone chooses to shovel aggregate, and that is the joy of volunteering. The opportunities are so amazing and diverse that we can all find something to enjoy.

When my wife Jill and I joined the team in 2002, like most volunteers at that time we were attached to a ranger group, in our case the one in Ribblesdale. This was home to a small group of **area rangers** (the main point of contact for local communities) and **access rangers** (responsible for the Public Rights of Way or PROW network).

Volunteers no longer have to be jacks of all trades but are encouraged to undertake specific duties if that is their preference, and this works well for younger working people, who have less time but plenty of enthusiasm.

## Opportunities for Everyone

In the early years we had lots of training – safe use of tools, first aid, navigation, walk leading, PROW surveying – and it was very effective. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 generated new activities when areas previously off limits were opened up to the public for the first time.

Every year volunteers survey 1,550 miles of public rights of way to identify defects such as blockages, missing or damaged signs, stiles or gates, or poor conditions underfoot. The defect survey sheets are then input to the national park authority's main database by a small number of volunteers working from home, and the output from this whole endeavour forms the basis of priorities for the following year (or straight away if the defect has a safety implication). We may even fix some of the problems we identify.

Working one to one with a ranger, or as a group of up to a dozen, we might be asked to put up a fallen wall, repair a damaged footpath, install a drainage channel, cut back overhanging vegetation, install a new gate or build a bridge. On these days it is good to see at first hand the positive relationships the rangers have with farmers or landowners where we are working.

PROW surveys are one of the ways volunteers gain intimate knowledge of an area, and in this way we have discovered untold beautiful and new (to us) parts of the Dales.





Dales volunteers installing a new footbridge on a path being created by agreement with the Lonsdale estate on Tebay Fell.

On another day we might be making a photographic survey of listed buildings or barns, to create a record or to identify listed buildings which may be at risk of deterioration, or reconnoitring a new walking route.

Cold, moonless winter nights could see us setting off by car to distant places to take dark sky readings in support of maintaining International Dark Sky Reserve status.

### The Human Touch

Since Covid we can be seen occasionally in car parks, carrying out 'meet and greet' surveys to understand the visitor experience better with a view to making improvements. These interactions are always illuminating and you meet some lovely people.

I mentioned the rangers, who form the backbone of the service. In our experience they are invariably knowledgeable, capable, friendly, patient and hard-working, and the reputation of the authority can be hugely impacted by the way they interact with local communities. Their commitment to the Dales is amazing and working with them is always a pleasure, even when you have to wheelbarrow tons of aggregate up a path.

When the Yorkshire Dales National Park was extended in 2016 there was a reshuffling of the ranger groups and we were transferred to the western team based in Orton, and are really enjoying getting to know the lovely area of the Westmorland Dales. So much to explore.



Photo courtesy of Stephen Garnett Photography

Volunteering includes practical tasks, wildlife monitoring, walling, leading walks, testing accessibility of routes and much more.

There are also huge opportunities to work with young people such as school groups, various disadvantaged adults and with Young Rangers, helping them to learn more about the outdoors, and hopefully come to appreciate the wonderful place that is the Yorkshire Dales.

On the other hand, you could be identifying and monitoring butterflies, flower species or fungi or showing visitors the delights of...

I'd better stop now.

**Ken Humphris, trustee**

To find out more about volunteering with YDNPA, go to [www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/park-authority/looking-after/volunteering](http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/park-authority/looking-after/volunteering)

In addition to **Ken and Jill Humphris'** 20 years' service each to the South West and West Ranger teams, **Malcolm Petyt**, a former chair of trustees and current volunteer member of our planning & policy team, was recently recognised for 10 years' service to the West Ranger team, and former trustee and treasurer **Rhona Thornton** for 20 years' service to the South Ranger team.

# The Power of Co

**A charity has breathed new life into a group of historic buildings in Keld. Trustee Helen Guy tells how volunteers have restored the properties to preserve the heritage and environment of upper Swaledale and benefit residents and visitors alike.**



## Key

1. Keld Countryside & Heritage Visitor Centre
2. Old School Living Heritage Centre
3. United Reformed Church and attached manse
4. Honesty café
5. Farm tea shop

Keld Resource Centre Ltd is a registered charity that was formed to take over the management of a group of listed buildings owned by the United Reformed Church (URC) including the Manse, Old Literary Institute and Old School. The URC operated a residential project from these buildings from the 1970s to the early 2000s for visiting church groups but after the foot and mouth outbreak visitor numbers began to decline and they needed major restoration and a new purpose.

So Keld Resource Centre (KRC) was created to take on the buildings on a long lease, with a vision and commitment to restoring them so they could be used in ways that were respectful to their original purposes, the local heritage and our charitable ethos.

The first objective was to create a reliable income stream, so in 2009 we completed a £120,000 restoration programme on the Manse so it could be operated as a holiday let. It is extremely popular and booked up for most of the year, providing funds for our local community projects and charity work.

In 2010 we created a wellbeing garden adjacent to the chapel graveyard. This was funded by donations and a grant from the Big Lottery Fund and provides a quiet place for reflection and relaxation with spectacular views down Kisdon Gorge.

