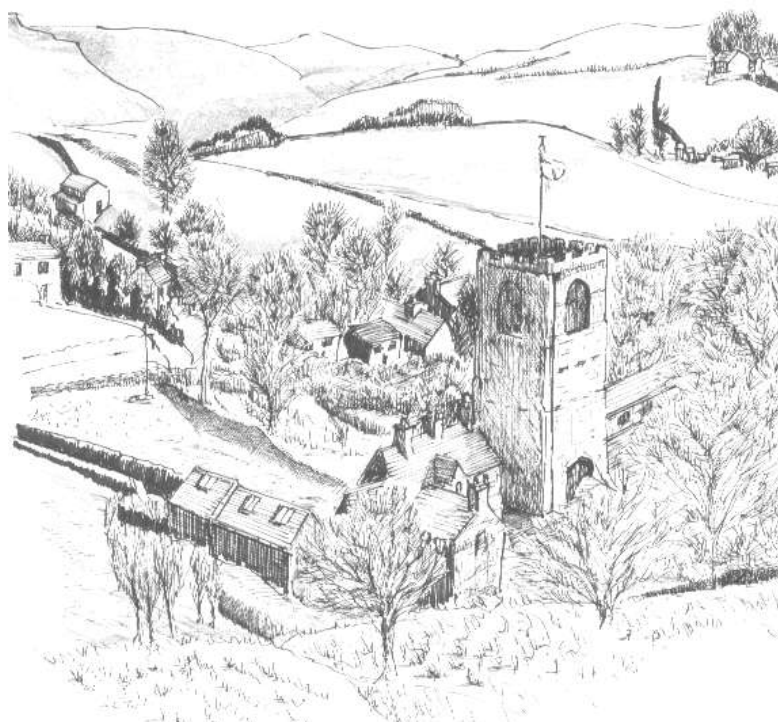


# THE MALHAMDALE PLAN

November 2005



**Malhamdale Initiative**

**Kirkby Malham Parish Council  
Airton Parish Meeting  
Calton Parish Meeting  
Otterburn Parish Meeting  
Scosthrop Parish Meeting**

## **Acknowledgements**

The Steering Group would like to take this opportunity to thank the following who have given assistance, support and contributions to help bring the Plan together:

Chris Hall, Bob Hart, Annie Heseltine, Sally Heseltine, Mike Holden, Susie Holden, Alan Mercer, Bernadette Schutte, Johnnie Towler

Nita Hart who has acted as treasurer to the Steering Group

Leeds Metropolitan University for assistance in analysing the survey results

Gemma Astin who gave several days of her time to enter survey results onto computer while on secondment to the Malham Tarn Field Centre preparing a final year dissertation on Malhamdale Initiative for her BA course in Human Geography at the University of Wales

We would also like to thank members of the following organisations who have given their time and valuable advice

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority  
Craven District Council  
North Yorkshire County Council  
The National Trust

The Steering Group comprises:

Chris Wildman (Chairman), Sandy Tod (Secretary), Rob Hudson, Simon Maufe, Tony Robinson, Mark Throup, David Whittaker, John Varney

# THE MALHAMDALE PLAN

## Table of contents

	Page Number
<b>SECTION 1</b> Executive Summary .....	2
<b>SECTION 2</b> Introduction to Malhamdale .....	3
<b>SECTION 3</b> Location .....	4
<b>SECTION 4</b> Preparing the Malhamdale Plan .....	5
<b>SECTION 5</b> Summary of Results .....	6
<b>SECTION 6</b> Malhamdale Plan - the Vision .....	7
<b>SECTION 7</b> The Community	
<b>7.1</b> The Community Generally .....	9
<b>7.2</b> Activities and Facilities .....	10
<b>7.3</b> Education, Training and Young People .....	11
<b>7.4</b> Housing .....	12
<b>7.5</b> Traffic and Transport .....	13
<b>7.6</b> Services and Amenities .....	14
<b>SECTION 8</b> Economy and Employment	
<b>8.1</b> Agriculture .....	15
<b>8.2</b> Tourism .....	16
<b>8.3</b> Employment Generally .....	17
<b>SECTION 9</b> The Environment	
<b>9.1</b> Countryside Conservation .....	18
<b>9.2</b> Energy Conservation .....	19
<b>SECTION 10</b> Action Plan .....	20

# THE MALHAMDALE PLAN

## Section 1 Executive Summary

The Malhamdale Plan brings together almost two years of survey, research, discussion and report writing involving volunteers from all sections of the community. It was made possible by a grant from the Countryside Agency whose helpful advice and support have been instrumental in creating a vision for the future of Malhamdale.

The Steering Group, all of whom are members of Malhamdale Initiative, an action group formed in 2002, carried out a survey of the population of the Dale which then formed the basis of the Plan. Following preparation of a survey report, the Steering Group was supplemented by volunteers to form three teams each of which addressed one of the fundamental issues, namely Community, Economy and Environment. Discussions were held with Yorkshire Dales National Park authority (YDNPA), Craven District council (CDC), North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and the National Trust. Kirkby Malham Parish Council (KMPC) and chairs of Parish Meetings were consulted and kept informed of progress.

The Plan comprises a descriptive introduction to Malhamdale, and its location, with an account of how the Plan was prepared and a brief summary of the survey results. The Malhamdale Plan's Vision is for a thriving, sustainable community supported by a robust local economy. Section 6 lists external influences, and describes how these can be exploited to realise this vision by means of our major assets, our community and environment, in partnership with YDNPA. The community demands that "change" is minimised, therefore subtle improvements are proposed which, if effected, will bring about a robust economy while enhancing rather than harming the manmade and natural environment. An Action Plan summarises the steps to be taken to implement these measures.

