

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum

1st Annual Report

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1. CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first Annual Report of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum. I hope you find reading this report informative and that it provides you with a good insight into the workings of the Forum.

The Yorkshire Dales Access Forum has been established by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) to provide independent and balanced advice on all matters relating to recreational access within the Yorkshire Dales. The Forum also has a lesser duty to advise the local highway authorities (North Yorkshire and Cumbria), as well as responding to relevant consultations issued by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs and the Countryside Agency.

Our first year has largely been spent establishing our ways of working and identifying systems for advising the YDNPA especially regarding the impending implementation of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). It has taken us considerable time to get to grips with this complex legislation. The CROW Act will have major implications for recreational access within the National Park. Open Access is scheduled to be implemented in October 2004 and this will increase largely unrestricted access from around 4% to 63% of the total area of the Park. Our first statutory duty as an Access Forum was to advise the Countryside Agency on the Draft Maps of Open Access and since then the Forum has kept busy dealing with a steady stream of consultations and regulations. I am pleased to report that the YDNPA appears to be well prepared for this implementation. However, it will be challenging times for all those involved, not least for the farming and landowning community over whose land this new access will be granted.

The last year saw the establishment of an "Access for All" working sub group of the Forum. This group has met on a number of occasions and I am pleased to say it will present its initial report to the Forum at our March 2004 meeting. This report will give broad guidance to the YDNPA as well as setting out a programme for improving access for all, including those with limited mobility, people with visual or hearing impairment, those with learning difficulties, individuals and families - young or old.

This next year is going to be demanding for the Forum given the considerable workload imposed by the implementation of the CROW Act. We will continue to draw on the extremely wide breadth of members' experience and expertise to give impartial advice and recommendations. If you as a member of the public have matters that you feel we should be addressing, please bring it to our attention through the Access Development Officer of the National Park Authority.

Over the last year as we have established ourselves, we have been supported and given guidance by the National Park Authority to whom we are extremely grateful. They have overseen the establishment of this Access Forum in a competent manner and with due regards to the regulations laid down within the CROW Act.

The future success of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum is, however, down to the dedication and hard work of its members who volunteer their time for free and combine their love and knowledge of the Yorkshire Dales with their recreation, farming or landowning backgrounds to make the Forum all possible. I thank them for their contribution and continued support as we develop into our second year.

Jon Beavan
Chairman
January 2004

2. THE YORKSHIRE DALES ACCESS FORUM

2.1 Statutory purpose

Section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act places a duty on local highways authorities and national park authorities to establish local access forums:

- To advise the National Park Authority on the improvement of public access to the land in the National Park for the purpose of open air recreation and enjoyment of the area, and as to such other matters as may be prescribed. This includes advising on the draft maps of open country, the imposition of bylaws and proposals for long term closures of access land, as well as on wider access issues contained in new rights of way improvement plans.
- In carrying out its function, the Forum will have due regard to the needs of land management and conservation of the natural beauty of the area.

3. WHO COMPRISES THE FORUM?

3.1 Members and representation

The Forum has been constituted so that:

- It is a balanced group, which avoids being dominated by single interests.
- It is representative of all interests, including; recreation use, land management, nature conservation, tourism, business, transport and access for all.
- Many members have secondary interests as well as the primary interest for which they were appointed.

The Members of the Forum during the period to 1st January 2004 are:

NAME	AREA OF INTEREST	INTEREST DETAIL	NUMBER
Michael Bartholomew	Users	Walking, cycling, bird watching and camping.	5
Mark Sandamas	Users	Outdoor Recreation (especially cycling), health and safety and health.	
Margaret Thomas	Users	Walking, nature conservation, recreation management.	
Jane Uzzell	Users	Horse-riding, wildlife conservation and local business.	
Geoff Wilson	Users	Motorcycling, walking, physical geography and recreation management in sensitive areas.	
Jon Beavan	Users/Other Interests	Caving, walking, climbing, mountain biking, conservation, photography and local business.	2
Philip Woodyer	Users/Other Interests	Caving, outdoor learning, mountaineering, climbing, kayaking, mountain biking and access for people with disabilities.	
Graeme Hall	Owners and Occupiers	Dales farming, walking and conservation.	7
John Sayer	Owners and Occupiers	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (Craven District Council) and Dales Farming.	
Ben Heyes	Owners and Occupiers	Land management, in particular management of moorland.	
Roger Harrison-Topham	Owners and Occupiers	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (North Yorkshire County Council) and smallholder.	
Richard Spensley	Owners and Occupiers	Dales farming, archaeology, game keeping and nature conservation.	
Richard Johnson	Owners and Occupiers	Land management, in particular management of moorland.	
Bill Foster	Owners and Occupiers	Dales farming, nature and heritage conservation.	
Veronica Boulton	Other Interests	Tourism, public transport, walking, access for people with disabilities and conservation.	5
Wilf Fenten	Other Interests	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (Parish Councils) and nature conservation.	
Gerald Light	Other Interests	Nature conservation, bird watching and walking.	
Andrew Mackay	Other Interests	Heritage, archaeology, natural history and outdoor recreation.	
John Goss (Co-opted Member)	Other Interests	Access for people with disabilities, air rifle shooting and 4x4 driving.	

The Forum agreed that Members will usually serve for three years. So that it develops a continuity of membership, the Forum agreed that the first appointments would be for periods of one, two or three years, ensuring that a third of the membership is appointed each year. Members drew lots to establish the first terms of appointment.

Nb. Richard Johnson and Bill Foster have replaced Matt Mason and Sebastian Green on the Forum. Both Mr Green and Mr Mason represented owners and occupiers.

3.2 Observers and advisers to the Forum

The Forum invites the following to the meeting:

Rob Terwey, Strategic Planning Manager, Cumbria County Council

Phil Broomhead, Group Engineer for Development and Control, North Yorkshire County Council

Angela Flowers, Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Officer, North Yorkshire County Council

Gill Dixon, Chief Executive, Craven District Council

Harry Tabiner, Chief Executive, Richmondshire District Council

David Slater, Access Officer, English Nature

Lynne Evans, Access Officer, Countryside Agency

Jon Avison, Head of Park Management, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Kathryn Beardmore, Access and Recreation Manager Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Mark Butler, Access Information Officer, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

3.3 Secretariat

The National Park Authority provides the secretariat to the Forum:

Catriona Kilner, Access Development Officer, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, August 2002 – March 2003.

Rachel Mozley, Access Development Officer, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, March 2003 – present.

4. WHAT'S HAPPENED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD?

4.1 Chairman of the Forum.

The Forum appointed its first Chairman (Jon Beavan) and Vice-Chairman (Benedict Heyes) at its first formal meeting on 17 January 2003.

4.2 Formal meetings of the Forum

Five formal meetings have been held during the reporting period. The dates of these were:

17 January 2003
18 February 2003
20 May 2003
2 September 2003
18 November 2003

The locations of the meetings have varied between the different areas of the national park.

The agendas have included:

- Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman
- Terms of appointment
- Standard procedures
- Expenses
- Identity of the forum
- Access for all
- Public Transport
- CROW Act Part 1
 - Comments on the draft maps
 - Grinton Access Trial
 - Scoping exercise
 - Funding
 - Practical aspects of management
 - Provisional maps
 - Closures and restrictions

Minutes, agendas and advance information are available for inspection from the Secretariat. Minutes and the agenda of the most recent meeting are available on the website at www.yorkshiredales.org.uk.

4.3 Training and development

Three training events have been held for forum members during the reporting period:

- In December 2002, before the first formal meeting of the Forum, Lynne Evans from the Countryside Agency, gave a presentation on the purpose and role of Local Access Forums and the role of the Countryside Agency.

