

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum Annual Report 2011 / 12





The award winning Farmoor Bridge, part of the newly opened Pennine Bridleway National Trail

*Many thanks go to David Bartlett, Colin Ginger and Michael Kenyon for their contributions up to January 2012.

-Many thanks go to Malcolm Petyt for his contributions up to March 2012.

+Welcome to the Forum's three new members, Alex Law, Heather Thomas-Smith and John Richardson, who were appointed for a three year term from 1 January 2012.

What is the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum?

It is an independent advisory body, established by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) in 2002, under sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

The Forum has the following primary purpose:
 "To be a statutory advisory body providing guidance and advice to public bodies on the improvement of public access within the Yorkshire Dales National park and contributing to opportunities for open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area."

In providing advice, the Forum will have regard to:

- The needs of land management.
- The conservation of the natural beauty of the area including its flora, fauna, and geological and physical features.
- The management and maintenance of recreational access whilst balancing this against the needs of nature conservation, agriculture, the interests of landowners and managers and countryside management projects within the Yorkshire Dales.

Who are the Forum?

The Forum is made up of 17 members. They represent:

- Users of rights of way and access land.
- Owners and occupiers of land affected by public access.
- Those with other interests relevant to the area.

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum Members 2010 to 2011

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Area of representation</u> |
|----------------------------|--|
| Phil Woodyer - Chair | Other interests, outdoor learning and Access for All |
| David Gibson - Vice Chair | Recreation |
| David Bartlett* | Recreation |
| Jon Beavan | Other interests, outdoor recreation |
| Andrew Colley | YDNPA member |
| Colin Ginger* | Other interests, natural history, geology and walking. |
| Neil Heseltine | Land management |
| Michael Kenyon* | Recreation |
| Alex Law+ | Land management |
| Ken Miller | Recreation |
| Stuart Monk | Recreation |
| Jerry Pearlman | Recreation |
| Malcolm Petyt [†] | YDNPA member |
| John Richardson+ | Recreation |
| David Seaman | Recreation |
| Sara Spillett | Other interests, fell rescue, paragliding and hang gliding |
| Mike Stephenson | Recreation |
| Heather Thomas-Smith+ | Other interests, community and Parish Councils |
| Alistair Thompson | Other interests, volunteering |
| Pat Whelan | Land management |

Front cover:
The Disabled Ramblers enjoying a trip to Wharfedale

What has the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum achieved during 2011 to 2012

Three formal meetings have been held during this period at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's head office, Yoredale, Bainbridge. In addition, seven meetings of the advisory groups have been held during this period. Much of the Forum's work has been achieved through these meetings:

- Members of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum supported a two day visit of the Disabled Ramblers to the National Park.
- The Forum has engaged with Ride Yorkshire to help develop equestrian tourism in the National Park and have given advice to help identify and improve information on parking and other facilities for horse riders.
- Members have given advice and input into on-site signage relating to access and recreation in the National Park, particularly for long distance routes.
- The Forum have contributed towards the sharing of information between LAF's, Natural England and Defra by responding to Richard Benyon's (the Minister for the natural environment and fisheries) letter, which consulted LAFs on a suite of proposals aimed at improving the flow of information between LAFs and government.
- Members have commented on the document 'Draft Guidance for Organisers of Large-Scale Events'.

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum Consultations

Particular consultations of note include:

- **Ingleborough Common**
The Forum was consulted on the proposal to erect fencing to help maintain and improve habitat and species diversity. Members raised concerns about ensuring the fencing was temporary and that it be removed within five years and that access points be provided along the fence.
- **Lakes to Dales Designation Project**
The YDAF responded to the five key consultation questions for the proposed extension to the Yorkshire Dales National Park boundary.
- **Proposed New Native Woodland, Dentdale**
Members of the YDAF agreed on a number of comments in response to the proposed tree planting scheme on open access land in Dentdale. As the planting was for native British trees in a red squirrel area, the proposal was generally supported by members.



How can you be part of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum?

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum meetings are open to the public. You can find out the dates and venues of the meetings from the website www.yorkshiredales.org.uk

More details about the Forum or about vacancies on the Forum (filled annually between October and December) are available from www.yorkshiredales.org.uk or from the Forum Secretary on 01969 652363 or email accessforum@yorkshiredales.org.uk

Chairman's Postscript

March 2012

This has been another busy year for the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum. The advisory groups have continued with their valuable work and in July, the Access for All Advisory Group supported another two day visit from the 'Disabled Ramblers' with their all-terrain wheelchairs.

The forum has considered many access issues during the year including draft guidance for large scale events in the national park, signage, proposals for a new woodland in Dentdale and the removal of stiles to be replaced with gates. We have also been involved in consultations for the boundary review, the proposed budget cuts for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and the North Yorkshire County Council plans for the future of unsurfaced, unclassified roads in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

We have continued to be represented at meetings of the Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership, the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Local Access Forum and we attended a National LAF conference arranged by Natural England in Newcastle. Natural England are trying to improve their communication with local access forums and have set up an internet 'Huddle' for on-line discussions relating to national issues.

I would like to thank all LAF members who have given their time freely during the year particularly Malcolm Petyt, who has now finished his term after many years of valuable service. I would also like to thank Meghann Hull who did a sterling job in taking over the role of Access Development Officer whilst Rachel Briggs was on maternity leave.

Phil Woodyer
Chairman