A sustainable community needs a robust economy. Tourism is the major employer in the Dale. Operators and accommodation providers need to aim for added value by broadening the range and quality of the services provided in the Dale to attract more long stay customers. Traditional dales farming needs to sustain an environment that will continue to attract tourists and there is scope here for farming and tourism to be more supportive of each other, by providing complementary services. However the danger of over-reliance on these two interdependent businesses is recognised and promotion of a more diverse economic base made up of small businesses and home-workers is considered prudent. These need affordable homes and work places, some of which will come from conversions of existing redundant farm buildings while some will require new buildings. A survey is proposed to evaluate both need and potential supply.

Environmentally the Dale's natural scenic grandeur needs to be cherished and enhanced by a number of conservation projects, some of which can be funded from tourism. Ways of dealing with traffic congestion and excessive visitor parking are proposed, as are the provision of sporting and playground facilities for community use, at present lacking in the Dale.

The recommendations in this Plan are inter-related and need to be considered as part of a united approach. It is proposed to form a "Malhamdale Partnership" comprising KMPC, chairs of Parish Meetings and local authority representatives, to oversee implementation of the Plan. This is discussed in more detail in Section 10, Action Plan.

## Section 2 Introduction to Malhamdale

Malhamdale lies in the District of Craven in the southern Yorkshire Dales and it is one of the smaller dales in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Thanks to its spectacular limestone scenery it is one of the most visited and tourism has replaced farming as the major employer. It is however, attractive as a place to live to young families as well as retired people who appreciate living in a rural environment, with the healthy lifestyle and close-knit active community that the Dale has to offer.

In the north lies Malham Moor, an area of limestone uplands from where run-off reaches the headwaters of the River Aire via a network of subterranean streams and tributaries. The spectacular rugged limestone topography of the upper part of the Dale is rich in heritage. Traces of ancient human habitation and field patterns, relics of evolving agricultural practices, have survived to create a unique landscape, the most prominent features being dry stone walls and barns dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and earlier. Natural limestone features such as Malham Cove, a 100 metre high limestone escarpment, and the spectacular gorge of Gordale Scar with tumbling waterfalls, attract thousands of tourists, walkers, artists, photographers, climbers and day-trippers each year as well as providing an inspiring setting for a number of centres offering further education and training in a wide variety of subjects.

Of the Parishes making up the Dale, Airton with Scosthrop is the largest settlement with a population of 300. Airton has one recently-opened farm shop, café and arts and crafts emporium. Malham (pop. 150) at the head of the Dale has a National Park Centre, tourist shops, a tiny post office, two inns and cafes and tearooms catering mainly for visitors, while Kirkby Malham (pop. 90) has the only primary school in the Dale and an inn. The three hamlets of Calton (pop. 60), Otterburn (pop.60) and Hanlith (pop. 30) are traditionally farming but increasingly residential. Malham Moor has a widely scattered population of 60, mostly farms but including Malham Tarn Field Centre at Malham Tarn House and the Centre for Management Creativity in a converted farmstead at High Trenhouse. Newfield Hall, a guest house owned by the Holiday Fellowship, is located in the south of the Dale.

Most of Malhamdale is privately owned although the National Trust owns several farms that are rented out to tenant farmers, and Tarn House and Estate which is leased to the Field Studies Council.

### Section3 Location

Malhamdale covers some 35 square miles between Ribblesdale and Wharfedale and includes the parishes of Malham, Malham Moor, Kirkby Malham and Hanlith, served by Kirkby Malham Parish Council and Airton, Calton, Otterburn and Scosthrop Parishes, each served only by a Parish Meeting. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) is the Planning Authority for the area while the higher statutory authorities are Craven District Council (CDC) and North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC).

The Dale is accessed from the south via a number of minor unclassified roads leading off the A65 trunk road from Skipton to the Lake District. These connect with a spinal road running north-south between Malham and Gargrave. Two unclassified moorland roads give access from the north via Arncliffe and Langcliffe respectively to Malham. The nearest towns are Settle, six miles from Malham, and the larger town of Skipton, twelve miles away. Connections to the Leeds - Carlisle railway line and to the Leeds - Carnforth line, for Lancashire and Cumbria, can be made at Skipton, Gargrave, Hellifield and at either Settle or Giggleswick. The Pennine Way passes through Malham as does the recently upgraded Pennine Bridleway. The Leeds - Liverpool canal passes through Gargrave and the nearest airport is Leeds & Bradford which is some 30 miles away.