- In July 2003, forum members went on 2 site visits to look at issues concerning open access.
- In September 2003, the National Park Solicitor and Definitive Map Officer, looked at legal definitions and the definitive map process.

4.4 Main Activities of the Forum.

- The Draft Maps of open country in the Yorkshire Dales (area 4) were issued in December 2002. At the January meeting of the Forum, Lynne Evans of the Countryside Agency gave advice to the Forum on how to comment on the maps. Comments were submitted to Binnie Black and Veatch in March 2003.

A Copy of the Forum's response is available for inspection from the Secretariat.

- At the September meeting, it was agreed to form a separate working group to look at developing a strategy for access for people with disabilities. The group met twice in the reporting year.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Forum attended various National Park Authority Officer working groups looking at part 1 of the CROW Act. They have also attended meetings of the Joint Northern Access Forum.

4.5 Advice of the Forum to the Authority on Part 1 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act.

- DEFRA Consultation Paper on Regulations relating to the Removal or Relaxation of General Restrictions on Access Land
The Forum opted for option 1, which was the least bureaucratic option to leave it to the authority to issue informal guidance on the method by which they wanted an owner to notify them of such a period, and no regulations would be made under the Act for this purpose.
- The Forum suggested that the YDNPA consult with user groups when carrying out a scoping exercise. Suggested user groups included the Ramblers Association, local businesses and camp site owners. These user groups have now been included in the communications strategy as drawn up by the YDNPA.
- When considering the Grinton Study, the Forum concluded it wasn't necessary to restrict access to areas with mine shafts and that the use of interpretation would be sufficient. The Forum also decided that bylaws were not required, with regards to open access, as the necessary restrictions are covered in the CROW Act Schedule 2, but that education is crucial.

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

1 January 2003 – 31 December
2003

INCOME

Project funds allocated from Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority	7000
Total Income	7000

EXPENDITURE

Set up costs

<i>Stationary and presentation Equipment</i>	£1952.35
<i>Supporting materials</i>	<u>£141.00</u>
Total	<u>£2093.35</u>

Members' expenses:

<i>Travel Allowance</i>	<u>£1285.00</u>
Total	<u>£1285.00</u>

Publicity

<i>Meetings</i>	£2077.63
Website design	<u>£410.00</u>
Total	<u>£2487.63</u>

Room hire/refreshments

<i>Recruitment</i>	£126.00
<i>Meetings</i>	<u>£639.50</u>
Total	<u>£765.50</u>

Total Expenditure	<u>£6631.41</u>
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UNDERSPEND	£368.52
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APPENDIX 1

MEMBERS – WHO’S ON THE YORKSHIRE DALES ACCESS FORUM?

(In alphabetical order)

Michael Bartholomew

From: Otley

Telephone: 01943 468459

Term of Appointment: 1 year

E-mail: bart.otley@virgin.net

Background

Michael Bartholomew is a retired university lecturer. He is a member of the Cyclists Touring Club, the Ramblers Association, the Yorkshire Dales Society and is also the chairman of the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Alliance. His interests include cycling, walking, bird watching and camping.

Area of Representation

Walking and cycling.

Jon Beavan - Chair

From: Austwick

Telephone: 015242 51021

Term of Appointment: 3 years

E-mail: info@dalesbridge.co.uk

Background

Jon Beavan is the proprietor and manager of the Dalesbridge Centre in Austwick. He is a member of the Settle Chamber of Trade, the Settle-Carlisle Business Liaison Group, the Federation of Small Businesses, British Cave Research Association and the Northern Cave Club. Jon is also an active member of the Cave Rescue Organisation. His interests include caving, walking, climbing, mountain biking, conservation and photography.

Area of Representation

Outdoor recreation (especially caving and climbing) and local business

Veronica Boulton

From: Leeds

Telephone: 0113 2672929

Term of Appointment: 1 year

E-mail: Veronica.Boulton@lineone.net

Background

Veronica Boulton has strong links with the Youth Hostels Association. Her interests include tourism, walking, access for people with disabilities, public transport and conservation.

