



The Dales & Bowland
Community Interest Company

Annual Report and Statement of Community Interest Delivery 2018-19



Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company
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Overview

- Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company (D&BCIC) provided a network of 15 Sunday and Bank Holiday public DalesBus services to and within the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale/ Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty throughout Summer 2018. Five services operated on Sundays during the winter months.
- D&BCIC is a social enterprise whose single member is a charity, the Yorkshire Dales Society, which is also known as Friends of the Dales. D&BCIC has its own independent board of directors who are all unpaid volunteers working in partnership with commercial bus operators, community transport operators, user groups, local attractions and other businesses and local authorities.
- DalesBus is not just a local but also a regional transport network. It serves a wide range of catchment communities across the North of England, from Preston to Middlesbrough, and Kirkby Lonsdale to Selby. Although primarily designed to meet the needs of urban communities to access the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale/Forest of Bowland AONBs, DalesBus also provides a much-valued service for local communities within the Dales who otherwise would have no transport on Sundays and Bank Holidays, thereby further isolating those without access to their own transport.
- 33,391 journeys were made on DalesBus services managed by D&BCIC during 2018-19. The 19% increase from 28,117 journeys in 2017-18 was driven by the reintroduction of a Summer Sunday service linking Otley with Nidderdale, the first full season of Winter Sunday service 24 in Nidderdale and the takeover of the Summer Saturday service between Ilkley and Grassington from NYCC once again.
- Whilst D&BCIC and its partners have continued to be remarkably successful once again in attracting sufficient funding for the summer 2019 network, it is clear that fundraising activity is becoming an unsustainable drain on the company's limited voluntary resources and that the securing of more stable longer-term funding is an urgent priority.
- DalesBus delivers many economic, social and environmental benefits, but D&BCIC cannot achieve these alone. **For DalesBus to survive and develop we urgently need increased political and financial support.**

The Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company

D&BCIC is a social enterprise wholly owned by the charity Yorkshire Dales Society, also known as Friends of the Dales. The company has its own independent board of directors who are all unpaid volunteers working in partnership with commercial bus operators, community transport operators, user groups, local attractions, businesses and local authorities.

We wish to thank the many volunteers who give up time to help with the running of the company, and the management and promotion of DalesBus services, as well as the many organisations, listed at Appendix 4, who have provided vital financial support.

The DalesBus Network

Several changes were made to improve the DalesBus network for Summer 2018, despite the constraints of limited funding. 33,391 journeys were made on DalesBus services managed by D&BCIC during 2018-19, an increase of 19% over 2017-18.

This was driven by the following changes:

- A revamp of the Summer Sunday network in Nidderdale, with:
 - the reintroduction of a service between Otley and Nidderdale, operating as Nidderdale Rambler service 821 between Keighley, Shipley, Otley, Fewston, Greenhow, Pateley Bridge, Lofthouse and Scar House Reservoir
 - service 825 revised to run between Ripon, Fountains Abbey, Brimham Rocks and Harrogate
 - service 822 extended from Fountains Abbey to Pateley Bridge and Grassington
- Following the closure of Pride of the Dales, NYCC withdrew support for any Saturday service between Ilkley and Grassington. D&BCIC stepped in to provide a Summer Saturday service, running as service 874 between Wakefield, Leeds, Ilkley and Grassington.
- A slightly longer season was operated on some routes, with Malhamdale and Summer Wharfedale services commencing at the start of April and continuing until mid-October.
- D&BCIC's management for Winter Sunday service 24 in Nidderdale continued until mid-May and resumed again at the start of October 2018.
- In Wensleydale, Northern Dalesman service 830 from Middlesbrough was truncated at Hawes, enabling the provision of new Summer Sunday Wensleydale Wanderer service 857 between Hawes, Bainbridge, Castle Bolton, Leyburn and Masham.
- A new Summer Sunday afternoon link from Hawes to Settle was provided as Ribblehead Ranger service 831.
- An improved Summer Sunday service between Grassington and Buckden was provided during peak season, utilising the bus from service 822.

The summer holiday weekday services from Bradford were managed by the Yorkshire Dales National Park in 2018, building on the success of the Dales Experience service provided by D&BCIC in recent years.