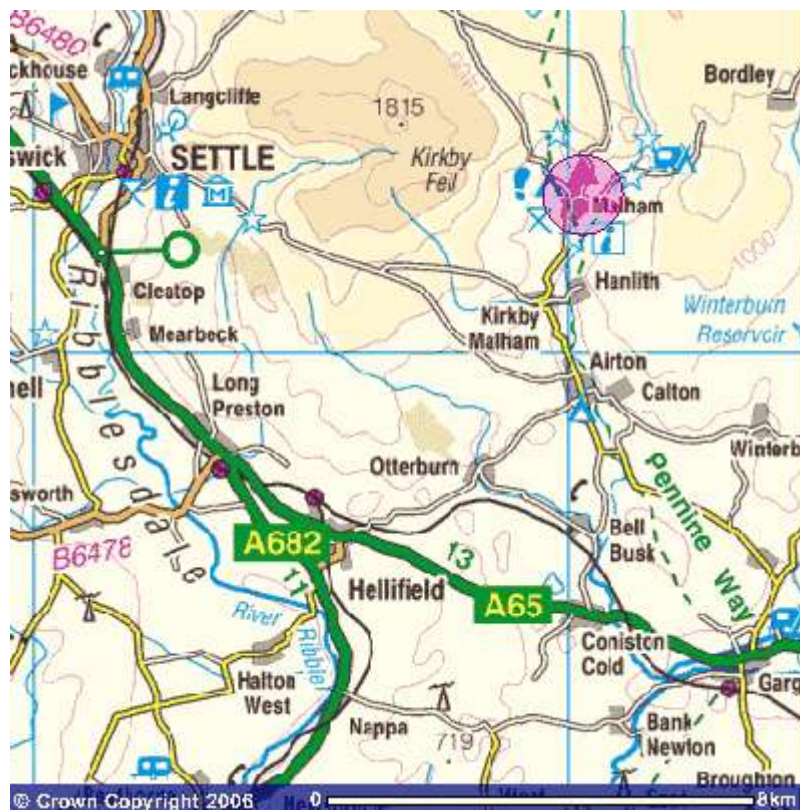


Image produced from the Ordnance Survey Get-a-map service. Image reproduced with kind permission of Ordnance Survey and Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland.

## **Section 4 Preparing the Malhamdale Plan**

In November 2003 the Countryside Agency awarded a grant to Kirkby Malham Parish Council (KMPC) to prepare a Parish Plan under its "Vital Villages" programme. The Parish Council asked Malhamdale Initiative, a local action group formed the year before, to carry out a survey and prepare the Plan and Action Plan on their behalf. The Parishes of Airton, Calton, Otterburn and Scosthrop, not within KMPC boundaries but served by Parish Meetings, were included for completeness and to make a viable project area. In view of this extension of scope Malhamdale Plan has been selected as the title.

Malhamdale Initiative (MI) was formed on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002 at a public meeting in Kirkby Malham attended by 60 residents. The objectives of the Initiative were to bring about the following:

- A thriving economy
- better facilities and amenities
- connection with new technology
- integrated public transport and reduced traffic
- vibrant communities

In January 2004 a second public meeting introduced the Parish Plan project to the community whose views then formed the basis of the questionnaire which was distributed to 250 households the following June. Following a statistical analysis using "Compass for Windows" software, preliminary findings were published in the Parish News in February 2005. A third public meeting was held in March to assemble a team to carry the Plan through to completion. Three study groups, covering Community, Economy and Environment, reported back to the whole team at a co-ordination meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2005 to set the foundation for drafting The Malhamdale Plan.

Consultation meetings were held with YDNPA, NYCC (Highways and Transportation Dept), CDC, and the National Trust during May and June 2005 and a further meeting with CDC in October to compare proposals against established policy frameworks. A meeting was held to present the Preliminary Plan recommendations to KMPC and the chairs of Parish Meetings in May 2005. In November the final draft was circulated to the community whose responses and views were sought at a public meeting held in Kirkby Malham Parish Hall on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2005.

The Malhamdale Plan and Action Plan were finalised and adopted by the Parish Council and chairs of Parish Meetings early in 2006.

## Section 5 Summary of Results

Responses to the questionnaire were received from 125 households, 50% of the targeted population. Predominant age groups are 9 -11 years for children and 40 - 60 years for adults. Forty nine families have lived in the Dale for less than five years outnumbering the next largest group who are those who have lived in the Dale for more than 21 years. The main reasons for coming to the Dale to live are love of the Dales, quality of life and peace and quiet. The rural environment and friendly community are what residents like most about the Dale while their dislikes include lack of recreational facilities, excessive traffic through villages and poor public transport. Sixty one percent of respondents to the survey would like the Dale to stay as it is, 54% want the area to be a working community. Malham is seen as the tourist centre of the Dale while other villages are mainly residential. If the Parish had funds to spend 35% would like it spent on a children's playground and 12% on sports facilities.

The majority of respondents feel the Parish Council and Parish Meetings are most aware of local concerns and feelings. Craven District Council is generally regarded as being better than the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and North Yorkshire County Council in this respect.

Tourism is the leading employer in the Dale, and the future is viewed with optimism. Farming, on the other hand, has been in decline for many years. Most would prefer to see new local job opportunities arising from traditional farming and conservation projects with tourist accommodation further down the list. There is support for new businesses, as long as these fit in with the fabric of the Dale. Conservation of the Dale's heritage and environment is important to most residents, particular concerns being crumbling dry-stone walls and barns and loss of wildlife habitat. Traffic congestion and excessive visitor parking on roadsides and in villages resulting from the "honey-pot" status of Malham is high on the list of residents' concerns

Community activities are well supported but the lack of play areas for young children and a sports field are keenly felt by many adults and young people. Village halls are badly in need of remedial work to bring them up to an acceptable standard and there is support for a purpose built sports hall, possibly incorporating a new community centre, built to modern standards.

Local services are generally considered satisfactory although basic services are lacking in some of the more remote parts. Refuse collection is rated excellent.

Young people enjoy the healthy lifestyle and relatively safe environment of the Dale but suffer from lack of local recreational facilities.