Area of Representation

Tourism and public transport.

Wilf Fenten (YDNPA Member)

From: Selside
Telephone: 01729 860313

Term of Appointment: 2 years
E-mail: wilf.fenten@btinternet.com

Background

Wilf Fenten works from home as a technical translator. He has been a parish councillor in Horton-in-Ribblesdale since 1994 and was appointed as a Member of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority in 1996. He is a Quaker and a member of Settle Meeting, and his interests include all aspects of sustainability and sensitive environmental management. He is a keen walker and keeps a few sheep.

Area of Representation

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (Parish Councils) and nature conservation.

Bill Foster

From: Kettlewell
Telephone: 01756 761028

Term of Appointment: 2 years

Background

Bill Foster is a retired farmer having lived and farmed at Kilnsey and Kettlewell all of his life. He is the owner of the Skirfare Bridge Dales Barn. Bill also has an interest in nature and heritage conservation.

Area of Representation

Dales Farming

John Goss (Co-opted member)

From: Boroughbridge
Telephone: 01423 323123

E-mail: john@gossonline.co.uk

Background

John Goss is a retired manager and shop owner. He is chairman of Harrogate and District Access Group and a member of Harrogate Borough Council's Disability Discrimination Act.1995 Committee. John also provides advice on disabilities to the Harrogate Hospital Trust and Yorkshire Water. His interests include air rifle shooting and recreational 4x4 driving.

Area of Representation

Access for people with disabilities.

Graeme Hall

From: Conistone, Skipton
Telephone: 01756 752140

Term of Appointment: 2 years

Background

Graeme Hall is a hill farmer, landowner and tenant from Conistone. He is treasurer for Conistone Moor Gait-holders. Other than farming, his interests include walking, conservation and rugby.

Area of Representation

Dales farming

Roger Harrison-Topham (YDNPA Member)

From: Coverdale
Telephone: 01969 640632

Term of Appointment: 3 years
E-mail: cllr.r.harrisontopham@btinternet.com

Background

Roger Harrison-Topham is a member of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and represents the Middle Dales Division on North Yorkshire County Council. He is a retired financial adviser to companies and governments and a smallholder on a Coverdale hill farm.

Area of Representation

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (North Yorkshire County Council), smallholder.

Ben Heyes – Vice Chair

From: Bolton Abbey
Telephone: 01756 718000

Term of Appointment: 3 years
E-mail: estateoffice@boltonabbey.com

Background

Ben Heyes is the land agent for the Trustees of Chatsworth Settlements at Bolton Abbey Estate, with extensive experience of combining moorland management with access for the public. He is Hon Secretary and chairs the River Wharfe Anglers Association and represents the Trustees as a member of the Moorland Association.

Area of Representation

Land management, in particular management of moorland.

Richard Johnson

From: Carperby
Telephone: 01969 667000

Term of Appointment: 2 years
E-mail: johnsons.hawes@dial.pipex.com

Background

Richard Johnson has been a qualified Solicitor for 33 years and practices in Hawes. He also owns and manages Stags Fell grouse moor, which is part of Abbotside Common where he is Chairman and Secretary of the Conservators. His main interests lie in restoration and conservation of heather moorland.

Area of Representation

Land Management

Gerald Light

From: Threshfield
Telephone: 01756 753720

Term of Appointment: 3 years

Background

Gerald Light is a retired manager for Royal Mail. He currently does voluntary conservation work for the British Trust for Ornithology, Plantlife, English Nature and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. Gerald is a member of the Upper Wharfedale Field Society, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Fell and Rock Climbing Club. His interests include conservation work, bird watching and walking.

Area of Representation

Nature conservation

Andrew Mackay

From: Settle
Telephone: 01756 706407

Term of Appointment: 3 years
E-mail: amackay@cravendc.gov.uk

Background

Andrew Mackay is the District Museums Officer for Craven District Council. He is a member of Council of the Society for Folk Life Studies. His interests include heritage, archaeology, natural history and outdoor recreation.