## Bringing the Past to Life

In 2011 we began restoring the former stables and carriage room on the lower floor of the Old Literary Institute. This became the Keld Countryside and Heritage Visitor Centre, promoting the traditions and heritage of the upper dale through themed displays, leaflets and an annual events programme. 2016 saw a major restoration of the upper floor of the institute at a cost of £200,000 to create an events space. This venue has wonderful views and can be hired for exhibitions and private functions, but also provides a venue for our workshops, social events and educational days.

In 2018 KRC supported and funded a local group of volunteers, who created a community orchard on a former allotment behind the Manse that had not been used for some years. People were invited to sponsor a tree or fruit shrub; a local resident made all the rustic wooden seating and the orchard is cared for by a team of local residents. All the fruit is available for anyone to harvest and take.

The last building to undergo a restoration project was the Old School. It had been used for storage for a couple of decades and was in a very poor state internally. We managed to raise enough funds through grants and donations to finally start work on the building



View of the Manse, with the visitor centre in the foreground on the right



Mining tub and artefacts in the visitor centre



# Community Action

in 2021. As with our previous restoration work, we used local builders and craftsmen to complete the project. Initially the KRC board explored the option of the Old School providing more accommodation, but it was agreed that the building should continue to be a place of education, staying true to the original reason it was built. I had a vision for a little museum at the top of the dale, and once local people began to hear about this, donations began to flood in.

So we began to develop and curate a local heritage exhibition in the Old School. Then in October 2022 we were asked if we would be willing to accept most of the Swaledale Museum collection in Reeth. This was an incredibly generous offer as it had been founded in the 1960s by Erica and Donald Law. It has allowed us to create a wonderfully diverse and interesting exhibition and ensured that the collection can stay in Swaledale.

## Pulling Together

Our annual events programme has grown considerably since 2012, and we have a team of dedicated local volunteers who lead guided walks and provide public talks. We also invite local dales people to share their experiences with audiences, crafts people provide workshops and the Moorland Group kindly hosts a moorland bird safari for KRC. We also



The community orchard

provide guided walks for Swaledale Festival and I give talks on local history topics to many groups and organisations throughout the area with all donations going to KRC.

Keld may be a very small village at the top of a remote dale but it has a great community spirit, bringing together born-and-bred local people, many with family names going back centuries, and others who have relocated here. Our volunteers live in many different locations including Reeth, Gunnerside, Richmond, Teesside and London and range from 16 to 85 years in age.

When the farm tea shop closes in winter, a group of Keld residents opens and runs a self-service honesty café in the reading room of the village hall. There are homemade cakes,

a selection of drinks and snacks, a log burner and even dog towels and biscuits. So there is always a warm welcome and lots of reasons to travel up the dale to visit Keld.

Helen Guy, Keld Resource Centre trustee



Upper room of the visitor centre



Inside the Old School Living Heritage Centre

*Keld Countryside and Heritage Centre is open to the public from 8:00am – 7:00pm in summer and 8:30am – 5:00pm in winter. The Old School Living Heritage Centre is open from 9:00am-5:00pm. Admission to both buildings is free.*

*For more information about Keld Resource Centre (registered charity no 1135650) visit <https://keld.org.uk> or email [communications@keld.org.uk](mailto:communications@keld.org.uk)*



# Healthy on the Inside

**RIBA conservation-accredited architect Sally Walker explains how interior wall insulation can improve the energy efficiency of older properties without spoiling their historic character.**

The many amazing features of the Dales and their abundance of beautiful landscapes create a harmonic whole with the built heritage at the centre, its structures tied to a winding road, a hamlet or situated alone within the countryside. Affecting the exterior of one building has a ripple effect that impacts on the whole.

The tension between protecting heritage at all costs and enabling continuous economic use is the crux of the matter when it comes to improving the thermal performance of our buildings. The starting point is choosing the best place to apply the insulation: on the exterior or on the interior? Both applications have the same three goals: to make the structure more energy-efficient and comfortable to live in whilst preserving the character of the architecture that makes the place and the community special.



South Carr Farm, before insulation and lime plaster



South Carr Farm, now a naturally internally insulated listed building

For three decades York-based Native Chartered Architects has championed this approach, in recent times pledging to match the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) 2030 Climate Challenge, which sets out 'voluntary performance targets for operational energy use, water use and embodied carbon'.

We have designed and built both exterior and interior insulation options, using different systems and materials. It is our experience (backed up by industry and academic research) that natural interior wall insulation (IWI) is the best option to preserve the significance and character of the built heritage of the Dales, improving efficiency of the built fabric and increasing user comfort.

Sustainability is not just about saving energy on heating bills but means adopting a full-circle approach, and aiming to be as natural as possible. This links to the 'embodied energy' (the amount of carbon it takes to make a building or any building material including insulation). The more carbon used, the more detrimental the effect that product has on the environment.

Plastic or foam insulation could, at first glance, seem fit for purpose but the amount of embodied energy used to make that insulation is greater than, for example, a natural, bio-based, renewable product such as wood fibre insulation.