### Comments from the questionnaire ...

"Malham needs to provide homes for the people who work here, and business opportunities/work for the people who can afford to buy homes here. This will maintain a sustainable, thriving community."

"reduce number of cars, public transport to get people to work, public transport links"

"need to work together to create all year high spend visitor numbers. Reduce dependency on weekend trippers. Foot and mouth taught us importance of tourism to ALL sectors of economy."



## Section 6 Malhamdale Plan - the Vision

The Malhamdale Plan is driven by the survey results and aims to complement the YDNPA Local Plan as well as other policies such as NYCC's Local Transport Plan. The Action Plan identifies projects arising from the Plan's recommendations.

The Plan's vision is to

- **achieve a sustainable, thriving community supported by a robust local economy consistent with the National Park's purpose of conserving the manmade and natural environment.**
- **build on Malhamdale's position as one of Yorkshire's top tourist attractions by enhancing the range and quality of visitor experiences without necessarily increasing visitor numbers.**
- **exploit the enthusiasm and initiative of an already caring and supportive community through a Partnership between the community and the National Park.**

This vision must be considered in the context of national and international developments that have a fundamental bearing on life in Malhamdale. These include:

- Falling payments to farmers due to the bargaining power of the major retailers
- Restrictions on farming imposed by the EC/DEFRA and demise of agricultural subsidies based on agricultural production in favour of a Single Farm Payment
- Effects of the Countryside Rights of Way Act (CROW)
- Stronger promotion of tourism by YDNPA as a requirement of its government funding and publicity given to Malham Cove as one of Yorkshire's top scenic attractions
- Demise of the small shop and the introduction of internet shopping and home deliveries
- The spread of the internet and arrival of broadband in the Dale
- Widespread car ownership
- The effect of drink/driving laws on pubs
- Decreasing numbers attending places of worship and the reduced influence of the Church in creating a cohesive and harmonious community
- Increased requirements to recycle waste
- Probable above-inflation yearly increases in the cost of energy and government efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Not all of these have a negative effect on life in the Dale and it is the aim of this Plan to exploit these developments in such a way as to produce a healthy, thriving and prosperous community. Some examples of this are:-

- The changes in farming subsidies provide an opportunity to improve the environment, and to create new opportunities for a more diverse and sustainable economy
- Promotion of tourism creates further opportunities for diversification and improvements in quality, hence added value, resulting from confidence in the tourism sector,
- Increasing fuel prices create an economic environment in which public transport and innovative solutions for visitor transportation will become more viable
- The drive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions presents the opportunity for environmental improvements such as tree planting to be funded by carbon balance charging of motorists coming into the Dale

- The drive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and stringent insulation requirements in buildings could lead to a new vernacular in dales architectural style which could generate interest in modern dales architecture and leave a positive legacy for future generations.

Implementation of some of these measures in Malhamdale may challenge the stated "cautionary" principle which is the basis of YDNPA planning policy. A change from traditional to a more progressive way of thinking from residents will be required, however we believe that this vision is capable of being realised because:

- we have a caring, active and supportive community
- the Dale is seen as a secure and healthy environment for young families.
- the quality of the Dale as a place to live and visitor attraction is second to none
- the Dale attracts retired professionals with the enthusiasm and expertise to make positive contributions to the community
- The Dale has a rich heritage capable of adding inspiration to a learning experience

*Sustainability is a characteristic of whole living systems. A complex system is more than the sum of its parts because it includes the way its parts relate to one another for the benefit of the whole. Every system can be understood at one level as a relationship between community (the sustaining mutual support of the parts), economy (the sustaining flow of energy in the system) and environment (the sustaining relationship between the system and the context in which it exists).*

*We have a difficulty in that most of us are steeped in a kind of thinking that does not take account of the complexity of living systems and we tend to deal with this complexity in overly simple and mechanistic ways. We readily overlook effects of our actions that are remote in time or space (e.g. pollution).*

*In developing this plan we need to be aware of these tendencies and try to see Malhamdale as a living whole to be nurtured in every aspect so that our legacy to future generations is healthy and wholesome.*

*John Varney, May 2005*

***Recommendation***

*It is proposed to work in partnership with YDNPA in order that individual planning decisions may encourage developments that will lead to a sustainable future for the community*

## Section 7

### The Community

#### 7.1 The Community Generally

In Malhamdale 39% of the population are in full or part-time employment, 25% self employed, 22% retired and 14% in full time education. Predominant age groups are 9 -11 years for children and 40 - 60 years for adults. Families that have moved into the Dale in the last 5 years account for 38% of the population, the same percentage as those that have lived in the Dale for over 10 years. Twice as many residents are employed outside the Dale as are employed in it, which is not surprising given the high price of homes and scarcity of well paid jobs in the Dale. The rural environment and friendly community are aspects that residents like most about the Dale while dislikes include too many tourists, lack of recreational facilities, excessive traffic through villages and poor public transport

Local residents are concerned by the impact visitors have on their quality of life, in particular parked cars, litter and occasionally, anti social behaviour after late night drinking. These problems arise primarily from the weekend influx of day-trippers. Market forces left undirected will result in a drift down-market and intentional initiatives will be needed to prevent such drift with its social and economic outcomes. Without any control on visitor numbers, enjoyment of the tranquillity and serenity of the Dale is bound to suffer.

