



**YORKSHIRE DALES**  
National Park



**Nidderdale**  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

## **Summary of Tourism Strategy and Action plan for the Yorkshire Dales**

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) and Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAONB), in 2008, achieved the EUROPARC Federation's Charter for Sustainable Tourism. A re-assessment, to see if the area still meets the criteria for this award, will take place in 2013. As part of this process a new sustainable tourism strategy has been developed by the Dales Tourism partnership. This revised strategy replaces the interim strategy produced in 2010.

Much has happened in relation to tourism in the Yorkshire Dales over the last five years including:

- Formation of the Dales Tourism partnership following the demise of the area tourism partnership in 2010. Whilst the partnership is not a destination management organisation its aim is to guide, (through this strategy) and ensure the coordination and development of sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales;
- Formation of the Dales Tourism Business Network in 2010 by the YDNPA and NAONB to work effectively with businesses in the area; this now has over 200 businesses actively involved, and is currently coordinated on a voluntary basis;
- Establishment of the Distinctly Dales project to help identify what is special about local areas and how businesses can use this as part of their USP in their promotion;
- Development of inspirational Brilliant Businesses case studies (available on [www.yorkshiredales.org.uk](http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk)) to help businesses share best practice;
- Promotion of the area through various media including through the highly successful Dales TV programme;
- Investment in sustainable tourism infrastructure:
  - the Pennine Bridleway and 'Way of the Roses' cycle route;
  - the rights of way network – the number of routes in good repair has increased, and more routes are accessible to people with limited mobility;
  - Proactive management of the area's green lane network, to ensure the tranquillity and special qualities of the area are conserved – key natural assets that attract people to the area;
- A number of outreach programmes including 'Go Dales!' and Mosaic have been/are running to bring people to the Yorkshire Dales who would not otherwise have the chance to visit; ultimately those returning will support the local tourism economy;
- Investment in sustainable transport:
  - The Dales & Bowland Community Interest Company now runs the DalesBus network. This has increased passenger numbers threefold since 2007;
  - The area is receiving an investment of £1m to support local sustainable transport solutions through the Dales Integrated Transport Alliance (DITA);
- The National Park Authority's own establishments becoming beacons for sustainable tourism:
  - The four National Park Centres (including Dales Countryside Museum) are accredited through the Green Tourism Business Scheme;

- Dales Countryside Museum has been awarded Visit England's quality mark under its Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme.

For this revised strategy a new assessment of the area has been carried out, which includes a review of tourism facilities and services, a profile of visitors, and an analysis of tourism performance. To inform the strategy, surveys have been conducted with visitors and tourism businesses. There has also been wide consultation with organisations through the Dales Tourism partnership and with local communities as part of the National Park Management Plan consultation.

From this assessment and the consultation responses, a vision and series of SMART objectives, to measure progress, have been developed for the area.

The vision for sustainable tourism in the Yorkshire Dales is:

*The Yorkshire Dales will be a UK-recognised quality destination for enjoying and experiencing a dramatic and tranquil landscape of limestone scenery, moorland and intimate individual dales. The area will be a well-managed destination with the strong involvement of the private sector and local communities. Greater numbers of businesses will be informing customers about what makes their area locally distinctive, and providing detailed information on ways to explore the area by foot, bike, horse back and public transport. There will be celebrated local food and drink, and vibrant arts and crafts businesses. Tourism businesses and visitors will seek to conserve and enhance the environment and heritage, including through visitor payback schemes and taking an active part in conservation. Initiatives will be in place to encourage more visitors during the winter period, and to provide more opportunities to appreciate the wildlife, habitats and cultural heritage of the Dales.*

The aims for this strategy are:

- Aim 1. Promoting a distinctive, high-quality and sustainable destination
- Aim 2. Providing opportunities for experiencing and learning about the area
- Aim 3. Producing a positive environment for tourism businesses
- Aim 4. Encouraging environmental responsibility
- Aim 5. Ensuring positive benefits to local communities and volunteers

Underlying these five aims are a number of themes and actions which include many which are Management Plan objectives. (These will be refined further once the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan objectives have been set. The National Park Management Plan, and Nidderdale AONB Management Plan, both have other objectives of relevance to this strategy).

### **Key draft objectives (2013 to 2018)**

- Promote the Yorkshire Dales National Park as a leading sustainable tourism destination in the UK renowned for its local distinctiveness:
  - implement three sustainable tourism campaigns by 2018
  - increase the number of businesses adopting responsible tourism practices from 17 to 80

- promote the local distinctiveness toolkit and develop initiatives at 5 key locations
- Maintain and develop strong business networks covering farming, tourism, creative industries and knowledge-based businesses, and ensure that all businesses have direct access to business support within 30 minutes drive.
- Improve the quality, variety and marketing of the tourism 'offer' within the National Park to extend the season and get more visitors to stay overnight so as to increase the value of tourism by 20% in real terms by 2020.
- Work with local people to deliver a world class Tour de France event in 2014 that showcases the National Park, and develop a range of new opportunities for people to explore the National Park by bicycle, including creating 3 new routes for family-friendly, traffic free cycling by 2018.

**Key actions** (to help deliver the objectives)

*Yorkshire Dales National Park logo* - Encourage local businesses to use the National Park logo, as part of their own promotion, destination branding and key messages;

*Distinctly Dales project* – continue to work with local businesses, to help them promote what is special about their area, to reinforce 'local distinctiveness' and 'sense of place';

*Dales Tourism Business Network* – continue to support the network as a point of contact between organisations and businesses, and to facilitate delivery ([www.dalestourism.com](http://www.dalestourism.com));

*Destination management* – ensure a coordinated and focused approach to destination management, amongst relevant organisations, through the Dales Tourism partnership;

*Campaigns* - identify key niche markets and undertake appropriate PR, social media and marketing campaigns (eg encourage more visitors during the winter period, to explore the area without their car, appreciation of wildlife, cultural heritage and food and drink);

*Green traveller* - establish the area as a 'green traveller' destination so that the area's businesses can benefit from its web site and niche marketing ([www.greentraveller.co.uk](http://www.greentraveller.co.uk));

*Visitor information hubs* - National Park Centres to provide an enhanced 'hub' for visitor information and sustainable tourism services, encouraging discovery of what the area has to offer including walking, cycling and travel options, so people stay in the area longer;

*Focused information* – make it easier for potential visitors using the internet to plan a visit, book accommodation, and understand the wide range of different places to visit and things to do; use social media to strengthen the information, and back up with printed material;

*Events* – provide better coordination and booking facilities for events across the Yorkshire Dales;

*Planning* – review the National Park local plan policies in relation to visitor facilities.

## Diagram showing how the Tourism Strategy has been developed