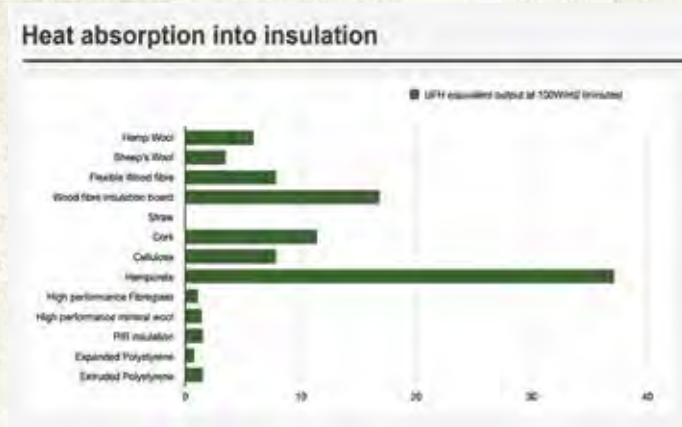
## Home Comforts

Natural insulation is also healthier for you and your family. Historic structures are usually built from natural materials with vapour-permeable building fabric, which can let moisture and air flow in and out, so it is not trapped in the building structure. Fixing modern closed cell plastic insulation materials to a traditional wall presents a problem as the wall will not allow the passage of moisture as it normally would. This leads to unintended consequences such as trapped moisture, causing condensation and a lack of natural airflow inside the building (which can contaminate the inside air by giving off gases from plastics). A breathable option such as hempcrete, wood fibre or cork will allow for a healthier building and a healthier you.





It is often not appreciated that natural materials can outperform modern ones and be more beneficial to buildings. The graph shows how much heat is absorbed by the insulation from heat sources (instead of being lost outside). Hempcrete, wood fibre or cork store heat much better than a modern material such as PIR (polyisocyanurate), a thermoset plastic that is produced by blowing plastic foam between layers of foil.



### Preserving Historic Character

The selection of materials for use in all types of buildings is complex and must be carefully considered, particularly where the context is sensitive. When looking at a historic building or building in a conservation area, using natural IWI allows you to insulate your building without affecting the exterior character of your house, its surroundings or the countryside. This will also make it easier when proposing improvement works or alterations that require planning consent as you are less likely to impact the settings of other buildings or the character of your area.

One consequence of IWI is that the interior of your building will be modified. The footprint will be reduced but this is not as drastic as you think. A 40mm layer of wood fibre insulation and 10mm of lime plaster is all that is needed to make a positive impact. The beauty of natural materials is that the character of your building, be it historic timbers or sash windows, can remain unaffected. Using wood fibre insulation on the interior of the grade II-listed building pictured meant that the exterior of the house was able to retain its charm following the removal of harmful cement mortar and the interior



Interior of first floor damp walls before removal of cementitious materials prior to wood fibre insulation and lime plaster

was able to convey its historic character. The client has a building that is both energy-efficient and with better indoor air quality and warm, dry walls.

Examples like this one in Arncliffe, combined with significant practical experience, demonstrate that natural IWI is the best option to upgrade a cold and damp historic or vernacular building. With this approach one can benefit from a more energy-efficient building, lessen the impact on the environment, and preserve the heritage of the building and character of the area. In an area of outstanding beauty like the Dales, one can't ask for a better option than that.

Sally Walker, Director, Native Chartered Architects

For more information visit the Association for Environment Conscious Building website at <https://aecb.net> and [www.nativearchitects.com/portfolio/south-carr-farm/](http://www.nativearchitects.com/portfolio/south-carr-farm/)



View of Grade II-listed gatehouse in Arncliffe



Mill Gate, Arncliffe, now a naturally insulated listed building



# Building Thriving Communities



West Witton development

Later this year the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority will publish its new Local Plan for 2023-40, which will include guidance for planning the right amount of development in suitable places. As the only major housing association solely based in North Yorkshire, we asked Broadacres Director of Development and Investment Helen Fielding to explain the importance of ensuring that as many homes as possible remain affordable for local people.

The national park authority has a fine balancing act to play in preserving the heritage and environment of the beautiful Yorkshire Dales, whilst recognising the need to provide more homes to address the current lack of supply.

This has been exacerbated by issues such as the rising number of second homes and holiday lets, placing real pressure on the ability of local people to buy and rent homes locally. And in this post-pandemic world many more people are taking advantage of the opportunity to work remotely, meaning that idyllic places like the Dales are sought-after locations for those seeking a better quality of life, pushing up house prices and rents.

This is good for many, but one of the consequences can be a real challenge for villagers looking to set up home for the first time, or be near family support for childcare or help in later life. The make-up of village populations can change, and this can have an impact on the sustainability of local services, schools and facilities.

West Witton development



Photos courtesy of Broadacres



At the end of March 2023, the authority published a list of sites for homes of 10 or more units, along with a set of proposed housing development boundaries for each town and village in the national park. These provide guidance for decision-making on future infill housing.

In my view, it is important to make sure that a good proportion of the homes are affordable and offered to local people with connections to the communities where they are built, and Broadacres is committed to supporting the national park authority to make this happen.

## Holding Communities Together

A good recent example of how we have already been able to achieve this is in the village of West Witton, near Leyburn.

Working collaboratively with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Richmondshire District Council, the rural housing enabler, the landowner and local developer Hartforth Homes, we were able to offer eight of the 17 homes built in the centre of the village for affordable purposes, either through social rent or discounted sale.

One of the beneficiaries was Carly Thompson and her partner, Pete Akers.

Carly had waited over 20 years for affordable homes to be built in the village where she has worked for her entire career and the couple's three-bedroom home is just yards away from her workplace as a manager at a hotel/restaurant in West Witton.