A full list of the services provided by D&BCIC in 2018-19 is included at Appendix 3

The overall cost of providing and marketing the network was around £163,700, with fares income of approx. £64,000, leaving a net cost funding requirement of £99,700.

Community Benefits and Consultation

DalesBus was primarily established to provide people without their own transport affordable opportunities to access the National Park and neighbouring AONBs where other public bus services are not available. An important secondary benefit is the provision of bus services for rural communities, allowing them to access local services, shops, jobs and leisure facilities, as well as enjoying the countryside itself.

An on-board survey was undertaken on all routes during July and August 2018, covering 685 passengers in 401 groups. There was a high level of satisfaction with the quality of service provided with an average rating across six factors of 86% regarding them as good or very good. Particularly notable is the high score for drivers, and we would like to thank our drivers for the excellent service they provide. Perhaps not surprisingly, frequency of service was the feature passengers were least satisfied with, although 75% rated this good or very good. Less than a third of passengers could have made the journey by car.

It was found that a little more than half our users were going for a walk, with nearly half reporting a ride in the country as a purpose of their journey. Naturally the latter tended to be older passengers, and 40% of all passengers reported that the service provided companionship and reduced isolation. 68% of passengers reported improved physical health from the exercise use of the service provided. The physical and mental health benefits achieved from a bus ride in the countryside and activities such as walking, are significant, well documented and can be a huge antidote to isolation, loneliness and depression, suffered by many older people.

The finding that bus passengers spend on average around £10 on the outing excluding transport is in line with an earlier independent survey and shows the importance of bus users to shops, pubs, cafes, camp sites, hotels and leisure attractions. This spend on local goods and services has a multiplier effect in which spending is engendered through small businesses to other supporting businesses in the area. This importance is recognised by local businesses, many of whom strongly support DalesBus, displaying and even requesting timetables and posters to publicise bus services to their customers.

A summary of the survey results is provided at Appendix 5.

Many regular DalesBus users are members of the Friends of the Dales and Friends of the DalesBus with whom D&BCIC has close working relationships. There is regular contact between our Board and their committees, and presentations are made to their annual general meetings on past performance and future plans for DalesBus services. Attendees are encouraged to provide feedback and suggestions for improving and expanding the services. D&BCIC also seeks input from other relevant groups, such as Lancaster District Bus Users Group and the Campaign for Better Transport.

Passengers are encouraged to feedback their experiences, concerns, complaints and suggestions to D&BCIC directors face to face or via email, Twitter, the DalesBus website or the Friends of DalesBus. Similarly, DalesBus drivers provide operational feedback to improve the running of the services, which reaches the company via direct face-to-face conversations or through their operating companies, with whom directors have close working relationships.

Though primarily involved with managing the Sunday, Bank Holiday and limited Saturday DalesBus network, D&BCIC also works to integrate its activities with the services of weekday bus and rail operators in the Dales such as Dales & District, Kirkby Lonsdale Coach Hire, Transdev and Northern, as well as the four Dales-based community transport operators operating public scheduled bus services, for mutual benefit and support. Our aim is for Dales residents and visitors to be offered a seven day a week, all year high quality public transport network to meet their travel needs.

Marketing

Marketing of public transport in the Yorkshire Dales is a major activity of D&BCIC, covering not only DalesBus services managed by the company but also other bus and train services in the area.

The passenger survey indicated that just over half of passengers consulted printed timetables or leaflets for information, showing the continued importance of these forms of information to users.

In 2018 the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) advised that it was no longer able to fund the printing of the popular twice-yearly Metro DalesBus timetable booklet, which is widely distributed throughout the DalesBus catchment areas and remains the prime source of bus service information. D&BCIC was pleased to receive funding from North Yorkshire County Council to allow the production of both editions in 2018-19, but this funding is not continuing in 2019-20 so the future of this important publication is now uncertain.

Some local authorities are currently introducing measures to reduce congestion and improve air quality to encourage people to make the change from car to bus, train, bike and walking, but at the same time they are reducing printed travel information in their public offices just when they should be utilising all channels of communication to make it as easy as possible for people to make the switch in their mode of transport. Current proposals by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to reduce the provision of printed timetables are a particular concern and may adversely affect DalesBus passengers and place a further strain on the way D&BCIC markets the DalesBus network.