#### **Calton resident:**

"Malhamdale is a prosperous community, the majority of residents are here by choice. Bus services and village shops have died a natural death. Life changes, evolves. Because of our proximity to Yorks/Lancs towns it is a desirable retirement/commuter district. That is its role. In our time in Calton 3 working farms have been reduced to one, 6 houses have been made from old barns, 3 holiday cottages are now permanent homes and there are now 21 households instead of 12, 30 years ago. Natural evolution of an agricultural village to a retirement/commuter community. Not better, not worse, but different."

#### **Malham resident:**

"Most who have been here like it "as it is". We are used to inconveniences and still like it. If we had wanted an urban scene we would not have moved here. As far as what is here for children, I quote:

"I can see lambs being born  
I can see birds singing in the trees  
I can see the countryside all around us  
I can see beautiful flowers  
I can see sheep grazing in the grass  
The dale is a wonderful place.

Resident - aged 7"

## 7.2 Activities and Facilities

Malhamdale Show and the Malham Safari Trail bring the community together annually. Many local clubs and interest groups exist for those with the inclination and time to use them. While Church and Chapels are not as well attended as in the past there is strong support for fund-raising events for the restoration and maintenance of Church buildings.

The Dale has three village halls. They all need upgrading to improve toilets and decorations. Kirkby Malham Parish Church Hall has a ramp for wheelchair access but no other facilities for the disabled. Airton Methodist Chapel hall has work in hand to provide facilities for the disabled. None are suitable for indoor sports, an amenity considered lacking by 30% of respondents.

The Dale has no children's play area or sports field. With over 60% of children being under secondary school age, play areas for smaller children are badly needed. Older children have to be driven to either Settle or Skipton to take part in sports, highlighting the need for a sports field, which was requested by 30% of respondents.

The need exists for an indoor sports facility, a sports field and safe play areas for children. The first two could be combined into a new Community Centre however a study is required to assess whether existing halls are adequate for the community's needs or whether it would be more economical to provide for these in a new Community Centre, releasing the existing halls for other purposes.

If additional facilities are provided for residents, consideration should also be given to extending their use, and their income generation, to visitors.

### **Airton resident:**

"The school has a recreation area that could be used by the community with the school and children. Some of it could be used to develop wildlife, vegetable growing, art groups, etc. The school is always busy and cannot maintain it alone, but it could give a lot of pleasure to keen gardeners and conservationists in the area and the children would learn a great deal and have pride in it, if they had some kind of help and support. With the right enthusiasm it could be a real asset to the whole community."

### **Hanlith resident:**

"A new community centre/sports hall would be good for sports, dances, meetings, computer facilities, etc., Local halls could then be converted into low cost housing. Redundant barns should be used for additional housing and for small businesses." More housing needs to be provided for young families.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. Carry out a study into practicality and cost of upgrading, and suitability-for-purpose, of existing facilities against the provision of an all-purpose community hall within the Dale.*
- 2. Carry out a feasibility study into the provision of recreational and playground facilities, possibly in combination with an all-purpose community hall and identify possible locations and seek funding.*

### 7.3 Education, Training and Young People

One third of homes in the Dale have under 16's attending playgroup, nursery or school while a quarter have someone attending adult education or evening classes. Very few feel constrained by lack of training facilities.

Seventy three percent of respondents to the survey said that they, or someone in their family, would attend evening classes if the venue were Kirkby Malham School and 12 people expressed willingness to run evening classes in a range of subjects. The most popular subjects were shown to be computer skills and sports training. Some evening classes already take place in the Dale run by local people, who advertise the classes in the Parish Magazine and by word of mouth.

Young people enjoy the countryside and environment the Dale has to offer but suffer from lack of local amenities and sporting facilities. Most support Malham Show and the Safari. If cycleways were provided 75% would use them for recreation and visiting friends. There is a strong demand (78%) for outdoor and indoor sports facilities. Nearly all those responding said they would be prepared to help organize these activities.

#### **Young person from Kirkby Malham:**

"I think that trying to make the dale attractive to young people will get out of hand and will make a real mess. [People] have got to learn when to stop building stuff because half the stuff they build doesn't really do much. I think it would be fair to implement new activities as long as it doesn't affect more touched parts of the countryside. Things like Malham Show/Safari/Meander are good but building stuff like skate parks is plain STUPID! My advice is to spend the money wisely"

#### ***Recommendation:***

- 1. Encourage and support suitably qualified local residents in running evening classes.***
- 2. Kirkby Malham Parish Council, Craven District Council and NYCC should support Kirkby Malham school in the provision of out of school activities and child care.***

## 7.4 Housing

The Dale's attraction as a place to live and restrictions on new development force house prices out of reach of those without the well-paid jobs so lacking in the Dale. The position is thought to be exacerbated by second homes and holiday cottages, both of which deny local people the opportunity to own smaller properties, and can diminish a community's cohesiveness. The survey indicates that 70% of residents believe that Malhamdale has the capacity to absorb more housing. Just over 50% favour affordable starter homes for first-time buyers, while 18% support small houses or flats to rent and 20% support sheltered housing for the elderly, however the true need for affordable housing in the Dale is unknown.

Tourism relies heavily on part-time local workers and a limited number of full time employees requiring local rented or tied housing. Accommodation providers need to be resident on site to deal with complaints, etc., and some employ workers on short term residential contract. With one third of employers in the major industry in the Dale considering expansion, some accommodation for staff is needed.