Carly says she is now surrounded by people she has known most of her life who have also benefited from the scheme, including a local farmer and a couple who work in the horse racing industry in nearby Middleham.

We're also working with a local builder in Bainbridge to deliver five homes for people on a shared ownership basis. Shared ownership is a popular scheme that allows people to part-buy and part-rent their homes, supporting access to home ownership but with the need for a much smaller deposit.

## Finding the Funding

West Witton was our first development in the Yorkshire Dales National Park since 2008, but another scheme in Sedbergh is currently underway and, when completed, 34 of the 49 homes we are building will be affordable. It's a great site with fantastic views, and Sedbergh is a good blueprint of how things could work in the future, with 29 of the homes in the Local Plan and the other 20 on an adjoining Rural Exception Site.

On Rural Exception Sites, 100% of the homes need to be affordable and, along with homes earmarked in Local Plans, it means we can provide a good mix of affordable and open-market-sale properties. Broadacres is a qualified Investment Partner with government housing delivery body Homes England, so we can draw down grants to allow the homes to be affordable to rent or buy.

And we're making things even more affordable for people by installing only renewable energy heat pumps in all our new-build properties and building our homes to great standards of energy efficiency. Our location also means we can provide personalised local services, which are delivered quickly and responsively by people who live in the communities we serve.

We recognise that just a few new affordable homes in a village can make all the difference to local people, young families, local businesses and communities.

The new Local Plan is therefore very much welcome, and we look forward to playing our part in the delivery of more affordable homes in the years to come.

**Helen Fielding, Director of Investment and Development, Broadacres**



Carly Thompson in front of her new home in West Witton.

*Broadacres is a not-for-profit, charitable housing association, based in Northallerton. It owns and manages around 6,700 homes with a plan to develop 1,000 more in the next five years. [www.broadacres.org.uk](http://www.broadacres.org.uk)*



# Going Back to Building Basics

## Architecture student Seth Benn asks whether reviving traditional construction methods could help us to live more comfortably, save money and reduce our environmental footprint.

A home. Sturdy, safe, low-cost, low-impact, well designed, warm and dry. It protects us from the depths of winter and the extremes of summer. Such a wonder of architecture should not be a stranger to so many in the third millennium. Perhaps, then, we should be looking back at the craftsmanship of our architectural heritage to find a tool to solve several of our modern problems that stem from resource scarcity.

Turning back to vernacular architecture (the style in which ordinary people's houses were built) brings confirmation of a growing design practice that is a 'fabric first' approach. Fabric first design recognises the significance of 'getting the materials right' in the first place, which in turn leads to better thermal, airtightness, acoustic and lighting performance and more.

Take, for example, a housing type seen in early settlements in Scotland and Ireland, the Hebridean Blackhouse. This was a low-lying structure with stone walls and a timber-thatched roof, containing three main spaces organised in a row with a central cooking and living area and one flank for human sleeping and the opposite for livestock. These were built from local materials with minimal processing simply because of the constrained resources of the localities.

Design features such as thick stone walls with a high thermal mass (ability to store heat and prevent temperature fluctuations), minimal windows, a low ratio of surface to floor area and effective spatial arrangements all contributed to increasing the difference between external and internal temperatures and reducing air infiltration. Traditional Dales longhouses also accommodated humans and livestock under one roof. Compared with the 'Winstone' house design, the typical design for UK volume house builders, a Blackhouse consumes 30-50% less energy.

This difference in performance is partly down to the effect of 'window losses'. A typical wall has a thermal resistance (R-value) against heat conduction of between R-10 and R-30 with the average being around R-20. A typical window, on the other hand, has an R-value of around R-2 and even high-performance windows have an R-value between R-3 and R-5. This does not even account for air infiltration losses, radiation losses and losses through thermal bridging of the window frame.



The Hebridean Blackhouse, Arnol, Isle of Lewis. Photo courtesy of Historic Scotland

However, the simple definition of a 'volume house design' immediately renders it incapable of suiting a particular location and climate. No manner of 'green-splashing' new homes with 'green' heating systems, ventilation systems and other tech can work around inabilities of the building fabric to deal with the demands of a particular climate.

## Lessons from the Past

Reducing building surface area, only heating spaces that require it, using vegetation for shading, moving unconditioned spaces to the building perimeter, reducing window quantity and more flexibility in the use of imperfect materials: these are a fraction of the green design principles that we can gain from vernacular architecture that would reduce construction costs and increase energy performance.

A home. A potential silver bullet in fundamentally tackling our modern resource-based issues such as the cost-of-living crisis whilst creating better places to live, limiting damage to the local environment, reducing carbon emissions and reinforcing local architectural identity. Could a well-crafted home, drawn from some of the abiding principles of our architectural heritage, begin to address many of our contemporary issues and in doing so build a new vernacular?

## Seth Benn

Ching, F D K and Shapiro, I M (2021) *Green Building Illustrated. Second ed.* John Wiley & Sons.