Area of Representation

Heritage, archaeology and natural history.

Mark Sandamas

From: Barnoldswick
Telephone: 01282 814738

Term of Appointment: 1 year
E-mail: mark@sandamas.demon.co.uk

Background

Mark Sandamas is a freelance consultant in event management, PR and health promotion. He is a member of the Cyclists Touring Club, the Fell Runners Association and the Youth Hostels Association. His interests include walking, mountain biking, tourism, health and safety, health, running, climbing and camping.

Area of Representation

Outdoor recreation (especially cycling), health & safety and health.

John Sayer (YDNPA Member)

From: Arncliffe
Telephone: 01756 770209

Term of Appointment: 1 year
E-mail: jsarncliffe@aol.com

Background

John Sayer is a retired farmer who has farmed at Arncliffe for over 30 years. He has served on the MAFF Regional Panel and the Farm Advisory Committee of MAFF's Redesdale Experimental Husbandry Farm. He has also been a member of the Minister of Agriculture's Hill Farming Advisory Committee.

Area of Representation

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (Craven District Council) and dales farming.

Richard Spensley

From: Castle Bolton
Telephone: 01969 622398

Term of Appointment: 1 year
E-mail: rmslivestock@fwi.co.uk

Background

Richard Spensley is a retired farmer and landowner and has played an active role in the National Sheep Association for many years. Other than farming, his interests include archaeology, game keeping, and nature conservation.

Area of Representation

Dales farming

Margaret Thomas

From: Bedale
Telephone: 01765 640477

Term of Appointment: 3 years
E-mail: marg.thomas@care4free.net

Background

Margaret Thomas is a self-employed consultant for recreation and access management. She was previously employed as the Cleveland Way Project Assistant for the North York Moors National Park Authority. Margaret is an active member of the Ramblers Association and represents their interests on the Moorland Access Advisory Group. She is also a member of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Plantlife, the Woodland Trust, the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Alliance and the RSPB.

Area of Representation

Walking.

Jane Uzzell

From: Horsehouse
Telephone: 01969 640606

Term of Appointment: 1 year
E-mail: janeuzzell@yahoo.co.uk

Background

Jane Uzzell is a self-employed saddler and lawyer. She is also a hill farmer and is chairman of the Yorkshire Dales Equine Access Group. Jane has strong interests in horse riding and horse breeding and also has interests in wildlife conservation and local business.

Area of Representation

Horse-riding

Geoff Wilson

From: Lazonby
Telephone: 01768 898584

Term of Appointment: 2 years
E-mail: GeoffMoto@aol.com

Background

Geoff Wilson practised as an electrical engineer and was CEO of the governing body for UK motorcycle sport. He now works part time on practical upland footpath management. A past Chairman of the Motoring Organisations Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) Geoff is also a member of the Lake District National Park Authority's Trail Management Advisory Group, and a Member of the Lake District Local Access Forum. He is a parish councillor, Chairman of the Cumbria Rights of Way Liaison Group and a member of the Countryside Agency's Discovering Lost Ways Advisory Group. His interests include motorcycling, walking, physical geography and recreation management in sensitive areas.

Area of Representation

Outdoor recreation (including trail-riding and recreational 4x4-driving).

Philip Woodyer

From: Preston-under-Scar
Telephone: 01969 650432

Term of Appointment: 2 years
E-mail: lowmill@gofree.co.uk

Background

Philip Woodyer is the Head of Centre at Low Mill Outdoor Centre. He is a parish councillor and a member of the Institute for Outdoor Learning. Philip is also a member of the National Caving Association and attends the Northern Panel of the Local Cave Leaders Training and Assessment Scheme. His interests include caving, outdoor learning, mountaineering, climbing, kayaking, mountain-biking and access for people with disabilities.

Area of Representation

Outdoor education and recreation (especially caving and climbing).