D&BCIC also produced a large range of localised timetables with promotional copy aimed at local communities and visitors. These included leaflets which focussed on bus links from rail services, produced in partnership with Friends of the Settle Carlisle line, and timetable leaflets in partnership with local bus companies. Volunteers have distributed these leaflets to numerous outlets, maintained many bus stop timetable displays in the Dales, maintained the www.dalesbus.org website and produced numerous press releases and public relations stories.

DalesBus is active on social media, with the DalesBus Twitter feed now having over 2,200 followers.

Key features of the DalesBus network are a range of multi operator tickets, discounts for young people (including the One Way £1 ticket), the elderly and disabled, and families (in addition to free travel for senior citizens with ENCT passes on some services) and, thanks to the support of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, availability of MCard train and bus commuter tickets on the weekend DalesBus network.

2019-20 – The Coming Year

Planning for 2019-20 and beyond was an important part of the company's activity in 2018-19, with the main challenge again being to seek funding to facilitate the continuation of the network of a similar basis to 2017-18.

- The West Yorkshire Combined Authority has offered continued support, reflecting the Authority's view of the value of DalesBus to the health and well-being of the people of West Yorkshire in terms of access to the National Park and AONB, and the regional economic and social importance of cross boundary services within the Leeds City Region.
- As agreed last year, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority will provide £5,000 per annum for the three years from 2018-19 to support the DalesBus network. This is very welcome but represents a small proportion of the net operating cost of the network.
- Continued support from the National Trust combined with other fundraising for Nidderdale area services will allow the improved Summer Sunday and Bank Holiday services in and around the Nidderdale AONB area to continue in 2019.
- Ongoing partnership with the Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company and Northern has again secured funding for services linking with the railway for Summer 2019. This funding is however on a short-term basis, so more longer-term funding is still required to secure these services in future years. The Bentham Line Community Rail Partnership was however unable to raise funding to facilitate the continuation of the Bowland Explorer service.
- Financial support from users via local transport user groups, the Friends of DalesBus and the Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line remains vital to the work of D&BCIC.
- Commercial sponsorship remains important, with particularly welcome new support from the Yorke Arms at Ramsgill as well as ongoing support from Harrogate Spring Water and other local businesses. Acorn Stairlift's sponsorship of the Wensleydale Flyer service is however coming to an end, meaning that new funding is needed for the service to continue beyond October 2019.
- The Friends of the Dales continues to provide an annual grant to D&BCIC, in addition to providing essential office and much appreciated administrative support to allow the company to function.
- Other smaller funders and grant givers, as well as a wide range of individual donations, have continued to make important contributions.

Fundraising has been insufficient to maintain a full network in 2019-20, so it has been decided to:

- Budget for the use of £15,000 of reserves and general donations in order to maintain the majority of the network and produce a summer edition of the DalesBus network timetable booklet.
- Reduce the operating season of some services, coinciding with the late Easter in 2019.
- Discontinue the Bowland Explorer service, with limited coverage of the Forest of Bowland AONB provided by a revised Malham Tarn Shuttle service.

Additional funding is needed for the Wensleydale Flyer service to continue beyond October 2019 and for a Winter Sunday service to be provided on route 24 in Nidderdale.

In the absence of new external funding it is likely that the winter edition of the DalesBus network timetable booklet will be discontinued.

The Future of DalesBus – 2020 and Beyond

Whilst D&BCIC has achieved considerable success in securing a series of donations and grants to support the network in recent years, an increasing amount of the funding is on a short-term basis and will not be available in future years, and the 2019-20 network is also being supported by the company's limited reserves. There is therefore an urgent need to arrange more stable long-term funding for the DalesBus network.

The Government's 8-Point Plan for England's National Parks, published in March 2016, states:

"National Parks ... are special places for everyone to enjoy. We will ... work with National Park Authorities to scale up projects to reach visitors from a diverse range of social groups and to alleviate barriers that stop more people from enjoying National Parks."

Lack of transport is often quoted in surveys as the main barrier to visiting National Parks by such diverse social groups. D&BCIC continues to argue that DalesBus can provide a practical cost-effective way to help address this problem.