Calder, B. (2022) *Hebridean Blackhouse vs Volume Housebuilder Home – Energy Profiles Compared.* *Architects Journal*



'Winstone' house design





# Home Economics

Completed in 2017 this house in Leyburn, North Yorkshire, achieved 'Passive House plus' certification, but not without many twists and turns beforehand. Photo courtesy of Paul White - [www.paulwhite.co.uk](http://www.paulwhite.co.uk)

**Passive House construction standards help to cut energy use and provide more comfortable living environments but they come at a cost. North Yorkshire Moors Association Chair Adrian Leaman weighs up the advantages and possible drawbacks.**

Passive house, or 'passivhaus' from the German, is one of those ideas that took a long time to get off the ground. It was coined in 1988 but is now flying worldwide. Passive house standards are design guidelines for achieving very low energy use, and thus a low carbon footprint, for dwellings and other smaller buildings like schools, libraries, student residences and offices.

In the 1970s, and in anticipation of the future fallout from extravagant use of fossil fuels, designers, especially in Europe and the USA, began to experiment with new ideas. In Britain, 50 built examples may be found in *Buildings: the Key to Energy Conservation*, published by the RIBA Energy Conservation Group in 1979. The impetus was lost from this pioneering work because too many of these buildings overheated, especially in summer, as too much attention was given to using the sun as a heat source. Other important considerations such as the walls, windows, ventilation and occupant needs and behaviour had a lower priority. As a result, many – but not all – of the experimental projects did not work particularly well.

## A Holistic Solution

The passive house approach evolved in the 1980s and 1990s. It gives more emphasis to thorough, tested airtightness of the fabric so draughts and heat loss are radically reduced; much higher standards of insulation for walls, floors and roofs; fastidious use of glazing and shading to control solar heating and cooling; attention to site details such as orientation and protection from the wind; and step-change standards of energy efficiency for electrical systems and appliances.

That said, any of the above can be applied to any kind of dwelling or building type, passive house or not: the difference is that they are all incorporated in a clear design philosophy. The distinguishing features that set the passive house approach aside are the ventilation system, which introduces fan-controlled, filtered, heated and/or cooled outside air via a network of pipes; and the effort that designers put into making sure that everything works properly in context and as a unified system,

so there is normally more aftercare and monitoring than might be expected.

To get the full benefits – a high-quality indoor air supply; low or (if paired with solar hot water and electricity-generating roof panels) near-zero energy costs; and excellent thermal comfort – the occupants must have a reasonably good understanding of how everything is supposed to work. So some training is normally desirable, especially when it comes to maintenance.

A true passive house will have met the rigorous standards of the Passivhaus Institute, and have the certificates to prove it. Others will aspire to passive house standards, and perhaps play fast and loose with the terminology, but not necessarily achieve the desired performance.

What are the pros and cons? The higher quality of components, fixtures and fittings, plus the additional design skills required, will make first costs higher, but these should be offset by the savings made during the life of the building. Well-heeled clients, especially architects and others who already possess many of the skills required, will be most suited to owning and running passive houses. But that does not rule out the passive house approach being applied, for example, to social housing, provided that the necessary landlord services are available to the tenants, and that proper maintenance and user training programmes are funded and in place.

There are inevitably downsides. The full passive house treatment may not be appropriate for retrofits of many traditional buildings, especially the ventilation system; and the approach has yet to be fully tested over time in different climatic areas, for example. Regardless, there are many who are already convinced. As with any technology there will be particular niches in which passive houses will work particularly well. We are yet to discover fully what they are or where.

Adrian Leaman, Chair,  
North Yorkshire Moors Association

### Further details:

*Passive House Plus* magazine has case studies of passive house projects from Ireland, the UK and around the world. Regular columnist Peter Rickaby is a trusted source.

See <https://passivehouseplus.co.uk>

*Buildings: the Key to Energy Conservation* edited by George Casabov.

See [www.usablebuildings.co.uk/UsableBuildings/Unprotected/GeorgeKasabov1979.pdf](http://www.usablebuildings.co.uk/UsableBuildings/Unprotected/GeorgeKasabov1979.pdf)

[www.homebuilding.co.uk/advice/passivhaus](http://www.homebuilding.co.uk/advice/passivhaus)



# Lunds Church: a Special Place

## Vice President Malcolm Petyt celebrates news of proposals to restore an important feature of upper Wensleydale's architectural heritage.

I first came upon Lunds Church by accident. In 1962 my (future) wife and I were on a walking tour of the Dales, using the network of youth hostels that existed in those times. From Keld we had climbed Great Shunner Fell and dropped into Cotterdale; then up again and over towards the headwaters of the Ure, to find one of the least accessible of hostels, known as Garsdale Head but at a largish house called Shaws in the scattered settlement of Lunds.

Next morning, setting out for the Dentdale hostel at Cowgill, we noticed a little building with a few old leaning gravestones nearby, standing on a small rise towards the corner of a field. The door was unlocked and we went in to find a simply furnished place of worship, obviously still in use at times. There was an indefinable 'sense of place', of the history of this building and the people who had worshipped here over the generations.

Inset photo Lunds Church, courtesy of [www.familysearch.org/en/wiki](http://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki)

Main photo courtesy of Malcolm Petyt



We learned that this church had started life as a chapel of ease. In the days when church attendance was required by law, chapels such as this were built to enable people living many miles from the parish church to attend divine service. The parish of Aysgarth was then one of the largest in England, so this chapel was built for the families from the farms around Lunds. The area in those times was within the Diocese of Chester, and the first curate here was licensed in 1713. The last independent incumbent was buried in the graveyard in 1842, by which time Lunds had been united as a parish with Hardraw.