In the future, if Malhamdale is to attract new businesses, entrepreneurs will seek to have a home in the Dale as will skilled workers, so any increase in the number of homes requires answers to questions about type of housing and timing of construction of new homes and business premises. The number of locations where housing and small businesses can be accommodated is limited, and both farm buildings and new sites should be preserved for developments in keeping with the growth of a robust local economy, while YDNPA's declared policy should not be allowed to discourage entrepreneurs from joining the community. Conversely, the conversion of existing business premises into residential or holiday accommodation should be strongly discouraged. Suitable development in and beyond current boundaries, on a case by case basis is preferable to extending settlement boundaries. Gradual incremental development will replicate the organic growth that has shaped the heritage-built environment.

### **Malham resident:**

"Malham needs to provide homes for the people who work here, and business opportunities/work for the people who can afford to buy homes here. Thus maintaining a sustainable, thriving community."

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. The above considerations be taken into consideration as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the YDNPA Local Plan in determining local planning applications.*
- 2. A study be undertaken with CDC and YDNPA to produce an audit of sites for housing and small businesses suitable for conversion or new build.*
- 3. A parallel study will examine the need for affordable housing for sale and rent, for those presently in full time employment in Malhamdale and to meet anticipated future needs.*
- 4. Working closely with this group, a study be carried out to examine the next steps to attract new businesses to the Dale, projections of premises and housing requirements*
- 5. At the conclusion of the above in consultation with KMPC and the Parish Meetings consider how best to implement the findings*

## 7.5 Traffic and Transport

Malhamdale is one of the most popular tourist “honey pots” in Yorkshire, and the resulting excessive traffic and visitor parking detracts from the Dale at weekends and during school holidays. The Dale's picturesque narrow, stonewall-lined roads do not cope well with heavy traffic and large tour buses. A park and ride strategy combining improved public transport and increased paid parking spaces is supported by 72% of respondents. This is consistent with NYCC's Local Transport Plan, however full implementation would require a prohibitively large investment in car parks and shuttle buses and a phased approach, starting with charging for parking in villages with revenue used to improve public transport would seem appropriate. The introduction of regular shuttle buses, particularly between Settle and Malham, is a welcome development, but needs more publicity.

Whereas rising fuel prices may discourage the use of private cars for routine journeys such as shopping and favour improved public transport, a convenience store in the Dale, while favoured by 47% of residents, is unlikely to have a significant effect on traffic congestion.

Forty seven percent of residents would use cycle ways, mainly for pleasure. They would also be used by children going to school, reducing congestion at those times. Kirkby Malham Primary School is at present only accessible by car or bus. The possibility of providing safe cycling routes through the length of the Dale needs to be investigated.

The lack of garage parking is a problem for 28% of residents in Kirkby Malham and 14% in Airton where parking on the main road causes considerable congestion. Traffic calming is requested by 48% of residents in villages where there is also concern that large lorries and coaches are damaging old buildings. The provision of residents' parking bays can be designed to effect traffic calming and this option should be investigated further.

### **Malham Moor resident:**

“Public transport could and should reduce number of cars - less congestion - less parking in the dale  
Public transport should make it easy for people to travel to work, either into the dale or out of it.  
Needs good links to bus/rail/air. This is vital  
There is an opportunity to link with cheap inward flights.”

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. Support proposals for an integrated transport system in accordance with the NYCC Local Transport Plan with local projects supported by revenues from increased paid parking.**
- 2. Consider the introduction of "pay and display" parking on the approach road to Malham and for short term parking only in Malham village.**
- 3. Investigate residents' parking bays on the main streets in Airton, Kirkby Malham and Malham.**
- 4. Any increase of visitor parking in Malham and other areas should be permitted only by extra paid parking facilities. A graded price system is required which will encourage parking out of the centre of Malham.**
- 5. Encourage the use of footpaths and the creation of cycle ways to make walking and cycling to school a safe and attractive option.**

## 7.6 Services and Amenities

While a convenience store is favoured by 47% of residents, a store catering solely for daily basic needs is unlikely to be viable in such a small community in which many families work, and therefore shop, away from the Dale. Since the survey was carried out, the Farm Shop at Airton, which specialises in locally sourced, quality food increasingly fills this need.

Mains services are generally considered good, however mains water supply and sewerage is not available to residents of Hanlith or Malham Moor, while Calton and 50% of Otterburn lack mains sewerage. Farms on Malham Moor and some other isolated properties in the Dale either lack mains electricity altogether or have to rely on an inadequate grid connection. While wind or solar power are viable alternatives, these are at present considered unfavourably by YDNPA because of visual impact. Underground mains connections are extremely expensive and this is an obstacle to the economic use of isolated buildings. Public conveniences in Malham have come under threat of sale or closure. In the context of Malham's status as a prime tourist attraction this should not be allowed to happen and the toilets should be upgraded and provided with facilities for the disabled.

Refuse collection is rated good by 95% of respondents but location of recycling facilities needs to be published. Clearing up litter and dog fouling with the help of local volunteers has successfully dealt with this nuisance in the past, however an official response is required and YDNPA and CDC need to co-operate in providing facilities appropriate to Malham's status as one of North Yorkshire's most popular tourist attractions.

High intensity security lights are unsuitable for a rural environment and cause light pollution. This is a planning issue which needs to be addressed by YDNPA. While the indiscriminate setting off of fireworks has much reduced recently they are still used on "special" occasions. They disturb wildlife, farm animals and pets. Warning neighbours and the local community is a social responsibility and can be done via KMPC or Parish Meetings.

### **Otterburn resident:**

"A community bus could also be used for social outings/activities."