The YDNPA finalised its Management Plan for 2019–24 at the end of 2018 and included the following objective for bus services which is of particular relevance to D&BCIC:

F7: Determine the demand from local communities and visitors for bus services to and within the National Park, and use that information to work with operators and community transport providers to provide services that meet the needs of local communities (with Grassington, Hawes, Reeth and Sedbergh linked throughout the year to their nearest main service centre and railway station), and link the main visitor destinations to the main visitor catchments.

The YDNPA has committed to providing £5K per year to D&BCIC to support DalesBus services, which is very welcome, but represents only a small proportion of the circa £100K net operating cost of the company's bus services.

DEFRA has commissioned the Landscapes Review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty led by Julian Glover which is due to report in Autumn 2019. This wide-ranging review is intended to build on the 8 Point Plan for National Parks in England which set out plans to protect, promote and enhance National Parks in England. It will be interesting to see how the review proposes to improve access to the National Parks and AONBs by diverse social groups, public transport, and what funding arrangements will be recommended.

The Lords Select Committee on Rural Economy produced a report in April 2019 calling for a strategy to help realise the potential of the rural economy including a call to Government to undertake a full review of funding streams to rural public transport: *"The aspiration should be to develop a "single transport investment pot" that could be used to better support rural transport."* However, there has been nothing so far to indicate that the Government is planning to take this forward.

In May 2019 the UK Parliament approved a motion to declare an environment and climate emergency and announced in June a commitment to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, making the UK the first member of the G7 group of industrialised nations to legislate for net zero emissions. To achieve this target will need a major switch from cars to public transport, cycling and walking to reduce congestion and air pollution – which might mean a more positive attitude towards the benefits and funding of bus services - but 2050 is a long way off in the life of DalesBus.

D&BCIC can help National Parks and other protected landscapes achieve many of their aims and objectives, and in so doing deliver significant economic, social and environmental benefits. But we cannot do it alone, and **for DalesBus to survive and thrive, and the benefits realised, we need increased political and financial support.**

Appendix 1

Directors as at 31st March 2019

Prof. Christopher Nash (*Chairman*)
Mr John Carey
Mr Paul Chattwood
Mr Howard Handley
Mr Howard Robinson
Ms Janet Stallworthy
Dr Christopher Wright
Mr Graham Yule

Dr John Disney, a director of the company since 2009, sadly passed away in October 2018.

Appendix 2

DalesBus Services managed by D&BCIC during 2018-19

Nidderdale Rambler	821: Keighley - Otley - Pateley Bridge - Scar House (<i>summer only</i>)
Fountains Flyer	822: Selby - York - Ripon - Fountains Abbey Pateley Bridge - Grassington (<i>summer only</i>)
Brimham Explorer	825: Ripon - Fountains Abbey - Brimham Rocks - Harrogate (<i>summer only</i>)
Northern Dalesman	830: Middlesbrough - Darlington - Richmond - Reeth - Hawes (<i>summer only</i>) 830: Preston - Lancaster - Settle - Ingleton - Ribbleshead - Hawes - Reeth - Richmond (<i>summer Sundays only</i>)
Ribbleshead Ranger	831: Hawes - Ribbleshead - Settle (<i>summer only</i>)
Bowland Explorer	833: Lancaster - Bentham - Ingleton - Slaidburn - Clitheroe (<i>summer only</i>)
Wensleydale	855: Garsdale - Hawes - Gayle (<i>all year</i>) 856: Northallerton - Bedale - Leyburn - Hawes (<i>all year</i>) Upper Dales CONNECT (<i>all year</i>) 857: Hawes - Castle Bolton - Leyburn - Masham (<i>summer only</i>) 859: Richmond - Leyburn (<i>summer Sundays only</i>)
Cravenlink	873/884: Dewsbury - Bradford - Ilkley - Skipton - Malham (<i>all year - in winter Ilkley to Skipton only</i>)
Yorkshire Dalesman	874: Wakefield - Leeds - Grassington (<i>summer Saturdays only</i>) 874: Wakefield - Leeds - Grassington - Buckden (<i>all year</i>) 875: Wakefield - Leeds - Buckden - Hawes (<i>summer only</i>)
Malham Tarn Shuttle	881: Morecambe - Lancaster - Ingleton - Settle - Malham (<i>summer only</i>)
DalesBus 24	24: Harrogate - Pateley Bridge (<i>winter only</i>)

All services operated on Sundays and Bank Holidays, except where indicated otherwise.