A building of some form here must then date at least from the early 18th century, but architectural historians see signs of an even earlier structure. The gravestones date from the 1800s to the 1930s. Some of the graves are clustered, but others are at a distance, which suggests that some intervening ones are unmarked; and it is known that some navvies who died while building the nearby Settle-Carlisle line in the 1870s were buried here.



## Reversing the Decline

I remember noticing on my first visit that the hymn books felt rather damp. Though I did not realise it, this was a clue to problems that have beset the building for many years. Historians can see evidence that suggests several stages of rebuilding and restoration. It is known that the last extensive restoration took place in the late 19th century: in 1894 the building was said to be 'very dilapidated' and, remarkably, public subscriptions covered the necessary costs.

It appears likely that the building had earlier been covered by a lime render, which provides some waterproofing but allows the stone to 'breathe'. But, as with other Dales buildings in the following period, the render was removed because exposed stonework was considered to be more attractive. Because damp problems then developed, the building was subsequently re-covered, but this time with a cement render. However, architects later realised that cement render traps any damp in the stonework, and such render has been removed from many buildings.

In 1981 Lunds Church was declared redundant and deconsecrated. The internal fixtures and furniture were stripped out, the bell was taken to the Dales Countryside Museum and the building was left for agricultural use. But it is still a Grade II-listed building of considerable cultural heritage significance, and in 2000 the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust provided grant funding for some of the works necessary for its conservation. The cement render was removed, but sadly its replacement by a lime render was not carried out. And there the situation rested...

Until recently. In January Friends of the Dales learned that the national park authority wishes to take advantage of funding currently available to carry out external and internal works to the masonry and plasterwork (including use of lime mortar and render), replacement of the door and windows, reinstatement of internal fittings and furnishings and the electricity supply, and the return of the bell. We have given these proposals our full support.

**Malcolm Petyt, Vice President and member of policy & planning committee**

Malcolm very kindly represented Friends of the Dales on Liz Green's BBC York and Sheffield radio show on 19 February. Liz was keen to hear all about the church and how and why it had fallen into disrepair and why we are keen to support its restoration. Additionally there has been wide press coverage about our support of the Lunds Church restoration across several regional and national media including the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Church Times*.





Photo courtesy of Victoria Benn



## New Benefits for our Supporters

While we've long been grateful to businesses and not-for-profit organisations that support Friends of the Dales, for many reasons it feels like the right time to take another look at this relationship and give it a refresh.

Starting in April, business and group membership – hitherto two different but similar types of membership – will become one: Community Supporter.

The idea is that businesses, not-for-profit groups or other organisations such as parish councils with interests and/or activities compatible with the objects of our charity can support us by making an annual donation of their choosing of £40 - or more, if they feel able to. This flexible donation will support our environmental campaigning and other charitable work.

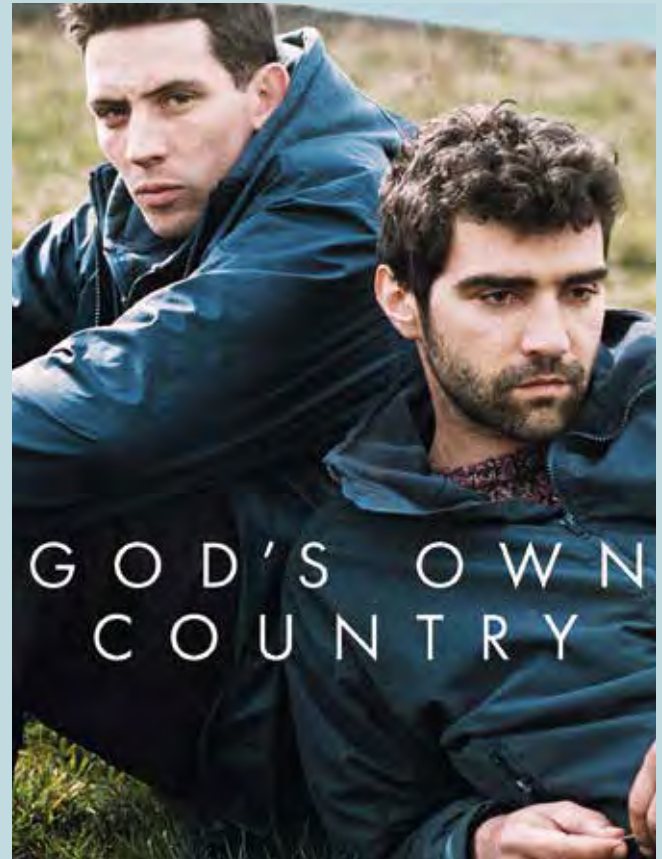
In addition to becoming part of a group of like-minded businesses and organisations actively supporting our work in building a sustainable future for the Yorkshire Dales, Community Supporters will receive:

- A bespoke, bimonthly Community Supporters' e-newsletter containing campaign and environmental updates appropriate to businesses and not-for-profit organisations
- A pin on a Google Map on our website, identifying their online presence
- A digital, annual Community Supporters' logo to highlight their support and environmental credentials
- A digital and/or hard copies of the *Yorkshire Dales Review*
- Invitations to two business-related environmental digital talks per year

Many loyal former business and group members have already pledged their support to the refreshed membership relationship. Here's what long-standing member Chrysalis Arts had to say:

*'Chrysalis Arts Development has been a business member of Friends of the Dales for several years and was previously represented on the board. We believe that the Friends of the Dales' work is now more crucial than ever for local businesses as we all have to deal with the critical impact of climate change on our lives and the way we operate.'*

*'The interrelated crises of climate breakdown, biodiversity loss, overuse of natural resources and pollution pose a serious threat to the unique Dales environment and the bold and dynamic stance on the climate emergency taken by the Friends is very welcome. These issues will affect everyone's livelihoods in the coming years, if they are not doing so already, and we feel it is critical for local organisations to work with Friends of the Dales to find positive ways of mitigating and helping to raise awareness.'*



Set amid the gorgeous landscape of rural Yorkshire, Francis Lee tenderly crafts a striking romance between local farmer Johnny and Romanian migrant worker, Gheorghe. The film is an affectionate portrayal of love, explored in a manner that feels more reminiscent of contemporary French arthouse cinema than something to come out of the familiar setting of Yorkshire. It is not only refreshing to see this change in the representation of Yorkshire in film, but also exciting to observe relatively new directors emerging from the area.

As a romance, *God's Own Country* is certainly one of the most poignant stories I've seen in a long time. However, where many films about a doomed romance fall into cliché (particularly in LGBTQ+ cinema), the narrative between Johnny and Gheorghe builds to a moment of catharsis and expression. Throughout the journey of the film it is difficult to predict where it will leave you; if it will conclude with hope and optimism or reflect a bitter reality.

In addition to witnessing a gripping romantic tale, we find ourselves absorbing delightful vistas of Yorkshire moorland – a view so recognisable to many of us, and yet so rarely represented in cinema. The similarities between *God's Own Country* and *Brokeback Mountain* are undeniable, however GOC ends on a completely unique note, which is heightened by the use of lesser-known actors, not to mention a location that is rough, rugged and timelessly beautiful.

Whether you seek a touching love story or an insight into the realities of farming in the Yorkshire countryside, *God's Own Country* is hard to dislike.

Bea Benn, Year 11 pupil at Skipton Girls' High School



# GUARDIAN OF THE DALES

The Story of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Author: Nigel Watson | Publisher: Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Price: £14.99 | ISBN: 978-1-8383994-3-6

Nigel Watson chronicles the history of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, drawing on conversations with individuals and much previously unpublished material. It is a fascinating story, told against a background of unrelenting opposition, and the eventual success of the endeavour is a huge credit to the committed and far-sighted people who made it happen.

Wordsworth famously described the Lake District as 'a sort of national property', which he believed 'every man has a right...to enjoy', and over the following century and a half the concept of landscape as a national asset, and the need to conserve it, gained more and more attention.

Things began slowly. CPRE was established in 1926, and the Addison Report in 1931 came down firmly in favour of the Yorkshire Dales becoming a national park. But a depression is not a good time for such an initiative and the government rejected it. The Kinder Scout trespass in 1932 reflected popular opinion and the establishment by CPRE in 1935 of a Standing Committee on National Parks (which later became Campaign for National Parks), with John Dower appointed drafting secretary, was a seminal moment.

## First Principles

It led to a government request for Dower to look at the possibility of setting up national parks in England and Wales, and his report, published in 1945, was a visionary work that outlined many of the principles and approaches that are regarded as common currency for them today. These included the two first statutory purposes, the landscapes to be protected, the importance of avoiding

'inharmonious development' and equal regard for local people and visitors but with the wellbeing of those who live and work within the national park always being the first consideration. His views on farming and visitors were less well received and he envisaged a number of small separate national parks in the Dales, but nonetheless his vision was instrumental in establishing them in England and Wales.

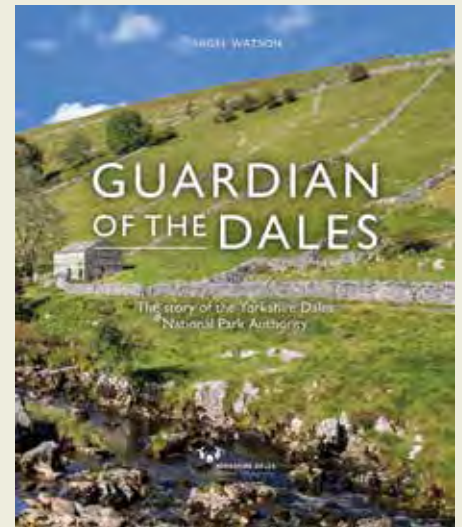
Two years later, after a change of government, a committee set up under Sir Arthur Hobhouse (who first coined the name Yorkshire Dales) paved the way for legislation, and the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act gained royal assent in 1949. During all this time opposition came from many politicians and county, district and parish councils, as well as some farmers and landowners.

The order to designate the Yorkshire Dales National Park was finally confirmed at the conclusion of another public enquiry in October 1954.

## A Rocky Start

The joint advisory committee set up to manage it, with area sub-committees to look after planning, was slow and ineffective. Little money was made available and not much achieved, and the first full-time employee was a ranger, who was taken on only in 1963. However, volunteers were recruited in significant numbers and by 1970 there were three wardens and 170 volunteers.

In 1974 Lord Sandford was tasked with reviewing national parks, and his criticisms included the observation that people administering them were 'short of staff,



starved of funds and operate in a fragmentary framework'. Improvements gradually followed and the first chief officer of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority took office in 1974 although it was still under the control of two county councils.

