



Customer survey 2008

The Customer survey 2008 is a repeat of a survey that took place in 2002 with a very similar questionnaire. However, any comparisons need to be treated with caution as the two surveys took place at different times of year, and other factors such as the weather can have a significant impact. The 2008 survey was conducted by QA Research and uses 554 questionnaire responses spread across a number of locations which gives a statistically robust sample. However, comparisons between different areas are difficult because of the low number of returns at some sites.

Profile of visitors

- The majority of respondents (77%) belonged to the more mature age groups of 45 years and older. Only a small proportion of 2% belonged to the younger age groups of 16 to 24 years old.
- Similarly to 2002, 61% of participants in the survey were male, with around two fifths (38% in 2002, 39% in 2008) of respondents being female.
- 97% of those participating in the survey classed themselves as white, British, Irish or any other white background, 1% as mixed ethnicity, and 1% as Asian or Asian British.
- A new question for 2008 asked if respondents classed themselves as disabled; a total of 8% did.

Characteristics of visit

- The majority of respondents were either on a day visit from home outside of the Yorkshire Dales National Park or were staying overnight in the Yorkshire Dales National Park (47% and 44% respectively). Only 6% were on a day visit from home within the YDNP and 3% were staying overnight outside of the YDNP boundaries.
- The mean average party size was 3.68.
- The majority of respondents did not have any children with them (85%). Of those that did, the mean average for the amount of children taken was 1.95.
- Of the 47% of respondents who were staying overnight, the average length of stay was 4.18 nights.
- Almost all respondents had travelled by car to the YDNP (90%), and only 3% had used public buses or coaches.

- The YDNP attracts a high proportion of repeat visitors with 93% of all respondents having visited before and only 7% visiting the park for the very first time.
- The average number of visits amongst those that had visited in the last 12 months was 8.1 visits.
- The source of information used most by respondents to plan their visits, was an Ordnance Survey map or other type of map (52%). Around a quarter of respondents stated they did not use any other sources of information to plan their visit (24%), with around one in five stating they used a guide book (22%) and a similar amount stating they used a leaflet (22%). Internet usage has increased from 13% in 2002 to 28% in 2008 (12% of these had used the National Park Authority website).

Evaluation of Yorkshire Dales National Park

- The most frequently mentioned special quality of the Yorkshire Dales National Park was its natural beauty/scenery and views (84%). Two fifths commented, without being prompted, on the open space/freedom and remoteness (39%). For about one third, walks and walking opportunities was considered to be a special quality (34%).
- Unsurprisingly, car parks and toilets were the two facilities that were used by most respondents (81% and 75% respectively). 51% of visitors had used the rights of way network and 31% a National Park Centre.
- When asked to rate these facilities respondents had used a scale from 1 to 6 (with 1 being not at all satisfied and 6 being very satisfied). All facilities received positive mean average ratings above 4. Aspects that received the best ratings included guided walks (5.74 mean), National Park Centres (5.68 mean) and National Park leaflets (5.60 mean). The table below shows the ratings of facilities by interview location, although people were not necessarily commenting on the facilities at that location alone.

	Total	Grassing-ton	Hawes	Muker	Dent	Ribbles-head	Malham Cove	Aysgarth Falls	Buckden	Reeth	Horton in Ribblesdale
Guided walks	5.74	5.83	5.43	-	6.00	6.00	6.00	5.50	4.00	6.00	-
NP Centres	5.68	5.40	5.62	6.00	5.67	5.00	5.83	5.85	5.56	6.00	-
National Park leaflets	5.60	5.59	5.54	5.33	5.56	6.00	5.74	5.43	5.36	5.89	6.00
Rights of way	5.57	5.37	5.56	5.08	5.90	5.83	5.86	5.31	5.10	5.91	5.29
Cafe/pub/restaurant	5.56	5.28	5.50	5.88	5.83	5.80	5.55	5.67	5.07	5.91	6.00
Information boards	5.53	5.19	5.62	5.58	5.67	5.86	5.64	5.50	5.36	5.71	5.50
Picnic sites	5.46	5.29	5.33	-	5.25	6.00	5.25	6.00	6.00	5.00	-
Car parks	5.26	5.10	5.31	5.50	5.55	5.86	5.28	5.12	4.90	5.86	5.27
Toilets	5.14	4.84	5.33	5.44	5.68	5.89	4.79	5.18	4.51	5.91	5.10
Public transport provision	4.50	4.46	4.67	-	6.00	4.00	-	4.00	4.00	-	-
Public transport information	4.35	4.33	3.83	-	6.00	4.00	-	4.00	5.50	5.00	-
Base: Varying											

- Aspects most enjoyed by visitors to the National Park included scenery and landscape (62%), good walking (41%) and peace and tranquillity (22%).
- Aspects that visitors were less satisfied with included bad weather (16%), costs of parking (5%), traffic congestion (5%) and too many people (4%).

- Positively, a large majority of respondents were either very satisfied (73%) or satisfied (21%) with the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The mean overall average satisfaction score was 5.67 out of 6. The trend compared with 2002 is positive in all aspects apart from public transport information and provision.

	All Parks Visitor Survey 1994 (those answering good) ¹	Combined satisfaction score (5 and 6) 2002	Combined satisfaction score (5 and 6) 2008	Difference between 2008 and 2002
Picnic sites	57%	76%	92%	16%
Information boards	66%	77%	90%	13%
NP centres	82%	80%	94%	14%
Toilets	48%	61%	75%	14%
National Park leaflets	80%	86%	93%	7%
Car Parks	69%	71%	82%	11%
Cafe/pub/restaurant	71%	78%	91%	13%
Rights of way	71%	82%	92%	10%
Guided walks	n/a	93%	94%	1%
Public transport provision	6% (78% adequate)	67%	55%	-12%
Public transport information	n/a	71%	53%	-18%

¹ Visitors are now asked to rate services on a scale of 1 to 6 with 6 being very satisfied, whereas in 1994 they were given the choice of just good, adequate or poor.

Awareness of Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and its services

- 6 out of 10 visitors (60%) showed an unprompted awareness that the National Park Authority is the organisation in charge of looking after the natural environment of the Yorkshire Dales and promoting its special qualities and enjoyable aspects.
- An even higher proportion of almost nine out of ten (86%) had heard of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority before the day of the interview.
- The services that most respondents perceived to be managed by the National Park Authority included looking after the environment (67%), looking after the rights of way (53%) and tourism/promotion of the area (27%).