### **Recommendations**

- 1. Agree realistic planning guidelines with YDNPA for small scale solar and wind power on remote farm buildings**
- 2. Publish locations of recycling facilities in the Parish Magazine.**
- 3. Litter and dog litter bins to be placed in car parks and at strategic locations on popular walks, with regular weekly collection.**
- 4. KMPC to negotiate with CDC to take over and run Malham public conveniences**
- 5. Request YDNPA to enforce planning restrictions on high intensity security lights.**
- 6. Private fireworks displays to be subject to prior Parish Meeting or Parish Council approval.**



## Section 8 Economy and Employment

### 8.1 Agriculture

Hill farming has created the special characteristics of Malhamdale which has been primarily responsible for attracting visitors to the area. Whereas this suggests that a thriving farming industry is vital, external changes in recent years have made life more difficult and less profitable for farmers. Moreover, it is the external forces that are most likely to shape the future of Dales farming, rather than any actions deriving from the Plan. The number working on the land is dwindling and in this seasonal industry, more work is now contracted out. Farmers are urged to adopt new practices and to diversify but 46% of respondents cited the difficulties of obtaining planning approval, as a constraint. Thus a second, non-farming family income is often sought but there is a shortage of suitable, well-paid local jobs.

Out of 15 farmers responding to the survey, 7 have engaged in a total of 10 farm diversification projects, all but 1 in the tourism sector. All projects that had been operating for a significant period were rated successful. While there may be scope for other tourism related services, consideration needs to be given to other business opportunities.

It is said that the lack of housing for farm workers is a problem, yet many barns have been converted to houses and sold on the open market. Those farm buildings, that are now left, could be vital in sustaining a vibrant community in Malhamdale in the longer term, so that no hasty decisions should be taken about their future.

***Recommendation:***

- 1. More collaboration between farmers, tourism providers and the rest of the community to find ways of supporting traditional farming in the Dale or developing new land uses that are compatible with the scenery***
- 2. Farmers considering diversification consult with CDC Economic Development Officers to investigate opportunities.***

## 8.2 Tourism

Tourism, centred on Malham, is the major employer in the Dale, accounting for 30% of local jobs but, in this seasonal industry, many are part-time. The industry generally does not pay well, so that there is a high level of full-time employee mobility. Visitor accommodation provides the majority of jobs, and over recent years the number of businesses has remained about the same. About two thirds of respondents feel that the level of accommodation is just right, so that only one third is considering expanding. A little over half of guests stayed for 1 or 2 nights, whilst a third had visitors for more than 5 nights. Overall, half of all tourist businesses rated their prospects as "good".

It appears that many businesses in the Dale believe they have found a niche and plan to continue "business as usual". They may be correct in their judgement that tourists are primarily interested in enjoying Malham Cove, Gordale Scar and the surrounding countryside but it would be unfortunate if providers, singly or jointly, do not seek to add value to the experience. Combining accommodation with learning or with outdoor activities suitable to the splendour and tranquillity of the Dales, services such as massage and reflexology for the weary, and organised evenings are possible means of reducing seasonality, extending stays and increasing profitability.

### **Malham resident:**

"Need to work together to create all year round high spend tourist custom, reduce dependency on weekend trippers. Foot and mouth hopefully taught us importance of tourism to ALL sectors of economy."

### **Recommendation:**

- 1 Collaboration between tourism providers to be encouraged, in conjunction with CDC/YDNPA Economic Development Officers, to increase the number staying for longer, raise the quality of the entire visitor experience and to reduce the purchase costs of supplies.*

### 8.3 Employment Generally

No community can isolate itself from the surrounding areas. Thus it is inevitable and not undesirable that twice as many people work outside the Dale as do locally. Some travel to nearby places like Gargrave, Settle and Skipton but others commute for longer distances. They help to create a more balanced, larger and sustainable community, alongside those employed in agriculture and tourism. Conversely, it is unreasonable to expect Malhamdale to be self sufficient in the provision of services, whilst the shortage of skilled labour is not simply a local phenomenon.

However Malhamdale does lack its own robust economy with a variety of well-paid jobs geared to the 21st century. A diverse economy would reduce the dependence on agriculture and tourism, whilst providing employment for the families of those who work in those industries.

It is dangerous to be too prescriptive, but the different creative industries, communications and information technologies, educational and conservation ventures, and consultancies of numerous kinds are examples of the possibilities. Such companies now operate in neighbouring parishes. These businesses are developed by entrepreneurs who require premises to be readily available. Some existing agricultural buildings are suitable for conversion into business premises, whilst a small well-screened modern unit is no more obtrusive or incongruous than many new farm buildings. In the past, the YDNPA has not looked favourably on such developments, but it now needs to consider the economic well-being of communities in the National Park.

#### **Airton resident:**

"Whilst accepting that some development and change is probably necessary for the future of Malhamdale as a living and working community I feel it is essential that what makes the dale special should not be lost. There is always the danger that as more services and facilities are provided for residents and tourists that the dale tries to become a replica of what the local towns have to offer. The very fact that it is different is part of its character and attraction. I believe that residents and visitors accept that part of the choice to live/visit here includes the necessity to travel out of the dale for some essential services or desirable activities."