The Edwards Review *Fit for the Future* in 1991 was critical of the way national parks were run and again recommended their independence. This time government did listen and the 1995 Environment Act for the first time freed them from county council control. On April 1st 1997 the independent national park authority took over.

By the late 1990s the authority had acquired responsibility for public rights of way, all aspects of planning, conservation, archaeology, forestry, quarrying and managing the ever-increasing number of visitors, and the successes and setbacks of those years are well documented here. Disagreements continued and numerous changes of leadership took place.

The achievements in the new millennium are too numerous to list, but are well documented in the final chapters of this book, right up to the award of International Dark Skies Reserve status in 2021.

Because of the level of detail *Guardian of the Dales* may not often be read at a single sitting, but the enormous dedication of those who overcame what at times seemed unsurmountable obstacles comes though time and time again.

Lovers of the Yorkshire Dales will find much to enjoy in it.

Ken Humphris, trustee





Our spring and summer programme takes the overarching theme of **Our Changing Landscape**:

## Walk: River Restoration in Action

Thursday, 27 April 2023  
10:00am – 3:30pm

Join Catherine Mason from the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust for a seven-mile guided walk in Arkengarthdale. Starting from Langthwaite village, the walk will follow Arkle Beck, where the trust is involved in a partnership project to implement natural flood management, assisting an area of the Dales that was badly affected by the floods of 2019. Including a steep climb up Fremington Edge, before walking west along the edge, there will also be an opportunity to view remains of historic lead mining along with local fauna and flora. This walk is supported by funding from the Alpkit Foundation.

\* To book see information bottom right:

## Volunteer Event: Eyes on the Bog

Saturday, 13 May 2023  
10:00am – 3:00pm

Volunteer for Eyes on the Bog, a peatland monitoring project we are running in collaboration with Yorkshire Peat Partnership. On this training event you will learn simple monitoring activities to eventually (if you wish) monitor your own allocated area of peatland, in order to assess the effectiveness of ongoing peatland restoration. This rewarding event will be led by Yorkshire Peat Partnership and take place at one of the peatlands it is restoring near Whenside.

\* To book see information bottom right:



## Walk: Exploring Frostrow Fell

Thursday, 25 May 2023  
11:30am – 4:30pm

Timed to coincide with bus and train services to Sedburgh, and led by trustee Ian McPherson, this is a delightful high-level, five-mile, moderate walk around Frostrow Fell. With stunning views of the Howgills and Lake District, the walk also offers the opportunity to see several breeds of moorland birds including curlew, stonechat and wheatear. Well-behaved dogs on a lead are welcome.

\* To book see information bottom right:

## Walk: Wild Ingleborough

Saturday, 10 June 2023  
10:45am – 4:00pm

We are once again joining forces with our friends at Wild Ingleborough for a guided walk through four of the region's finest nature reserves, including Ashes Shaw, its newest reserve. Ellie Parker, Community Engagement Officer for the partnership, will offer expert insight into the native flora and fauna of the biodiverse grassland at Ribblehead Quarry, Salt Lake Quarry and Ashes Pasture and the archaeological features of Ashes Shaw. Sorry, no dogs due to the sensitive nature of the reserves. This walk is timed to coincide with trains to Ribblehead Station.

\* To book see information bottom right:



## Walk: Peregrine Watch at Malham Tarn

Wednesday, 21 June 2023  
10:00am – 3:00pm

Join Ian Court, Wildlife Conservation Officer for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, for a rare opportunity to learn more about one of the most majestic birds of prey of the Yorkshire Dales. Peregrine falcons were at a low point in the 1960s due to human persecution and the impact of pesticides in the food chain. Improved legislation and protection have helped the birds to recover, but a number of threats remain. With Ian's guidance and the use of telescopes, we hope to observe the peregrines and other upland bird species in their natural habitats in and around Malham Cove. Strictly no dogs on this guided walk.

\* To book see information bottom right:



## Catch up via E-News

Sign up to our free monthly e-news and be one of the first to hear our news, new event listings and information about hands-on volunteering opportunities arranged by Friends of the Dales and other environmental charities. Sign up at: [www.friendsofthedales.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthedales.org.uk)

You can also follow us on **Facebook**, **Instagram** and **Twitter**.



## Catch up on YouTube

If you missed one of our talks first time round, you can watch them on our own YouTube channel: [@friendsofthedales](https://www.youtube.com/@friendsofthedales)

There are more than 20 films – with more being added all the time – on a wide range of environmental subjects covered in our successful digital talks programme. Find out more about everything from raptor persecution in the Yorkshire Dales to the facts about our decimated peatlands to the future of rural bus services.

If you subscribe to the channel you will immediately be notified of all new content additions.



## Save the Date:

Saturday, 1 July 2023

In celebration of National Meadows Day and its connection to our Living Verges campaign, we are hosting an information and guided walk event in collaboration with the Addingham Environment Group, whose principal aim is to protect and enhance (in some cases restore) the natural environment of the village and its surrounding countryside. Further details to follow via our website, e-news and social media channels. You can sign up to our free e-news at: [www.friendsofthedales.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthedales.org.uk)

## \* Booking for our events is easy.

Either email our Membership & Events Officer, Victoria Benn, at: [victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk](mailto: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/events](http://www.friendsofthedales.org.uk/events)



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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](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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LOVE...**



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