

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

November 22nd 2007

Wharfedale Trail

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a background report to the Wharfedale Trail proposal.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2003, the Target Project (a partnership including Bradford Metropolitan District Council, North Yorkshire County Council and Yorkshire Dales National Park) commissioned Sustrans to investigate ways to encourage people to visit the Yorkshire Dales National Park using means other than motor transport. Part of this study explored the feasibility of converting the dismantled railway track bed between Addingham and Bolton Abbey into a new route for cyclists, walkers and horses.

- 1.2 In March 2005 Sustrans presented the results of the Addingham-Bolton Abbey feasibility study to Addingham Parish Council . In the absence of a positive response, a local petition was raised, which attracted nearly 600 signatures in support of the project. Then, in October 2005, local supporters established a forum within which interested parties could discuss issues arising from the proposals. Meanwhile, efforts to persuade the council to support the scheme culminated in a public meeting at which a vote was passed that Addingham Parish Council would support a wider public consultation, in order to establish the full extent of support (or otherwise) for the project..

- 1.3 Appendix 1 shows a map of the proposed route or you can view it at www.wharfedaletrail.co.uk/proposed_route.htm

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 In August 2006, representatives of Addingham Parish Council and the Wharfedale Trail Forum met to discuss the project; it was agreed to seek funding for a professional third party public consultation; this funding was forthcoming early in 2007. An independent consultant was commissioned to carry out the exercise in two parts: Part One, focused on Addingham and Bolton Abbey, took place during June/July 2007. Part Two, focused on Ilkley, is ongoing and due to be completed by the end of November 2007. It is anticipated that the full report on both parts of the consultation will be made public early in 2008.

- 2.2 The consultation is being part funded by North Yorkshire County Council with the majority of the funding coming from Bradford Metropolitan Borough Council.

- 2.3 The consultation has not been an easy process with a group forming called the Anti-Wharfedale Trail. The web site can be viewed at www.thewharfedaletrail.co.uk/. Some of the campaigning has been particularly nasty, vindictive and extremely personnel. Recently completed consultations were stolen from Ilkley Library; the matter is in the hands of the Police.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- a) This report is received for information.

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