#### **Recommendations**

- 1** *A Dales Business Directory be created.*
- 2** *Liase with recommendation 7.4.2 to identify opportunities for conversion and new build for business start-ups.*
- 3** *A group of people from within and outside the Dale, with experience of small businesses, be formed to advise the Malhamdale Partnership on the next steps.*

## Section 9 The Environment

### 9.1 Countryside conservation

Damage to green lanes and disturbance to wildlife concerns 83% of respondents. There is strong support for YDNPA action to stop trail bikes and 4 x 4's using green lanes. Damage to dry stone walls and barns concerns 73%, and loss of wildlife habitat concerns 60%. Countryside Stewardship schemes should help to recover wildlife habitat lost to grazing land. However this has to be weighed against the need to conserve heritage sites and retain those features of traditional hill farming which give the Dale its special appeal.

The National Park Authority needs to take the lead in collaborating with farmers and landowners to come up with a strategy for maintaining the Dale's landscape, plants and wildlife. A co-ordinated plan for repairing and maintaining dry stone walls and barns and other heritage features is needed. Remote barns should be preserved pending the establishment of possible new uses - lack of planning consent is currently leading to their destruction

Restoration of traditional woodland, particularly "ghyll planting", would create wildlife corridors and slow the rate of run off during heavy rainfall, helping to reduce erosion and alleviate flash flooding. Tree planting is an important factor in restoring the carbon balance and once established managed woodland can provide a carbon neutral source of renewable fuel for local consumption. By hiding car parks, picnic areas, walking and biking trails, playgrounds, etc. woodlands can play an important part in alleviating visitor impact. Funding could be sourced from a carbon balance appeal to visiting motorists to contribute a sum towards tree planting.

Dry stone walling, repair of barns and tree planting are expensive and labour intensive often requiring the use of heavy equipment. A strategy for tackling this problem must include an appraisal of human and mechanical resources to carry out the work. The establishment of a sponsored apprenticeship scheme for dry stone walling would ensure a supply of skilled labour as well as preserving the traditional skills of the craft.

#### **Scosthrop resident:**

The character of the dale is precious and fragile. Once destroyed it will be gone forever. Therefore NO to wider roads, easier, faster access. YES to slowing down traffic. YES to park and ride scheme. YES to rebuilding walls. NO to 4 x 4 on green lanes and motor cycles on Bridleways/footpaths. Safer roads a priority for young children's safety.

#### **Recommendations:**

- 1. YDNPA with land owners to formulate long-term strategies for restoring and maintaining dry stone walls and barns, and woodland and wetland restoration.*
- 2. Investigate funding and resources for the above ensuring that maximum use is made of local labour, plant and materials and that spending stays within the local community as far as possible.*

## 9.2 Energy Conservation

Most residents are concerned about rising fuel prices, fewer about global warming and the energy crisis. From responses to the questionnaire, a Renewable Energy Group of over 30 households has been compiled. Many buildings in the Dale are below modern standards of insulation and rely for heating on oil or LPG - both subject to price increases several times the rate of inflation. Measures such as loft insulation, double glazing, low energy light bulbs and more efficient boilers are the most cost-effective way to cut energy bills.

Solar panels to heat water and home generation of electricity is possible, but guidelines are needed to clarify the YDNPA planning regulations which currently barely tolerate internationally accepted requirements for energy conservation. The National Trust however, supports its tenant farmers who wish to install small-scale renewable energy devices. Government funding is available and businesses can offset capital cost under the Enhanced Capital Allowance (ECA) scheme.

New buildings are subject to more stringent building regulations requiring higher standards of insulation. More eco-friendly design of new buildings needs to be encouraged to improve energy efficiency. In particular, any new community building should set an example for keeping carbon emissions to a minimum.

### ***Recommendations***

- 1. The Renewable Energy Group should work with YDNPA to clarify planning regulations governing installation of renewable energy devices.***
- 2. Planning guidelines need to encourage energy efficient design, particularly public buildings***

## Section 10      Action Plan

The Action Plan brings together the Plan's recommendations, identifies partners and residents' groups responsible for carrying them out and proposes a timescale.

Item numbers refer to the sections in the report where each recommendation originates. Reference to the report will give details and suggestions as to how each action point should be addressed.

It is proposed to form the following groups:

Malhamdale Partnership      MP

The purpose of the Malhamdale Partnership is to oversee implementation of the Malhamdale Plan. The Partnership will review progress at regular meetings with leaders of the various residents' groups. It should be formed from representatives of KMPC and chairs of Parish Meetings and include representatives of YDNPA, CDC, and other organisations as required. During the process of preparing this Plan, consultation meetings have been held between members of Malhamdale Initiative and representatives of these local authorities. It is proposed that, in order to ensure continuity, Malhamdale Initiative continues as a delegated body, chairing each of the residents' groups.

**Overall control of the Plan will be retained by the various Parishes' elected bodies.**

The following residents' groups are referred to in the Action Plan

The residents' groups are to be responsible for the tasks identified in the Plan's recommendations. Membership of each group is open to anyone who wishes to make a contribution to realising the overall aims of the Malhamdale Plan.

Recreation Group	rg	to draw up a plan for recreational facilities
Housing group	hg	to carry out an affordable housing needs survey
Business group	bg	to investigate business opportunities
Access group	ag	to draw up a parking and traffic and access strategy
Renewable energy Group	reg	to draw up a renewable energy plan

Other initials refer to the following organisations;

YDNPA	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
KMPC	Kirkby Malham Parish Council
CPM	Chair, Parish Meeting
CDC	Craven District Council
VHC	Village Hall Committee
NT	National Trust
KMPS	Kirkby Malham Primary School