Appendix 3

Passenger Journeys

Sundays & Bank Holidays	
Cravenlink	7,656
Wharfedale	5,897
Yorkshire Dalesman	1,867
Northern Dalesman from West	1,356
Northern Dalesman from North East	909
Nidderdale Rambler	1,479
Fountains Flyer	1,199
Brimham Explorer	450
Wensleydale	5,737
Malham Shuttle	1,471
Bowland Explorer	182
Winter Nidderdale 24	2,583
Saturdays	
Wharfedale	2,605
Total	33,391

Appendix 4

Financial Support

D&BCIC would like to thank the following for financial support during 2018-19:

Acorn Stairlifts
Bewerley Parish Council
Birstwith Parish Council
Darley Parish Council
Forestry Commission
Friends of DalesBus
Friends of the Dales
Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line
Fullers Foods
Harrogate Spring Water
Hartwith cum Winsley Parish Council
Holmes Planning Ltd.
Individual donors and passengers
Leeds Lancaster Morecambe Line Community Rail Partnership
National Trust
Nidderdale Chamber of Trade
Nidderdale Plus
North Yorkshire County Council
Northern
Northern Powergrid
Otley Walkers are Welcome
Pateley Bridge Town Council
Reynard Crag Caravan Park
Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company
Two Ridings Community Fund
West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Wharfedale Charitable Trust
Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Appendix 5

SURVEY RESULTS 2018

An on-board survey of weekend DalesBus passengers was undertaken during July and August 2018, covering 685 passengers in 401 groups.

1. Purpose(s) of Journey *

Walk	56%
Average walk duration	3.7 hrs
Ride in the countryside	40%
Visit a specific attraction	20%
Meal	11%
Shopping	8%
Visit friends	7%
Special event	5%
Work / volunteering	3%

2. Main Destinations

Malham	10%	Blubberhouses	3%
Grassington	8%	Richmond	3%
Hawes	6%	Burnsall	3%
Bolton Abbey	5%	Fountains Abbey	3%
Scar House	4%	Pateley Bridge	3%
Ilkley	4%	Northallerton	2%
Skipton	4%	Settle	2%
Keld	4%	Leyburn	2%
Reeth	4%	Buckden	2%
Kettlewell	3%	Brimham Rocks	2%

3. Starting Points

Ilkley	7%	Otley	3%
Skipton	7%	Preston	2%
Leeds	6%	Lancaster	2%
Harrogate	4%	Headingley	2%
York	4%	Keighley	2%
Ribblehead	3%	Hawes	2%
Pateley Bridge	3%	Malham	2%
Bingley	3%	Muker	2%
Shipley	3%	Ingleton	2%
Leyburn	3%	Settle	1%

4. Frequency of Use

Nearly every week	34%
At least once a month	15%
Several times a year	20%
Less Often	31%

5. Sources of information *

Timetable/leaflet	53%
Used it before	36%
DalesBus website	27%
Bus stop	13%
Friends of DalesBus	13%
Information centre	11%
Friends / family	10%
Other website	5%
Social media	3%

6. Surveyed passengers receiving information in the year prior to day of travel

61%

7. Quality Assessment

Routes taken	86%
Frequency of buses	75%
Value for money	88%
Reliability	88%
Comfort	85%
Drivers	92%

Ave. quality assessment 86%

8. Average spend per day per group

Food and drink	£13.49
Transport	£ 6.88
Other spending	£ 4.03

Total spend £24.39

Average spend per passenger: £14.27

9. Average Size of Party

1.71

10. Age of passengers

Under 25	10%
25 - 40	11%
41 - 59	17%
60 - 69	33%
Over 70	29%

51% of passengers hold an ENCTS bus pass.

11. Car ownership and accessibility

48% of passengers were from a car-owning household.

31% could have used it on the day of travel (*making a positive choice to use the bus*)

63% could not get to the Dales without the DalesBus network

12. Benefits gained from visiting the Dales

Pleasure from enjoying countryside	95%
Improved physical health from exercise	68%
Companionship and reduced isolation	40%

13. Memberships

Friends of DalesBus	18%
Friends of Settle Carlisle Line	11%

* Totals add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

